

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY
ANNOUNCEMENT
FOR
Defense Science, Technology, Engineering, and
Mathematics (STEM) Education Consortium (DSEC)
Cooperative Agreement



W911NF-18-S-0008

ISSUED BY:
U.S. Army Contracting Command
Aberdeen Proving Ground
Research Triangle Park Division

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Table of Contents

- I. OVERVIEW OF THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY..... 3**
- A. Required Overview Content 3**
 - 1. Federal Agency Name..... 3
 - 2. Funding Opportunity Title 3
 - 3. Announcement Type 3
 - 4. Funding Opportunity Number..... 4
 - 5. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number and Title 4
 - 6. Response Dates 4
- B. Optional Overview Content**
 - 1. Funding 4
 - 2. Cost Share or Matching 4
 - 3. Profit/Fee 4
 - 4. Place of Performance 4
 - 5. Period of Performance 5
 - 6. Award Instruments 5
 - 7. Articles of Collaboration..... 5
- II. DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY 5**
- A. Funding Opportunity Description..... 5**
 - 1. Program Description 5
 - 2. Government Role and Responsibility..... 6
 - 3. Guiding Policies and Authorities for DoD STEM Programs 7
 - 4. Fundamental Elements 8
- B. Federal Award Information 19**
- C. Eligibility Information 19**
 - 1. Eligible Applicants 19
 - 2. Cost Share or Matching 20
- D. Application and Submission Information 20**
 - 1. Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures 20
 - 2. How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov 20
 - 3. How to Submit an Application to DoD via Grants.gov 22
 - 4. Content and Form of Application Submission..... 23
 - 5. Submission Dates and Times 30
 - 6. Intergovernmental Review 31
 - 7. Funding Restrictions 31
 - 8. Other Submission Requirements..... 31
- E. Application Review Information 33**
 - 1. Criteria 33
 - 2. Review and Selection Process 37
 - 3. Recipient Qualification 37
- F. Award Administration Information 38**
 - 1. Award Notices 38
 - 2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements 38
- G. Agency Contacts 41**
- H. Other Information..... 41**

I. OVERVIEW OF THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

In accordance with 10 USC §2192, *Improvement of education in technical fields: general authority regarding education in science, mathematics, and engineering*, the National Defense Education Program (NDEP) K-16 Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education and outreach is seeking to strategically implant a vehicle to identify and support stronger guidelines for conducting K-16 education and outreach programs. The Department of Defense seeks to diversify its portfolio of support and increase focus on efforts that support the Force of the Future, and align with the Federal and DoD STEM strategies. Enhancing the permeability of ideas into DoD's workforce, especially the STEM workforce, through alliances with academia, industry and various non-traditional partners in STEM should deliver far-reaching sustainable and scalable programs and partnerships. While aligning with the DoD STEM mission, “to attract, inspire, and develop exceptional STEM talent across the education continuum to enrich our current and future DoD workforce to meet defense technological challenges,” the Defense STEM Education Consortium (DSEC) should collaboratively work with the Government to provide a cohesive strategy to meet the vision, roles, and goals outlined in the DoD STEM Strategic Plan (https://www.acq.osd.mil/rd/publications/docs/DoD_STEM_Strategic_Plan_2015_1022_final.pdf). The goals and objectives of this strategic plan will support: (1) building and maintaining not only DOD's, but the nation's STEM pipeline; (2) reducing the number of STEM professionals who choose to leave DoD; and (3) keeping DoD competitive with industry and other countries also seeking STEM talent.

The fundamental elements under the DSEC Cooperative Agreement (COA) are: (1) Consortium Management; (2) Program Evaluations: Data Collection, Analysis and Reports; (3) Outreach/Communications; (4) STEM Alumni Management; and (5) Strategic Outreach Initiatives. These fundamental elements are the essential elements of the consortium that will support the DoD STEM education and outreach goals.

A. Required Overview Content

1. Federal Agency Name

Under Secretary of Defense (Research & Engineering), Defense Laboratories Office, 4800 Mark Center Drive, Suite 17C08, Alexandria, VA 22350 and issued by U.S. Army Contracting Command-Aberdeen Proving Ground, Research Triangle Park (ACC- APG-RTP) Division

2. Funding Opportunity Title

Defense Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education Consortium (DSEC) Cooperative Agreement

3. Announcement Type

Initial Announcement

4. Funding Opportunity Number

W911NF-18-S-0008

5. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number and Title

12.560 - "DoD, NDEP, DOTC- STEM Education Outreach Implementation"

6. Response Dates

The following is an estimated summary of the events and dates associated with the DSEC Cooperative Agreement (COA) Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA): Additional information will be posted on the Federal Business Opportunities Website regarding the upcoming Opportunity Day.

<u>EVENT</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Final Announcement Issued	22 May 2018
Opportunity Day	07 June 2018
Applications Due	25 June 2018
Evaluations Completed	20 July June 2018
Award	1 August 2018

B. Optional Overview Content

1. Funding

This FOA issued is subject to the availability of funds. This FOA provides the estimated funding levels for the Defense Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education Consortium (DSEC) Cooperative Agreement (COA). The DoD has submitted the requisite documents to request funding for the period covered by the DSEC COA; however, applicants are reminded that this request is subject to Presidential, Congressional and Departmental approval. **The funding levels provided in this FOA are for application preparation purposes only. The actual funding level of the cooperative agreement will be updated annually as part of the appropriation process.** Hereafter, the terms COA and Cooperative Agreement are synonymous and the terms DSEC and Consortium are synonymous.

2. Cost Share or Matching

Cost sharing or matching is not required to be responsive to this FOA as there is not an evaluation factor for cost sharing. .

3. Profit/Fee

Profit/fee is not permitted under this cooperative agreement.

4. Place of Performance

Performance is limited to the United States, Puerto Rico as well as DoD Education Activity (DoDEA) locations around the world.

5. Period of Performance

An award made as a result of this FOA will provide potential funding for up to five (5) years. This award will be structured as a base agreement of a 12-month duration, with four 12-month options to be exercised based upon recipient performance and availability of funding. The Government along with OSD will review the COA annually to assess the degree to which the recipient is making progress towards meeting the objectives of the agreement.

6. Award Instruments

This FOA is expected to result in the award of a cooperative agreement as defined at 31 U.S.C. 6305. The cooperative agreement will be awarded to an “eligible entity” as defined at 10 USC §2192(b)(3) which includes a State, a political subdivision of a State, an individual, and a not-for-profit or organization in the private sector. The Consortium must be led by a Lead Organization (LO) entity responsible for managing the Consortium. The LO will be charged with providing leadership to the Consortium as well as coordinating and synchronizing overarching efforts across all fundamental elements under this COA. Each fundamental element must be led by a Consortium Member. The diverseness required to cover the fundamental elements is expected to result in the need for more than one organization to be involved in meeting the program objectives. Performance under the cooperative agreement also may include additional Consortium Members and subawardees, but the number of participants should be balanced to ensure the streamlined implementation and administration of a well-focused program and to maximize efficiency and minimize the duplication of efforts.

7. Articles of Collaboration

The Articles of Collaboration define the operational structure within the Consortium. An attachment to the Appendix of this FOA provides a sample of “Articles of Collaboration” for applicants to consider in preparing their articles of collaboration. Applicants are free to modify this document as appropriate to address and achieve the objectives outlined in support of the COA priorities, however any changes must be clearly identified in an application and these changes must be acceptable to the Government for the applicant to be eligible for the award. Applications must include a copy of the proposed Articles of Collaboration, signed by a duly authorized representative for each Consortium member. The Articles of Collaboration will be evaluated under the Management Evaluation Factor.

II. DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

A. Funding Opportunity Description

1. Program Description

The overarching DoD STEM portfolio encompasses many STEM programs from the Services and 4th Estate, with autonomous cadres supporting STEM efforts that are unique to their distinctive mission needs. These DoD STEM programs are currently comprised of a number of activities that span across the formal and informal program domain in support of the following five goals:

1. Communicate the value and purpose of the DoD STEM Strategy and the need for engagement.
2. Inspire youth and community engagement in STEM education and outreach in the K-12 domain by supporting and enhancing student and educator participation in DoD-sponsored STEM events.
3. Cultivate the future STEM talent pool through supporting and enhancing undergraduate and graduate students served by DoD-sponsored STEM programs.
4. Promote increased participation of underserved groups in STEM activities and education programs.
5. Enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of STEM initiatives by gathering evidence using a systemic approach.

The DoD STEM portfolio intends to position itself to directly support improving permeability and recruitment through strategically investing in recruiting students in STEM education and outreach activities that will provide students with exposure to DoD research and career opportunities. Education and outreach activities will support the future mission of the DoD through sustainable partnerships, student engagement opportunities (including authentic STEM experiences), and mentorship. In alignment with the Federal plan, the DoD's strategy collectively addresses critical STEM challenges as a national priority through communication, talent inspiration and cultivation, and diversity emphasis using evidence-based approaches. This DoD-wide strategic plan is an overarching framework that is driven by the Federal priorities with a focus on developing education and outreach initiatives that are unique to DoD's mission, needs, and resources and required to build the Force of the Future needed to serve and defend our Nation. The STEM education and outreach partnerships and programs which are expected to be part of the DSEC should be treated as critical elements of DoD's Science and Technology strategy, and cultivating, recruiting and retaining the best STEM professionals possible is key to building a future force capable of ensuring technical superiority and increasingly competitive world. Addressing this challenge requires a multi-faceted approach that expands beyond our traditional approaches of internships and scholarships. It will require new relationships, effective policies, and integrated performance management so we can march toward meeting the vision of leadership to ensure a technologically secure future.

2. Government Role & Responsibility

Substantial Government involvement is expected under the DSEC COA and essential to the performance and successful execution of DSEC programs. The cooperative agreement enables and encourages Consortium members to synchronize and coordinate the program planning and execution of individual DSEC components with the Government's primary representative, the DSEC Cooperative Agreement Manager (CAM). It is the CAM's responsibility to provide technical and fiscal oversight over the DSEC Cooperative Agreement.

On behalf of the Office of the Under Secretary of the Defense for Research and Engineering [USD(R&E)], the CAM must ensure that DSEC programs and partnerships are planned and executed in alignment with the COA priorities and goals as implemented annually in the approved program plans and funding levels. In addition, it is the CAM's responsibility to effectively and efficiently integrate STEM assets/resources across the DoD's Science and Technology (S&T) Enterprise into DSEC programs and partnerships, to ensure STEM participants are exposed to and learn about STEM opportunities and careers across DoD. Substantial Government involvement is required to provide K-16 students and teachers STEM opportunities with DoD S&Es and at DoD laboratories, to integrate DoD involvement and representation during COA events.

The CAM's role is also to ensure that individual DSEC programs and partnerships under the COA take a centralized approach in registration/application, if applicable, evaluations and outreach/communications. Lastly, the CAM facilitates/synchronizes between the funding and policy office at USD(R&E), the Grants Officer, Consortium members and DoD laboratories to ensure program intent and objectives are met. In an effort to grow the DoD STEM under the DSEC COA into a more robust and dynamic program, the CAM will make informed decisions on which efforts to adjust, which practices to sustain and expand, and to make real-time adjustments to funding, planning, implementation, and processes, if required.

3. Guiding Policies and Authorities for DoD STEM Programs

USC Title 10, Section 2192: The Secretary of Defense under Title 10, U.S.C., Chapter 111, "Relating to Support of Science, Mathematics, Engineering Education and Training, Sections 2191-2199," establishes and implements policy, and assigns responsibilities and procedures to carry out DoD STEM activities. Specifically, under 10 U.S.C. § 2192:

“The Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of Education, shall, on a continuing basis-

- (i) identify actions which the Department of Defense may take to improve education in the scientific, mathematics, and engineering skills necessary to meet the long-term national defense needs of the United States for personnel proficient in such skills; and (ii) establish and conduct programs to carry out such actions.”

. The STEM education programs executed under USC Title 10, Section 2192 must adhere to the guidance provided by the FC-STEM steering board as established by H.R. 5116 of the America Competes Reauthorization Act of 2010 and supported by USC Title 42, Section 6621.

The Military Child Pilot Program (MCP), authorized by Section 233 of the FY 2015 NDAA to enhance the preparation of dependents of members of the Armed Forces for careers in STEM and provide assistance to teachers at military-connected schools to enhance this preparation. Additional guidance was provided by Congressional Joint Explanatory Statement accompanying the H.R. 3973 Public Law 112-291 and ASD(R&E) signed memorandum, June 11, 2015.

The current *Federal STEM Strategic Plan's* intent is to establish a coordinated, coherent portfolio of STEM education investments across the Federal Government so that efforts and assets are effectively and efficiently deployed for greatest potential impact. Federal agencies will focus on building new models for leveraging assets and expertise, and on building and using evidence-based approaches.

https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/ostp/Federal_STEM_Strategic_Plan.pdf

The DoD STEM Strategic Plan covers Fiscal Years 2016-2020. The plan establishes the DoD's vision, mission, role, and strategy for STEM and how the plan aligns with the overall Federal strategy.

http://www.acq.osd.mil/rd/publications/docs/DoD_STEM_Strategic_Plan_2015_1022_final.pdf

4. Fundamental Elements

DSEC Efforts	
A.	Consortium / COA Management
B.	Program Evaluations: Data Collection, Assessment/Analysis and Reports
C.	Outreach and Communications
D.	STEM Alumni Management
E.	Strategic Outreach Initiatives

An application should provide evidence of how an applicant will accomplish the following objectives, as described below for each fundamental element.

A. CONSORTIUM/COA MANAGEMENT

Overview: The Recipient will lead the Consortium to ensure fundamental elements are focused on planning and executing programs in alignment with STEM priorities and goals as outlined in the DoD STEM Strategic Plan. It is critical the Consortium be structured and managed to foster an open, collaborative environment in which each member of the Consortium is equal and receptive to leveraging knowledge and resources as well as sharing and adapting best practices to achieve the Government's priorities and objectives.

The Recipient will be responsible for planning Consortium Management Committee (CMC) Meetings, submitting consolidated Consortium-wide deliverables, conducting program evaluation and overall outreach and communications efforts. The Recipient will also be responsible for the distribution of funding to all members of the Consortium. The Recipient, in its leadership role to the Consortium, can only administer the DSEC (Fundamental Element 1) and cannot administer/manage the other four fundamental elements.

The organizational framework of the Consortium should be efficient and flexible with defined areas of responsibility among the Consortium Members to minimize overhead and duplication, yet ensure relevance and proper oversight. Applicants should identify management tools and mechanisms in their application, but in doing so they must also justify and demonstrate the benefit and cost effectiveness of these management activities.

The Applicant is to assemble a qualified team of organizations that have expertise and a proven track record in the areas required to successfully manage and implement fundamental DoD STEM elements described in this announcement. These members each must be an **“eligible entity” as defined at 10 USC §2192(b)(3) which includes a State, a political subdivision of a State, an individual, and a not-for-profit or organization in the private sector.** The Applicant will propose a Consortium structure that seamlessly integrates fundamental elements and program components in a way that promotes and enables collaboration, creativity, and synergy, ultimately aiming to achieve the goals established by the Government.

At the request of the Consortium and at the approval of the DoD, additional Consortium Members may be added to or removed to advance the DoD STEM program.

The following requirements are to be addressed in an application for the technical management and oversight of the Consortium:

- **Cooperative Agreement Manager (CAM):** Overall technical management and fiscal responsibility for the DSEC COA will reside with the CAM, designated under the cooperative agreement. The CAM will work closely with the DoD STEM funding and policy office in the Office of the USD(R&E) and the Grants Officer at the U.S. Army Contracting Command, APG-RTP Division. The CAM is the Government lead for this effort and therefore, all executables must be approved by the CAM, to include programmatic and budgetary changes.
- **Consortium Chair (CC):** The CC of the DSEC is the technical representative charged with the responsibility to manage and provide guidance to the DSEC. The CC will be designated by, and must be a part of, the LO.
- **Individual Program Administrator (IPA):** The IPA is the primary point of contact designated by the Consortium for each of the fundamental element(s) and should regularly communicate with the CC and CAM. It is acceptable for a Consortium member to be responsible for more than one fundamental element, depending on how the Consortium is formed and program responsibility is divided. The IPA will also serve as the representative on the CMC.
- **Local Program Coordinator (LPC):** In a few cases, DOD STEM programs/components have site-specific government employees who provide localized management/oversight at a DoD laboratory or research facility. In these cases, that person is designated the LPC and at times, will communicate directly with the IPA administering their fundamental element(s). However, only the CAM can make decisions concerning the COA.
- **Cooperative Management Committee (CMC):** The DSEC will have a CMC that includes a representative from each member of the Consortium. The CAM participates as an ex officio member in all discussions except those that deal with purely internal Consortium matters. The CMC will be chaired by the CC. Each Consortium Member will have one vote on the CMC to support programmatic and management-related activities and decisions. In the event of a tie, the Recipient will cast the deciding vote. The CMC

will be responsible for the management and integration of the Consortium's efforts under the DSEC COA, to include programmatic, technical, reporting, financial, and administrative matters. The CMC makes recommendations that concern the membership of the Consortium, the definition of the tasks, and goals of the Consortium. Quarterly meetings will be conducted by the CMC.

- **Articles of Collaboration** will be established by the Consortium and submitted with the application. A sample is attached (Appendix). *The Articles of Collaboration* define the operational structure within the Consortium.
- **Annual Program Plan (APP):** As part of the application, applicants will submit an initial program plan (IPP) for the first year of the DSEC COA and an APP template. The IPP will include a 5-year roadmap which describes the overall plan to be accomplished by the Consortium. The roadmap should provide a detailed description of a well-coordinated plan of program execution, focused on DoD STEM priorities and objectives as outlined in this FOA. It should provide approximate timelines, to the best possible extent for the various components and activities. The APP template will be proposed by the applicant and reviewed as a part of the evaluation criteria.

Every year after the first year of the award, the Consortium will work with the Government, through the CAM, in developing an APP prior to the start of the program cycle. The CAM will approve the APP and formally submit to the Grants Officer for incorporation into the cooperative agreement. This process will continue through the life of the cooperative agreement. Each APP will cover a one-year timeframe, but may be altered, with the approval of the CAM and the Grants Officer, if work requirements change. Information to consider for the APP is execution planning, projected 3 year targets, etc. Funding will not be released until an approved APP is in place. Additionally, annual funding is contingent upon Congressional approval of the Federal budget.

The Consortium, as an entity, will not solicit or accept funding from outside sources without the approval of the CAM and the Grants Officer. During the period of performance of the COA, the Grants Officer, in coordination with the CAM, will have approval authority for certain changes to the IPP/APP including but not limited to:

1. Changes in the scope or the objective of the program or IPP/APP;
2. Change in the key personnel of the Consortium;
3. The need for additional Federal funding; and
4. Any sub-recipient, transfer, or contracting out of program performance under an award, unless described in the IPP/APP.

During the period of performance of the COA, the Grants Officer, in coordination with the CAM, will have approval authority for certain specific changes to the cooperative agreement including, but not limited to:

1. Changes to the Articles of Collaboration, if such changes substantially alter the relationship of the parties as originally agreed upon;

2. Solicitation or acceptance of funding under the agreement from sources other than DoD; and
 3. Changes in Consortium membership.
- **Annual Program Review (APR):** With CAM approval, the Consortium will be responsible for coordinating and participating in a year-end APR to the DoD to present the results and achievements of the previous program cycle and to propose plans for the following year. The program review will foster interactions and collaborations among all consortium members and the Government. A proposed APR format/template will be included in each application to be reviewed and included in the evaluation of the application.
 - **Quarterly Reviews:** In coordination with (ICW) the CAM, the Consortium will establish quarterly consortium meetings with a minimum of one in-person meeting (preferably year-end program reviews). The quarterly meetings will provide the Consortium and the CAM the opportunity to share best practices, address programmatic issues/updates, and synchronize DoD STEM outreach and communications efforts.

The Recipient will work with the Government to ensure that all of the STEM's strategic initiatives are advertised through the centralized DoD website, www.dodstem.us. This website is a Government-owned website which the DSEC will be responsible for maintaining for the life for the program. This website will enable the DoD and the Consortium to ensure all partnership and program information is managed, stored and accessible in a centralized location for efficient and effective dissemination of information. The Recipient will ensure adequate personnel are in place to manage the entire DoD website.

1. For applicable COA efforts, the Recipient will ensure demographic and other program application information is made available to Consortium members and the Government. Program application data may include information that affects an individual's privacy, to include Personally Identifiable Information (PII) data, which will need to be properly safeguarded per the Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-579) as codified in 5 U.S.C. §552a and DoD Regulation 5400.11-R.
 2. The Recipient will coordinate with the CAM on program applications which require synchronization with participating DoD laboratories.
- **Insurance:** The Recipient will carry an insurance policy to cover all student participants participating in COA efforts for each year of performance. Cost of the insurance policy will be included as a specific line item in the budget for the COA. This policy must cover accidental death, accidental dismemberment, and medical expense benefits for participants or survivors of participants. A copy of the most up to date policy will be provided to the CAM.
 - **Compliance:** The Recipient will assure compliance with all applicable federal and state child labor laws, with regards to all DoD STEM fundamental elements.

- **Program Promotion:** The Recipient will develop a plan for cross program promotion to target audience to increase students' participation through DoDs K-16 pipeline of opportunities. The Recipient, in collaboration with the Government, will provide innovative ideas and propose new Consortium Members to further the initiatives of the DoD STEM mission and goals as outlined in this FOA.
- **Metrics:** Performance metrics are to be provided to measure the COA's accomplishments against its priorities and objectives, such as successful integration of goals into all programs, partnerships, and processes; effective integration and use of website and branding; collaboration of all organizations; effectiveness of evaluations, common metrics and data collection; and management of COA.

B. PROGRAM EVALUATIONS: DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND REPORTS

Overview: Aligned with the Federal Strategic Plan and the DoD STEM Strategic Plan, the Government requires the evaluation of all DoD STEM programs based on specific metrics and evidence-based approaches to achieve key objectives of DoD outreach; increased efficiency and coherence; ability to share and leverage best practices; as well as focus on DoD STEM priorities and core objectives. DoD strives to make programmatic decisions driven by data and analysis through its evaluations efforts. While current evaluation efforts have focused on documenting activities and outputs, indications of potential near-term outcomes through annual evaluations of STEM programs have been inconsistent and intermittent. The Government requires the incorporation of mid to long-term impacts of STEM alumni that previously participated in STEM programs. Additionally, periodic program effectiveness through an external third party evaluator may be appropriate.

The Recipient is responsible for ensuring a cohesive and coordinated evaluation strategy across all elements of the STEM programs. A centralized evaluation is required to satisfy key Federal guidelines for rigorous evaluation, in that it:

- Is conducted by capable professionals who are external to program administrators and their institutions, to assure confidence in the objectivity of the evaluation.
- Strives to (1) assess whether programs are making satisfactory progress toward STEM program objectives; (2) recommend reasonable, evidence-based adjustments to programming; and (3) provide indications of potential program effects.
- Employs study- designed methods that are appropriate, aligned to the evaluation objectives and data assessment tools, and account for the varying developmental stages of STEM programs and objectives.

The following requirements are to be addressed in an application for this fundamental element:

Program Evaluations: The Consortium will be responsible for developing and managing the program evaluations to include design and instrumentation, data collection and analysis, and the generation of annual evaluation reports. Overall evaluations are a STEM-wide effort and the Government envisions each Consortium member to be an integral part of the process and

execution. The DoD website, and proposed application and survey tools will be used as the primary method to collect data from STEM program participants. The Consortium is responsible for assuring that complete and accurate participant data are reflected in the data collection and program evaluations. In addition to the student information collected from the DSEC centralized application and evaluation surveys, the Consortium should include in their application the types of quantitative and qualitative data from students, teachers, mentors, and other participants in their individual program(s) it plans to collect. As the subject matter expert and lead on evaluations and data collection, the Recipient is responsible for guiding evaluation efforts, including collection, synthesis, interpretation, reporting of data, and overall development of the evaluation strategy.

Information to consider should be a clear execution strategy for individual program evaluations and for all of DSEC, proposed assessment tools for each program as well as common metrics across DSEC, and, a timeline of execution to include data collection, analysis, and report writing.

The application should detail a sufficient number of personnel with the appropriate skills and expertise to meet program evaluation requirements. The application should also address the following near, mid, and long term outcomes and impacts:

Near Term Outcomes	Mid and Long-term Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Increased student interest and engagement in STEM (formal and informal) · Increased participant STEM competencies (STEM skills, knowledge, abilities, and confidence) · Increased participant awareness of, and interest in, DSEC opportunities · Increased participant awareness of, and interest in, STEM research and careers · Increased participant awareness of, and interest in, DoD STEM research and careers · S&E Mentors’ impact on DSEC participants · Changes in teacher approaches to teaching about STEM concepts, practices, and careers in their classrooms · Implementation of evidence-based recommendations to improve programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Sustained student appreciation of STEM and DoD STEM · Increased student pursuit of DSEC opportunities and DoD workforce development programs · Increased student pursuit of STEM coursework in secondary and post-secondary schooling · Increased student pursuit and achievement of STEM degrees · Increased student pursuit and achievement of STEM careers · Increased student pursuit and achievement of DoD STEM careers · Continuous improvement and sustainability of the DSEC

C. OUTREACH/COMMUNICATIONS

Overview: A comprehensive and coordinated overarching outreach strategy is essential to the

successful management, execution and measurement of the DoD STEM programs. The primary objective of the outreach strategy is to promote DoD STEM as a coordinated and cohesive effort offering students and teachers a pipeline of STEM educational opportunities, sparking an early interest in STEM subjects by providing hands-on learning, and maintaining that interest through STEM competitions, summer enrichment activities, and competitive apprenticeships. In order to meet DoD STEM goals, outreach strategies and tactics should be designed to influence and educate K-College students, educators and other key stakeholders about the STEM educational opportunities available across the DoD STEM continuum, including DoD STEM career opportunities, while increasing participation among historically underserved/and underrepresented populations (Goal 4.0, DoD STEM Strategic Plan).

The following requirements are to be addressed in an application for this fundamental element:

Outreach and Communications Strategy: The application should define a sufficient number of personnel with the appropriate skills and expertise to ensure the proactive and successful execution of the overall outreach communications plan. This plan should detail how the applicant intends to synchronize and coordinate with IPAs to ensure the successful implementation of the outreach and communications strategy; manage and execute internal communications through collaboration tools, weekly messages to Consortium members, newsletter, etc.; develop and implement coordinated outreach/communications campaigns that leverage IPAs and their networks to increase awareness of as well as engagement and participation (e.g. through webinars, social media strategies and tactics, etc.); manage and maintain the DoD public-facing website, www.dodstem.us, ensuring program information, DSEC News and other website content are accurate and up-to-date. The Recipient will also need to detail how it plans on communicating DSEC milestones and successes through the development and dissemination of program press releases on a regular basis; conduct media relations and outreach, increasing visibility and awareness of DoD STEM programs and identifying relevant media engagements for DSEC personnel; establish and maintain a blog that allows DSEC stakeholders (e.g., DoD leadership, past STEM participants) to voice their opinions and share their experiences, plan, manage, and execute DSEC's social media presence and strategy; and develop, implement, and maintain a comprehensive calendar of DoD STEM events and posted on www.dodstem.us.

In close collaboration with the Government, develop a plan for the overall strategic outreach and communications campaign in support of DoD STEM priorities and goals. The Recipient will coordinate with the CAM to develop, manage, and execute the annual strategic communications plan and vision (in coordination with the DoD and IPAs that aligns with DoD STEM objectives and priorities); develop, manage, and execute an annual communications schedule/editorial calendar (in coordination with DoD and IPAs; based on program year); plan, manage, and execute an integrated Social Media Strategy; and establish a communication infrastructure that is efficient and scalable to strengthen DoD STEM's engagement with target audiences across multiple platforms integrating the website, traditional and social media channels.

Purchases and contracting: The applicant should detail the process in which the purchase and contracting of services, items, and collateral required to support the outreach and communications plan. All such purchases must be in compliance with federal fiscal laws and

will be approved by the CAM. These purchases can include, but are not limited to:

- Graphic Design Services
- Web Design Services
- Print/Press Production
- Promotional Materials/Informational Items
- Outreach Suite/Memberships
- Video Production Services
- Web Domain Fee and Maintenance

D. STEM ALUMNI MANAGEMENT

Overview: Over time, the DSEC programs and partnerships will generate a large pool of talented, highly-skilled STEM alumni who have benefitted from participating in DoD-sponsored STEM programs. STEM alumni management efforts will capitalize on the outcomes and successes of its programs, which can most effectively be accessed and shared through its alumni network. The best testimonial to the value of DoD STEM programs are previous and current program participants, their educational and professional pathways and the experiences they can share with the greater STEM network. The Government believes that previous and current program participants are best suited to serve as role models and ambassadors for the DoD STEM programs they participated in. Therefore, STEM alumni management efforts will provide the Government a way to access, connect, exchange, and share information that is relevant to current and future DoD STEM generations.

STEM Alumni Management: The Recipient will work with the Government to develop a strategy and tactics that will establish and grow the STEMs alumni database. The Applicant should consider innovative ways to accomplish the development of a STEM alumni network that allows the DSEC and the Government to engage in a mutually beneficial connection to each other and DoD STEM programs, support and advance the DoD STEM eminence for future generations and to stimulate continued interest in DoD STEM programs, and share how they benefitted from the hands-on STEM experiences, competitions.

STEM Alumni Study: The Applicant should include in the application a proposed study (herein referred to as alumni study) with alumni to ascertain the current status, achievement, attitudes, and future aspirations of STEM alumni, and assess the extent to which alumni perceive their participation in a STEM program as contributing to these factors. This study would evaluate the extent to which STEM is successful in achieving its longer term objectives through assessing mid- and long-term outcomes. The infrastructure developed for this study could then be used (as resources are available) to support longitudinal tracking and study of these same alumni over the next 5-7 years (herein referred to as longitudinal study). Because such a small proportion of alumni are (historically) retained in the DoD STEM pipeline, the infrastructure established for the alumni study could provide a new mechanism for tracking alumni and studying changes in outcomes over time after they leave the DoD STEM pipeline or do not otherwise participate in DoD STEM annual evaluation studies.

The Applicant will consider a strategic implementation plan with timelines and processes, proposed work with target outcomes for the program year, and 3-year outlook with initial year as baseline.

E. STRATEGIC OUTREACH INITIATIVES

Overview: DoD STEM aims to grow its strategic outreach initiatives in an effort to expand its reach of its programs, to increase program awareness and impact as well as participation from diverse populations. The Government is looking to explore and adapt innovative ways to form mutually beneficial relationships with likeminded organizations that have similar STEM goals, specifically serving students from underserved and underrepresented populations and military dependents. In collaboration with STEM partners and by sharing information, leveraging strong STEM networks, and building on already existing relationships, the Government intends to promote its portfolio of opportunities to better meet objectives, maximize impact, and provide more enriching STEM opportunities for students.

DSEC Programs and Partnerships: The Applicant should consider a Consortium to be composed of like-minded organizations that align with the DoD K-16 STEM education and outreach goals and strategies (http://www.acq.osd.mil/rd/publications/docs/DoD_STEM_Strategic_Plan_2015_1022_final.pdf). The Consortium should be comprised of organizations to accomplish the following goals:

1. Collaborate with STEM partners and leverage strong STEM networks. This could include, but is not limited to, internships/hands on research experiences at colleges or universities, partnerships with local/regional/national science and engineering expos or festivals, etc.
2. Promote and integrate portfolio of STEM opportunities within the framework of partners' existing STEM programming.
3. Enhance the educational experiences of underrepresented and military-dependent K-12 students, their parents, and teachers. These programs may include teacher professional development and student-focused programs in the formal and informal domains. Formal programs provide curriculum-based content and activities while informal programs provide after-school and summer enrichment.
4. Coordinate with the Government to leverage existing and new partnerships to execute STEM activities such as virtual competitions and challenges at the K-16 level. These competitions and challenges should include areas of, but are not limited to, robotics, mathematics, artificial intelligence, etc.

Expositions/Symposia/Events: The Applicant should explain how it proposes to encourage STEM program participants to engage in scientific meetings/technical symposia to showcase

their STEM achievements and receive recognition. Participation in scientific meetings/technical symposia will expand and enrich educational experiences of STEM students by interacting and networking with STEM professionals in the field, exploring a variety of STEM disciplines and careers, gaining experience in communicating their research accomplishments, and serving as STEM ambassadors. This could be accomplished in the following ways, however the applicant is also expected to propose other technique(s) to accomplish this as well:

1. Partner with technical associations and organizations that are willing to support STEM program participants and offer them a platform to present their research.
2. Develop a fair and equitable process that identifies STEM students who are invited to attend technical symposia to present their research accomplishments.
3. Ensure that STEM students who benefit from this opportunity provide an executive summary of their experience.
4. Highlight STEM student presenters through internal and external communications efforts.

Military Dependent Children and Families: In close collaboration with the Government, develop a strategy and tactics to engage and increase participation of military dependents in STEM programs through the following means:

1. In collaboration with CAM, establish a line of communication with DoDEA to specifically target DoD military-dependent students and their teachers, and to make them aware of DoD STEM opportunities and careers.
2. Target Child, Youth and School services at military installations to promote STEM programs and increase participation of military-dependent students in these programs.
3. Partner with military-focused organizations and associations to create awareness of and engage military families in STEM opportunities.

Develop a plan with established objectives and recommend measurable impacts in support of engaging and retaining interest of students from underserved and underrepresented populations.

At least 80% of funding allocation should fund Fundamental Element 5, the Strategic Outreach Initiatives. The budget should clearly show this allocation.

F. PROGRAM TRANSITION

The current COA will conclude 14 August 2018. The DoD intends to make a single award to the DSEC COA on or about 1 August 2018 to allow a transitional period between the Recipient of

the current cooperative agreement and the new consortium formed by the Recipient of this award. Upon award, the Recipient will work immediately with the CAM to develop a transition plan with the existing agreement Recipient to include transfer of any intellectual and physical properties, and plans for continuation/phase out of ongoing programs and partnerships.

Specific items, but not all inclusive, to be transitioned to the Recipient are listed below:

1. Domain management of www.dodstem.us.
2. Social media accounts administrative rights.
3. Transfer of any physical or electronic outreach or promotional materials
4. Ongoing programs that have not concluded and will need to be continued to completion under this award
5. Communication strategy of transition to the public, partners, DoD, and other stakeholders
6. All historical documentation regarding program reviews, strategic docs, financial docs, and other historical documentation

G. FUNDING

The projected scope of the cooperative agreement is approximately \$82 million over the course of five (5) years. The Defense Laboratories Office (DLO) within the Office of the USD(R&E) will execute the DoD’s strategy to take a coordinated and cohesive approach to its STEM investments. Table 1 presents the estimated annual funding for the DSEC COA over the potential five year period of performance. The projected funding includes all costs associated with the COA. This information should be used as a guide by applicants when developing an application.

Table 1. Estimated Annual Funding over the Period of Performance

Period	Amount
FY18	Up to \$7,000,000
FY19	Up to \$15,000,000
FY20	Up to \$15,000,000
FY21	Up to \$15,000,000
FY22	Up to \$15,000,000
FY23	Up to \$15,000,000
T O T A L	Up to \$82,000,000

The LO will invoice the DoD for approved program funds of each of the fundamental elements and then distribute funds to all Consortium members accordingly.

Prior to award, the Recipient and all consortium members will establish and maintain an approved accounting system in accordance with 2 CFR 200.302.. This system will include comprehensive documentation for audit purposes to justify allocation of costs for each fundamental element and tasks performed, and for operation of the administrative program management office(s).

The Recipient will provide quarterly a Federal Financial Report (SF 425).

The Recipient will provide a compiled annual financial report to the CAM electronically. The report will summarize (a) by cost element the total funds programmed and expended during the year for the administrative management offices, (b) the funded and expended costs for each fundamental element, including information about additional/supplemental funding received from federal partners, (c) by cost element the total funds programmed and expended during the year for any subprograms within the components, including additional/supplemental funding received from other sources. This report will be due no later than 60 calendar days after the completion of each program cycle.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

The Applicant selected for this single award will be notified by the Grants Officer or his/her designee via email. Once notified the selected Applicant will be required to sign the cooperative agreement. The award is not official until each Consortium Member on the Applicant's application and the Grants Officer have signed the cooperative agreement.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligibility Applicants:

. Applicants are reminded that formation of a Consortium is a requirement in order to be responsive to this FOA. All Consortium Members are expected to have significant involvement and input into the program. The Lead Organizations will be charged with spearheading the efforts to meet previously identified goals and in managing overall efforts in program evaluations, communications and outreach. Additionally, applicants are expected to consider carefully the construct of their proposed consortium to ensure clarity of each member's area(s) of responsibility and in providing flexibility when and where necessary, to efficiently achieve the goals in support of program priorities.

To be qualified, potential Consortium Members must:

- be judged to have adequate financial and technical resources, given those that would be made available through the cooperative agreement, to execute the program of activities envisioned,
- have no known recent record of lack of responsibility or serious deficiency in executing such programs or activities,
- have no known recent record indicating a lack of integrity or business ethics
- be otherwise qualified and eligible to receive an award under applicable laws and regulations.

To prevent the existence of bias and unfair competitive advantage resulting from conflicting rules, Applicants must identify in their application any organizational conflict of interests (OCI) which may exist. If an Applicant has an actual or potential OCI, their application must identify the OCI and the mitigation plan to address it. Silence on this topic in an application will be understood to mean there is no OCI with the Applicant.

Subawardees:

The Consortium may be augmented with subawardees to meet the objectives of this effort, especially for the efforts for which they are particularly qualified.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching:

Cost sharing or matching is not required to be responsive to this FOA as cost sharing is not an evaluation factor.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

This FOA may be accessed via the following websites:

- Grants.gov (www.grants.gov)
- Federal Business Opportunities (www.fbo.gov)
- ARL website <http://www.arl.army.mil/www/default.cfm?page=8>

Amendments to this FOA, if any, will be posted to these websites when they occur. Interested parties are encouraged to periodically check these websites for updates and amendments.

The following information is for those wishing to respond to the FOA:

1. Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures

This section provides the application submission and receipt instructions for DoD program applications. Please read the following instructions carefully and completely.

DoD is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. For this funding opportunity, DoD requires applicants to submit their applications online through Grants.gov. This funding opportunity may be found on Grants.gov by going to the Grants.gov Search Grants screen and entering the funding opportunity number for this FOA, **W911NF-18-S-0008, in the Funding Opportunity search box**. You can also search for the CFDA Number 12.560.

2. How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

- a. *Instructions:* Read the instructions below about registering to apply for DoD funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number, active System for Award Management (SAM) registration, and Grants.gov account to apply for grants.

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but DUNS and SAM registrations may take several weeks. Therefore, an organization's registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the entity's ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Complete organization instructions can be found on Grants.gov here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

- 1) *Obtain a DUNS Number:* All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a DUNS Number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). Applicants must enter the DUNS Number in the data entry field labeled "Organizational DUNS" on the Standard Form (SF)-424 form. For more detailed instructions for obtaining a DUNS Number, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>
- 2) *Register with SAM:* All organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually. For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>
- 3) *Create a Grants.gov Account:* The next step is to register an account with Grants.gov. Follow the on-screen instructions or refer to the detailed instructions here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>
- 4) *Add a Profile to a Grants.gov Account:* A profile in Grants.gov corresponds to a single applicant organization the user represents (i.e., an applicant) or an individual applicant. If you work for or consult with multiple organizations and have a profile for each, you may log in to one Grants.gov account to access all of your grant applications. To add an organizational profile to your Grants.gov account, enter the DUNS Number for the organization in the DUNS field while adding a profile. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/add-profile.html>
- 5) *EBiz POC Authorized Profile Roles:* After you register with Grants.gov and create an Organization Applicant Profile, the organization applicant's request for Grants.gov roles and access is sent to the EBiz POC. The EBiz POC will

then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been assigned the AOR role. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>

6) *Track Role Status*: To track your role request, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>

b. *Electronic Signature*: When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization applicant with the AOR role that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC **must** authorize people who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as a user with the AOR role; **this step is often missed, and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

3. **How to Submit an Application to DoD via Grants.gov**

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement (FOA), you can create individual instances of a workspace.

Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>

a. *Create a Workspace*: Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.

b. *Complete a Workspace*: Add participants to the workspace to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the state of your application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.

1) *Adobe Reader*: If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

- 2) *Mandatory Fields in Forms:* In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.
 - 3) *Complete SF-424 Fields First:* The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and DUNS Number. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.
- c. *Submit a Workspace:* An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package **at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date** to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.
 - d. *Track a Workspace Submission:* After successfully submitting a workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the Track My Application page under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>

Applicant Support: Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist the DoD with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

4. Content and Form of Application Submission

Application forms and instructions will be available at Grants.gov. To access these materials, go to <http://www.grants.gov>, select "Apply for Grants", and then select "Download an Application Package." Enter the funding opportunity number, W911NF-18-S-0008 or search by the CFDA Number 12.560.

Applicants must complete the mandatory forms and any optional forms (e.g., SF-LLL Disclosure

of Lobbying Activities) in accordance with the instructions on the forms and the additional instructions below. The required fields should be completed in accordance with the “pop-up” instructions on the forms. To activate the instructions, turn on the “Help Mode” (icon with the pointer and question mark at the top of the form). Files that are attached to the forms must be in Adobe Portable Document Form (PDF) unless otherwise specified in this announcement.

The following formatting rules apply for the file attachments:

- Paper size when printed – 8.5 x 11 inch paper
- Margins – 1 inch
- Spacing – Single
- Font – No Smaller than Times New Roman, 12 point

Form: SF 424 (R&R) (Mandatory) – Complete this form first to populate data in other forms. Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) usernames and passwords serve as “electronic signatures” when your organization submits applications through Grants.gov. By using the SF 424 (R&R), applicants are providing the certification required by 32 CFR Part 28 regarding lobbying.

Form: Research & Related Other Project Information - Complete questions 1 through 6 and attach files.

- **Project Summary/Abstract (Field 7 on the form)** - The Project Summary should be a brief abstract that summarizes the content of the application. The project summary should provide a brief summary of the applicant’s strategy and implementation plan to address the requirements of this FOA. **The project summary must not exceed 5 pages.** Pages in excess of the page limit may be removed for the evaluation of the application.
- **Project Narrative (Field 8 on the form)** - Chapters and Numbers of pages – Field 7 is to contain the chapters set forth below and may not exceed the stipulated page counts for those chapters. Pages in excess of the page limits may be removed for the evaluation of the application. All chapters set forth below should be in a single PDF file. For those chapters with specified page limitations, any pages submitted beyond the specified amount for a chapter will not be reviewed or evaluation.

Chapter 1: Technical Component. The pages included in Chapter 1 are to be numbered. Applicants are advised that Chapter 1 **will not exceed 50 pages**, utilizing one side of the page. Tables that extend beyond one page (fold out tables) will only count as one page. The application must include a discussion of the strategy and the implementation plan to be employed to advance DoD’s STEM mission. Proposed templates for IPP, APP, and APR will not count towards the page limit. The application must also clearly:

- a. Describe how the Applicant will address the requirements in each of the DSEC fundamental elements on this FOA and how efforts across the Consortium will collectively lend to achieving the objectives specified in this FOA.

b. Propose detailed activities to address projected benchmarks (where applicable) for all fundamental elements and reference which priority (may be more than one) and goals are being addressed; provide evidence that the proposed activities are likely to result in advancing DoD's STEM programs and in meeting/exceeding projected benchmarks.

c. Discuss the Consortium's network and proposed innovative activities to leverage the Consortium's reach in promoting STEM opportunities to students especially those from underserved/underrepresented populations.

Chapter 2: Management. The pages included in Chapter 2 must be numbered. Applicants are advised that Chapter 2 of the application **must not exceed 20 pages**. The application must include a detailed plan for leadership and effective management of the DSEC cooperative agreement, creation of a collaborative environment, and organizational structures. The application must include plans on how each member of the Consortium will collaborate within each fundamental element of this FOA and across all of the DSEC. The application must describe the processes and tools to facilitate collaboration. The application must describe the strategy for collaborating with the CAM(s) and other Government POCs, to ensure programs efficiently executed. The application must demonstrate flexibility in adjusting proposed activities to address any changes to the DoD and/or Federal STEM Strategic Plans. The application must also identify key personnel positions for the Consortium.

Chapter 3: Past Performance. The pages included in Chapter 3 shall be numbered. Applicants are advised that Chapter 3 of the application **must not exceed 10 pages**, utilizing one side of the page. This does not include past performance questionnaires.

Chapter 4: Credentials. Credentials **must not exceed 10 pages** but does not include the resumes or biographical sketches of individuals. Biographical sketches are to be limited to two (2) pages per individual, and should be included for at least the LO, CC, CMC, and IPAs. The application must include the names, biographies, and availability of key personnel who will be involved in overseeing the management of the program. The application is to demonstrate how the aggregate skills/expertise across the Consortium provides required breadth and depth to effectively meet program requirements and advance DoD's STEM education goals.

Chapter 5: Cost Component. The pages included in Chapter 3 will be numbered and does not have a page limitation. Cost Application must include a budget for the entire period of performance. The Consortium will be requested to provide an annual budget breakdown by each fundamental element on this FOA. The cost portion of the application will contain cost estimates sufficiently detailed for meaningful evaluation. Budget justification may also be attached in this chapter. For budget purposes, assume a performance start date of 1 August 2018. Before award it must be established that an approved accounting system and financial management system exist.

For all applications, the budget details should include:

a. Direct Labor: Show the current and projected salary amounts in terms of man-hours, man- months, or annual salary to be charged by the personnel performing under this agreement either by personnel or position. State the number of man-hours used to calculate a man-month or man-year. For each person or position, provide the following information:

- i. The basis for the direct labor hours or percentage of effort (e.g., historical hours or estimates);
- ii. The basis for the direct labor rates or salaries. Labor costs should be predicted upon current labor rates or salaries. These rates may be adjusted upward for forecast salary or wage cost-of-living increases that will occur during the agreement period. The cost application should separately identify the rationale applied to base salary/wage for cost-of- living adjustments and merit increases. Each must be fully explained;
- iii. The portion of time to be devoted to the requirements of the agreement;
- iv. The total annual salary charged to the agreement; and
- v. Any details that may affect the salary during the project, such as plans for leave and/or remuneration while on leave.

Note: There is no page limitation for budget applications or budget justifications.

b. Fringe Benefits and Indirect Costs (Overhead, G&A, and Other): The most recent rates, dates of negotiation, the base(s) and periods to which the rates apply must be disclosed and a statement included identifying whether the proposed rates are provisional or fixed. If the rates have been negotiated by a Government agency, state when and by which agency. A copy of the negotiation memorandum should be provided. If negotiated forecast rates do not exist, applicants must provide sufficient detail to enable a determination to be made that the costs included in the forecast rate are allocable according to applicable cost provisions. Applicants' disclosure should be sufficient to permit a full understanding of the content of the rate(s) and how it was established. As a minimum, the submission should identify:

- i. All individual cost elements included in the forecast rate(s);
- ii. Basis used to prorate indirect expenses to cost pools, if any;
- iii. How the rate(s) was calculated;
- iv. Distribution basis of the developed rate(s);
- v. Basis on which the overhead rate is calculated, such as "salaries and wages" or "total costs;" and

vi. The period of the applicant's FY.

c. Permanent Equipment: If facilities or equipment are required, a justification why this property should be furnished by the Government must be submitted. State the organization's inability or unwillingness to furnish the facilities or equipment. Applicants must provide an itemized list of permanent equipment showing the cost for each item. Permanent equipment is any article or tangible nonexpendable property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit. The basis for the cost of each item of permanent equipment included in the budget must be disclosed, such as:

- i. Vendor Quote: Show name of vendor, number of quotes received and justification, if intended award is to other than lowest bidder.
- ii. Historical Cost: Identify vendor, date of purchase, and whether or not cost represents lowest bid. Include reason(s) for not soliciting current quotes.
- iii. Engineering Estimate: Include rationale for quote and reason for not soliciting current quotes.

If applicable, the following additional information shall be disclosed in the applicant's cost application:

- iv. Special test equipment to be fabricated by the recipient for specific requirements in the agreement.
- v. Standard equipment to be acquired and modified to meet specific requirements, including acquisition and modification costs, listed separately.
- vi. Existing equipment to be modified to meet specific research requirements, including modification costs. Do not include equipment the organization will purchase with its funds if the equipment will be capitalized for Federal income tax purposes. Proposed permanent equipment purchases during the final year of an award shall be limited and fully justified.
- vii. Grants and cooperative agreements may convey title to an eligible institution for equipment purchased with project funds. At the discretion of the Contracting/Grants Officer, the agreement may provide for retention of the title by the Government or may impose conditions governing the equipment conveyed to the organization per the governing laws and regulations.

d. Travel: Forecasts of travel expenditures (domestic and foreign) that identify the destination and the various cost elements (airfare, mileage, per diem rates, etc.) must be submitted. The costs should be in sufficient detail to determine the reasonableness of such costs. Allowance for air travel normally will not exceed the cost of round-trip,

economy air accommodations. Specify the type of travel and its relationship to the requirements of the agreement. Additional travel may be requested for travel to DoD laboratories and facilities to enhance agreement objectives and to achieve technology transfer.

e. Participant Support Costs: This budget category refers to costs of transportation, per diem, stipends, and other related costs for participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with DoD-sponsored conferences, meetings, symposia, training activities, and workshops. Generally, indirect costs are not allowed on participant support costs. The number of participants to be supported should be entered in the parentheses on the budget form. These costs should also be justified in the budget justification page(s) attached to the cost application.

f. Materials, Supplies, and Consumables: A general description and total estimated cost of expendable equipment and supplies are required. The basis for developing the cost estimate (vendor quotes, invoice prices, engineering estimate, purchase order history, etc.) must be included. If possible, provide a material list.

g. Publication, Documentation, and Dissemination: The budget may request funds for the costs of preparing, publishing, or otherwise making available to others the findings and products of the work conducted under an agreement, including costs of reports, reprints, page charges, or other journal costs (except costs for prior or early publication); necessary illustrations, cleanup, documentation, storage, and indexing of data and databases; and development, documentation, and debugging of software.

h. Consultant Costs: Applicants normally are expected to utilize the services of their own staff to the maximum extent possible in managing and performing the project's effort. If the need for consultant services is anticipated, the nature of proposed consultant services should be justified and included in the technical application narrative. The cost application should include the names of consultant(s), primary organizational affiliation, each individual's expertise, daily compensation rate, number of days of expected service, and estimated travel and per diem costs.

i. Computer Services: The cost of computer services, including computer-based retrieval of scientific, technical, and educational information, may be requested. A justification/explanation based on the established computer service rates at the proposing organization should be included. The budget also may request costs, which must be shown to be reasonable, for leasing automatic data processing equipment. The purchase of computers or associated hardware and software should be requested as items of equipment.

j. Subawards (Subcontracts or Subgrants): A precise description of services or materials that are to be awarded by a subaward must be provided. For subawards totaling \$10,000 or more, provide the following specific information:

- i. A clear description of the work to be performed;

ii. If known, the identification of the proposed subawardee and an explanation of why and how the subawardee was selected or will be selected;

iii. The identification of the type of award to be used (cost reimbursement, fixed price, etc.);

iv. Whether or not the award will be competitive and, if noncompetitive, rationale to justify the absence of competition; and

v. A detailed cost summary.

k. *ODCs*: Itemize and provide the basis for proposed costs for other anticipated direct costs such as communications, transportation, insurance, and rental of equipment other than computer related items. Unusual or expensive items must be fully explained and justified.

l. *Profit/Fee*: Profit/fee is not allowed for the recipient of or subaward to an assistance instrument, where the principal purpose of the activity to be carried out is to stimulate or support a public purpose (i.e., to provide assistance), rather than acquisition (i.e., to acquire goods and services for the direct benefit of the Government). A subaward is an award of financial assistance in the form of money, or property in lieu of money, made under a DoD grant or cooperative agreement by a recipient to an eligible subrecipient. The term includes financial assistance for substantive program performance by the subrecipient of a portion of the program for which the DoD grant or cooperative agreement was made. It does not include the recipient's procurement of goods and services needed to carry out the program.

All Consortium Members included in the Cost Application are to provide detailed information on all cost elements included in their proposed budgets to the Lead Organization as part of the Application submission process.

Bibliography and Reference Cited (Field 9 on the form) – Attach a listing of applicable publications cited in above sections.

Facilities and Other Resources (Field 10 on the form) - The applicant is to include a listing of facilities and other resources available to support the application. Any Government resources necessary for performance are to be clearly identified. Attach this information at Field 10.

Equipment (Field 11 on the form) - The applicant is to include a listing of equipment available to support the application. Any Government equipment necessary for performance is to be clearly identified. Attach this information at Field 11.

Other Attachments (Field 12 on the form) are as follows:

1. Attach the completed Application Cover Sheet.

2. Attached the completed certifications.
3. Attach any exceptions or conditions.
4. Attach the signed Articles of Collaboration (AoC) for all Members. AoC will not be included in the page count.
5. **FORM: SF-424 Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) (Mandatory)** – The Degree Type and Degree Year fields on the Research and Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) form will be used by DoD as the source for career information. In addition to the required fields on the form, applicants must complete these two fields for all individuals that are identified as having the project role of PD/PI or Co-PD/PI on the form. Additional senior/key persons can be added by selecting the “Next Person” button
6. **FORM: SF-424 (R&R) Personal Data (Mandatory)** - This form will be used by DoD as the source of demographic information, such as gender, race, ethnicity, and disability information for the Project Director/Principal Investigator and all other persons identified as Co-Project Director(s)/Co-Principal Investigator(s). Each application must include this form with the name fields of the Project Director/Principal Investigator and any Co-Project Director(s)/Co-Principal Investigator(s) completed; however, provision of the demographic information in the form is voluntary. If completing the form for multiple individuals, each Co-Project Director/Co-Principal Investigator can be added by selecting the “Next Person” button. The demographic information, if provided, will be used for statistical purposes only and will not be made available to merit reviewers. Applicants who do not wish to provide some or all of the information should check or select the “Do not wish to provide” option.
7. **SF-LLL – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities.** If applicable, attach a complete SF-LLL at Field 11 of the R&R Other Project Information form. Applicability: 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 cooperative agreement, you must complete and submit Standard Form - LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying.”
8. Complete the **Representations under DoD Assistance Agreements: Appropriations Provisions on Tax Delinquency and Felony Convictions** (this can be found under National Policy Requirements)

5. Submission Dates and Times

- a. Applications - Electronic submission of applications through grants.gov are due by 3:00 PM local Durham, NC, USA time 25 June 2018. Applications submitted after the closing date will not be considered or evaluated by the Government.

Application Receipt Notices

Grants.gov: After an application is submitted to Grants.gov, the AOR will receive a series of three emails from Grants.gov. The first two emails will be received within 24 to 48 hours after submission. The first email will confirm time of receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system prior to transmission to the grantor agency or has been rejected due to errors. A third email will be received once the grantor agency has confirmed receipt of the application. Reference https://www.grants.gov/help/html/help/GetStarted/Get_Started.htm from the Grants.gov User Guide for information on how to track your application package.

For the purposes of this FOA, an applicant's application is not considered received by the Government until the AOR receives email #3.

6. Intergovernmental Review

Not applicable

7. Funding Restrictions

There are no specific funding restrictions associated with this FOA (e.g. direct costs, indirect costs, etc.)

8. Other Submission Requirements

The following Application Cover Sheet is required to be submitted by each applicant:

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

1. Information concerning the Consortium Lead Organization:

Technical POC: _____
Phone No.: _____
Fax No.: _____
Email Address: _____

Business POC: _____
Phone No.: _____
Fax No.: _____
Email Address: _____

2. List the names and relationships of all organizations included in the application: *(Please also indicate for each Member the program component they will be responsible for, DUNS and CAGE codes, should the application be selected for award.)*

Consortium Members: _____

Sub awardees: _____

3. Provide a point of contact for each organization included in the Cost Application. *These individuals may be contacted for questions concerning the Cost Application:*

Organization: _____
POC: _____
Phone No.: _____
Email Address _____

Organization: _____
POC: _____
Phone No.: _____
Email Address _____

4. Signature of one person for the Lead Organization and each Consortium Member, authorized to submit an application and bind that organization: *(These signatures may be provided on separate sheets.)*

Organization Name: _____
Signature: _____
Type Name/Title: _____
Date (Application): _____

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. CRITERIA

All information necessary for the review and evaluation of an application must be contained in the application itself. No other material will be provided to the panel. Applications should contain sufficient technical detail to allow for in-depth technical assessment.

An initial review of the applications will be conducted to ensure compliance with the requirements of this FOA. Failure to comply with the requirements of the FOA may result in an application receiving no further consideration for award.

A Selection Assessment Panel (SAP) will review the applications. The SAP, consisting of qualified groups of scientists, managers, and cost specialists, will conduct an assessment of each application and provide the results to the Selecting Official (SO). The SO will review the results to determine if an award can be made from the initial assessment conducted. When it is not possible to award on the initial assessment, the SO will make a decision concerning a competitive range and which applicants to include for discussions.

If discussions are held, the Grants Officer will coordinate with the applicants at that time.

Applications submitted in response to this FOA will be assessed against the criteria set forth below. Cost will be evaluated for realism, reasonableness, and affordability. Panel members will identify strengths, weaknesses and clarifications concerning the application. Information from any and all application volumes may be used for any and all criteria described below.

Definitions:

The following definitions will be used in the review and assessment of applications submitted in response to this FOA.

1) Strength - Strength is an aspect of an application that has merit or exceeds specified performance or capability requirements in a way that will be advantageous to the Government during performance.

2) Weakness - Weakness means a flaw in the application that increases the risk of unsuccessful performance.

3) Clarification - Clarification is defined as limited exchanges between the Government and applicants, for the purpose of enhancing the Government's understanding of applications, without entering into discussions, or requesting a revision to the application.

BASIS FOR AWARD

The Government intends to make one award based upon the integrated assessment of the application that represents the best value to the Government. This assessment will be the result of

a thorough analysis of the application with consideration of all criteria evaluated. The assessment will address the technical merit and affordability assigned to each application to determine which application provides the optimum solution. Therefore the Government may award to other than the highest technically merit rated or the lowest priced applicant. The adjectival merit criteria for the elements are indicated within the section for each element.

Relative Importance of Criteria

The relative importance of the criteria are as indicated: Factor 1 – Plan/Approach to Execution is significantly more important than Factor 2- Management. Factor 2 is more important than Factor 3 – Credentials which is more important than Factor 4 – Past Performance.

1) FACTOR 1 - Plan/Approach to Execution. This factor will focus upon the plan and approach for executing STEM outreach efforts and furthering STEM education and outreach efforts nationwide. The application shall include a detailed discussion on its overall plan/approach to execute each of the five fundamental elements. The plan shall clearly describe its creativity, innovation, feasibility, efficacy to achieve the FOA objectives, and how it links to the DoD STEM Strategic Plan.

The application shall include a discussion on how appropriate STEM program participants will be selected. The application shall clearly address its plan for increasing awareness of DSEC's continuum of opportunities. The application shall also address the process the applicants will use to facilitate transitioning from the current COA to the resulting COA once awarded. The application shall also discuss and provide examples of a proposed initial program plan, annual program plan, and format for annual program review.

The Government's assessment of this element will focus on the degree to which the application sufficiently describes its overall plan and approach to executing the fundamental elements, focusing on how such plans will lead to achieving the FOA objectives. The application shall explain, in detail, the plan to ensure collaboration amongst the consortium organizations and plans to mitigate any conflict between organizations. Each organization under the application should be represented in this explanation of collaboration.

The Government will also assess the adequacy of the proposed plan to increase awareness of DSEC's continuum of opportunities.

2) FACTOR 2 – Management. Evaluation of this factor will focus upon the plan for managing execution of Consortium activities over the lifetime of the DSEC COA. The applicant should demonstrate a viable management approach by providing a feasible, comprehensive management plan considering each of the following items as a minimum: a detailed description of its overall management concept; proposed Articles of Collaboration signed by each consortium member; a detailed description of its methodology and mechanisms for development of a comprehensive program plan; sufficient description of the leadership roles and management to be provided by the CC; management procedures to oversee and maximize progress; management concepts to foster collaboration among components and communication among consortium members to include clearly identifying the consortium member responsible for each component; specifics of

the integration of DoD website into all components/efforts; and controls to assure timely submission and tracking of consortium invoices submitted to the Government.

The Government's assessment of this element will focus on the degree to which the application sufficiently describes its overall management concept; including the proposed Articles of Collaboration signed by each proposed consortium member. The Government will also evaluate the methodology and mechanisms of the proposed comprehensive program plan to ensure that it provides for adequate oversight and management of the DSEC COA in the furtherance of the Government's objectives.

The Government will assess the leadership role/functions and management to be provided by the CC; management procedures to oversee and maximize progress; management concepts to foster collaboration among components and communication among consortium members as well as the assignment of components to consortium members to capitalize on their strengths and maximize efficiency. The Government will assess the degree to which specifics of the integration of DoD website into all components/efforts will be effective and efficient. Lastly, the Government will assess the controls proposed by the applicant to ensure timely submission and tracking of consortium invoices to the Government.

3) FACTOR 3 – Credentials. This factor will focus on the applicant's credentials, as a Lead Organization and the credentials of the Consortium Members (individually and as a whole organizationally) proposed, including, but not limited to, the CC and all IPAs. The application shall include the names, brief biographies and availability of key personnel substantially and meaningfully engaged in the DSEC COA, including, but not limited to the CC and all of the IPAs. The application shall clearly identify the components and/or functions each of the named persons will be responsible for managing.

The Government's assessment of this factor will focus on how the demonstrated education and experience of proposed personnel, as well as their availability, is expected to contribute to the understanding and achievement of the DoD's goals for STEM education and outreach and the goals of the DSEC COA. The Government will assess the application to determine if data has been provided for all key personnel whose performance will significantly impact the successful completion of the requirements outlined in the FOA. The Government will also assess the application to determine if the biography data demonstrates Consortium Members, through their key personnel, have the capability to successfully perform the requirements for the components allocated to them.

4) FACTOR 4 - Past Performance. This factor will focus on previous or current efforts performed by the applicant and its proposed consortium members that demonstrate the ability to successfully perform requirements similar in scope and nature to those outlined in the FOA. The applicant shall include contact information (agency/company name, point of contact, telephone and facsimile numbers, e-mail address, etc.) as well as the project/contract/grant/agreement name and number of three (3) references that can verify and validate its ability to successfully perform the requirements in the FOA. The applicant shall provide a brief description of its ongoing and previous Government Agreements/contracts during the past three (3) years, which are relevant to the effort required in this FOA. Identify in specific detail for each contract/grant/agreement listed

why or how the effort is relevant or similar to the effort required in this FOA. Applicants shall discuss in detail corporate experience solving challenging problems similar to those that may arise with this program. The performance can be of the proposed Lead Organization or its proposed Consortium members. However, since the Lead Organization will be responsible for overall management and administration, its past performance shall clearly demonstrate that it has successfully performed in a similar role in the past three (3) years. Additionally, the past performance for each proposed Consortium member shall clearly demonstrate that it has successfully performed in the area(s) where they will have administrative management control. Applicants are encouraged to include information on performance problems encountered on identified contracts/grants/agreements and the corrective actions taken.

The Government's assessment of this element will result in a performance risk assessment based on the applicant's on-going and prior experience within the last three (3) years. The Government will assess the past performance information provided and determine the performance risk based upon similar efforts to promote STEM education and outreach nationwide. The Government reserves the right to contact references and previous customers to discuss past performance. The combination of the evaluation of relevancy and assessments for projects will then result in an overall performance risk rating. Applicants without a record of relevant past performance or for whom information on past performance is not available, will not be evaluated favorably or unfavorably for this evaluation factor.

5) FACTOR 5 - Cost. This element will not be weighted, but the assessment of this element will consider cost realism, cost reasonableness, and affordability. Applicants shall provide only data under this section that pertains to its cost. No other information will be accepted or analyzed. The Cost Section shall include descriptions of cost estimating techniques and allocation methods, utilized by the applicant. Estimating technique(s) that are used in creating the application shall be clearly identified. Commercially available parametric cost models and in-house developed parametric cost models may be used if available. However, reasonable allocation techniques may be used to spread hours within individual projects in accordance with the applicants existing accounting systems and procedures. For comparison purposes, applicants shall clearly identify labor categories with the number of labor hours and labor rates for both direct and indirect labor. Indicate if the proposed rates are current or projected. If projected, provide the indirect rates for the last three year period. The applicant is to provide its administration office (Defense Contract Administration Office or Office of Naval Research if known) and cognizant Audit Office (if known) and date of last audit. See additional requirements listed at Section D of this document for the cost element.

The Government will analyze the estimated cost proposed by the applicant for performing all the requirements outlined in this FOA to include the rationale used to build the application. The Government will be the sole judge of these determinations. The Government will also consider the cost proposed for subawardees and its overall impact on the total cost. As part of its cost realism analysis the Government may make adjustment to the cost of the total proposed efforts deemed necessary to reflect what the effort should cost. These adjustments will consider the task undertaken and approach proposed. These adjustments may also include upward or downward adjustments to the proposed labor hours, rates, quantity of materials, overhead rates and G&A, etc. The Government will determine the affordability of the application based upon the cost

realism analysis and the anticipated return on its investment (the achievement and enhancement of the overall goals for DSEC).

2. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Applications received in response to the FOA will undergo review to determine technical merit using a selection assessment panel.

The panel will not compare one application against another, but rather assess each application against the requirements of the FOA. The assigned merit consistent with the factors will be derived from the demonstrated ability, as evidenced in the application to perform the work in accordance with all aspects of the requirements outlined in this FOA and from the affordability and realism of the Cost Section. Applications which are unrealistic in term of technical commitments or price, will be deemed to reflect an inherent lack of technical competence or failure to comprehend the complexity and risks of requirements and may be rejected.

While not anticipated, the Government may enter into discussions with the most highly rated applications. Any such discussions may be conducted telephonically or face-to-face at the Applicant's facility. Any such meeting will be coordinated with the Applicant at the appropriate time. If discussions are held, Applicants may be invited to submit an application revision that will be evaluated using the same criteria as the initial Application.

A single award will be made based upon an integrated assessment of the application that represents the best value to the Government. The Government may award to other than the highest technically merit rated or the lowest priced applicant. The Government reserves the right not to make an award should no acceptable application be received for evaluation.

3. RECIPIENT QUALIFICATION

NOTE: Upon implementation of the OMB guidance in 2 CFR part 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards," by DoD, prior to making an award, the DoD is required to review information available through any OMB designated repositories of Government-wide eligibility qualification of financial integrity information, such as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS).

- a. Prior to making an award under this FOA in an amount greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, which currently is \$250,000, the DoD Grants Officer must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313).

- b. An applicant may, at its option, review information currently in FAPIIS (accessible through SAM) and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency (DoD or other federal awarding agency) previously entered.
- c. DoD will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR 200.205, Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants, as implemented by DoD at 2 CFR part 1103.

F. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. AWARD NOTICES

The Applicant whose application is recommended for award may be contacted by a Grants Officer or his/her representative. The notification email must not be regarded as an authorization to commit or expend funds. Award is not made until the cooperative agreement is signed by each Member of the Consortium and the Grants Officer.

The award document signed by the Grants Officer is the official and authorizing award instrument. The authorizing award instrument, signed by the Grants Officer, will be emailed to the PI and AOR.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

- a. Each award under this announcement will be governed by the general award terms and conditions in effect at the time of the award that conform to DoD's implementation of OMB guidance applicable to financial assistance in 2 CFR part 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards." The DoD Research and Development General Terms and Conditions (latest version, September 2017) are located at <https://www.onr.navy.mil/Contracts-Grants/submit-proposal/grants-proposal/grants-terms-conditions>.

These terms and conditions are incorporated by reference in this announcement.

- b. You must comply with all applicable national policy requirements. The key national policy requirements that may relate to an award under this FOA are included in the terms and conditions specified in paragraph 2.a above.
- c. By electronically signing the SF-424, the applicant affirms its agreement with the following certification.

Certification Required for Grant and Cooperative Agreement Awards

The certification at Appendix A to 32 CFR Part 28 regarding lobbying is the only certification required at the time of application submission for a grant or cooperative agreement award. The certification is as follows:

“By signing and submitting an application that may result in the award of a grant exceeding \$100,000, the prospective awardee is certifying, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief that:

- (1) No federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
- (2) 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 employ of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit SF-LLL, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities” in accordance with its instructions.
- (3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, and loans, or cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, Title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty or not less than \$10,000.00 and not more than \$100,000.00 for each failure.

d. Representations Required for Grant and Cooperative Agreement Awards

Appropriations Provisions on Tax Delinquency and Felony Convictions

Check either “is” or “is not” for each of these two representations, as appropriate for the proposing institution, include the AOR signature and point of contact information, and attach the representation page to Field 12 of the SF-424 Research & Related

Other Project Information form. The page for these representations is provided with the application materials that are available for download at Grants.gov.

Representations

The applicant is () is not () a “Corporation” meaning any entity, including any institution of higher education, other nonprofit organization, or for-profit entity that has filed articles of incorporation. If the applicant is a “Corporation” please complete the following representations:

(1) The applicant represents that it is () or is not () a corporation that has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability.

(2) The applicant represents that it is () is not () a corporation that was convicted of a criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months.

NOTE: If an applicant responds in the affirmative to either of the above representations, the applicant is ineligible to receive an award unless the agency suspension and debarment official (SDO) has considered suspension or debarment and determined that further action is not required to protect the Government’s interests. The applicant therefore should provide information about its tax liability or conviction to the agency’s SDO as soon as it can do so, to facilitate completion of the required considerations before award decisions are made.

OMB CONTROL NUMBER: 0704-0494

OMB EXPIRATION DATE: 11/30/2019

AGENCY DISCLOSURE NOTICE

The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 5 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to the Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Executive Services Directorate, Directives Division, 4800 Mark Center Drive, East Tower, Suite 02G09, Alexandria, VA 22350-3100 [0704-0494]. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

Prohibition on Contracting with Entities that Require Certain Internal Confidentiality Agreements

Agreement with the representation below will be affirmed by checking the “I agree” box in block 17 of the SF-424 (R&R) as part of the electronic application submitted via Grants.gov. The representation reads as follows:

By submission of its application, the applicant represents that it does not require any of its employees, contractors, or subrecipients seeking to report fraud, waste, or abuse to sign or comply with internal confidentiality agreements or statements prohibiting or otherwise restricting those employees, contractors, subrecipients from lawfully reporting that waste, fraud, or abuse to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information

Note that: (1) the basis for this representation is a prohibition in Section 743 of the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act, 2015, Pub. L. 113-235) on provision of funds through grants and cooperative agreements to entities with certain internal confidentiality agreements or statements; and (2) Section 743 states that it does not contravene requirements applicable to SF-312, Form 4414, or any other form issued by a Federal department or agency governing the nondisclosure of classified information.

G. AGENCY CONTACTS

Questions regarding program execution and administration should be directed to **ALL THREE** of the following:

- 1) Dr. Syed Shah
Deputy Director, Defense Laboratories Office
syed.a.shah2.civ@mail.mil

- 2) The DoD Grants Specialist is:
Camilo Asuncion
US Army Contracting Command-Aberdeen Proving Ground RTP Division
camilo.b.asuncion.civ@mail.mil

H. OTHER INFORMATION

Applicants are advised that any data or supporting materials submitted to the Government in response to this announcement may be released to non-Government personnel for review and analysis. The participation of these non-government personnel will be limited to offering an opinion, which may be used as a guide by the government evaluators. The exclusive responsibility for merit assessment and application selection will reside solely with the Government. Clearly identified proprietary information submitted in response to this announcement will be protected from unauthorized disclosure as required by 41 U.S.C §423. These individuals will be authorized access only to those portions of the application and discussions that are necessary to enable them to perform their respective duties. Such firms are

expressly prohibited from competing on the subject acquisition.

If the applicant objects to the disclosure of information to non-Government personnel, this applicant shall provide the objection in writing to the Grants Officer. The objection shall include a detailed statement of the basis for the objection and identify specific portions (*i.e.*, page, paragraph and line) of the application of which the applicant objects to disclosure to non-Government personnel.

Incumbent Performer: The effort is currently being performed under Agreement Number FA7000-16-2-0019. The current Recipient is Building Engineering and Science Talent, Inc., 1531 Grant Avenue Suite D, San Marcos, CA 92078-2463.

APPENDIX

1. Sample Articles of Collaboration