

**U.S. Department of Commerce, NIST  
Standardization Center of Excellence, 2024-NIST-SCOE-01**

**Funding Opportunity Description:**

NIST's Standards Coordination Office is seeking applications from eligible applicants for activities to establish and maintain a Standardization Center of Excellence (SCoE) to support U.S. engagement in international standardization for critical and emerging technologies (CETs) that are essential to U.S. economic competitiveness and national security. The scope of this institutional award, as described in the Department of Commerce Grants and Cooperative Agreements Manual, Chapter 6.A.2 (20 April 2021), encompasses all critical areas of standardization such as pre-standardization engagement, measurement standards, reference standards, documentary standards, conformity assessment, and management systems.

**Announcement Type:**

Initial

**Funding Instrument:**

Cooperative Agreement

**Assistance Listing (CFDA Number):**

11.609: Measurement and Engineering Research and Standards

**Award Project Period:** Program performance period of up to five (5) years.

**Goals & Objectives:**

The goal of the program is to create and maintain a Standardization Center of Excellence (SCoE) to support U.S. engagement in international standardization for critical and emerging technologies (CETs) that are essential to U.S. economic competitiveness and national security.

**Topic Areas:**

The SCoE will focus on four broad areas: 1) pre-standardization engagement; 2) workforce capacity building; 3) a collaborative pilot program with NIST in CETs; and 4) creating an information and data sharing hub.

**Eligible Applicants:**

Eligibility for the program listed in this NOFO is open to all nongovernmental organizations (including, but not limited to academic institutions, trade associations, and professional societies), located in the United States or its territories. Eligible applicants include contractors that operate Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) where the applicant is permitted to receive federal financial assistance award funds. Non-domestic (non-U.S.) Entities (Foreign Institutions) are not eligible to apply. Non-domestic (non-U.S.) components of U.S. organizations are not eligible to apply.

**Funding Amount:**

In Fiscal year 2024 (FY24), NIST anticipates funding one (1) award up to \$6,000,000 for the first two (2) years of the award, and then up to \$3,000,000 per year for up to three (3) years, for a total of five (5) years, subject to availability of appropriated funds and satisfactory annual performance review. After (5) five years, upon independent review and evaluation of the program and the recipient, NIST may provide to the recipient additional multi-year funding with performance periods of up to five (5) years. The award of additional performance periods will be on a non-competitive basis as an institutional award.

**Cost Sharing/Matching Requirements:**

Non-federal cost share is not required for awards issued pursuant to this NOFO but is encouraged.

**Estimated Number (can give a range) and Type of Award(s):**

One (1) Cooperative Agreement award.

**Submission Dates and Times:**

Full Applications must be received at Grants.gov no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, August 7, 2024. Applications received after this deadline will not be reviewed or considered.

Applicants should be aware, and factor in their application submission planning, that the Grants.gov system closes periodically for routine maintenance. Applicants should visit Grants.gov for information on any scheduled closures.

NIST expects to complete its review and selection by September 2024. NIST expects the earliest start date for awards under this NOFO to be January 1, 2025.

**How to Apply:**

Applications must be submitted using [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Paper applications will not be accepted.

**Review & Selection Process Summary:**

This NOFO is for a group competition. An initial administrative review will be conducted to determine if the application meets the eligibility requirements and is complete and responsive to the NOFO. Then, at least three (3) independent and objective reviewers will evaluate and score each eligible, complete, and responsive application based on the evaluation criteria outlined in Section V.1. of this NOFO. Applicants may be invited to participate with reviewers in a telephone or virtual conference or a site visit conducted by the same reviewers at the applicant's location. If there is a telephone or virtual conference or site visit, reviewers will be given an opportunity to revise their scores based on the evaluation criteria outlined in Section V.1. of this NOFO as a result of the information obtained. Scoring revisions will be made by reviewers on an individual basis. Based on the numerical average of the reviewers' scores, a rank order will be prepared and provided to the

Selecting Official for further consideration. The Selecting Official will make final award recommendations to the NIST Grants Officer. Final approval of the selected application and the issuance of an award will be made by the NIST Grants Officer. The complete review and selection process is included in Section V.3 of this NOFO. Addition Information: On April 22, 2024, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published updates to the OMB Guidance for Grants and Agreements located in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR), now called the OMB Guidance for Federal Financial Assistance. This updated OMB Guidance for Federal Financial Assistance (2 CFR) is effective for all awards issued by DOC/NIST on October 1st, 2024, or later. Applicants can find these recent revisions to 2 CFR here: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/04/22/2024-07496/guidance-for-federal-financial-assistance>.

**Agency Contacts:**

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## **FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT**

### **I. Program Description**

The statutory authority for the Standardization Center of Excellence is *15 USC § 272(b)(4) and 42 USC §§ 18951(b) and (c)*.

#### **1. Background Information**

The overall objective of this funding opportunity is to establish an institutional award, as described in the Department of Commerce Grants and Cooperative Agreements Manual, Chapter 6.A.2 (20 April 2021).

The national interest in CETs and associated areas of standardization demands an increased level of coordination and effort and will require the rapid development of new ways for public- and private-sector stakeholders to work together to advance U.S. national security and economic competitiveness. An effective SCoE will facilitate U.S. ability to meet these challenges by focusing on all aspects of standardization for critical and emerging technologies.

Congress authorized NIST to:

- (1) support private sector-driven engagement and ensure effective Federal engagement in the development and use of international technical standards;
- (2) support capacity building via:
  - (a) education and workforce development efforts to promote U.S. participation in international standards organizations, and
  - (b) engagement by more U.S. stakeholders in international technical standards development.

See § 10245 of Title II, Division B, Subtitle C of the Research and Development, Competition, and Innovation Act, enacted along with the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, Pub. L. 117-167, (hereinafter CHIPS Act).

The statute also authorized support for capacity building with a focus on:

- (1) removing and preventing barriers to private sector participation in standards development;
- (2) improving communications between public and private sectors on standards; and
- (3) enhancing U.S. and like-minded nations' representation and influence in international standards governance and leadership.

The four objectives and eight lines of effort identified in the United States Government National Standards Strategy for Critical and Emerging Technologies (USG NSSCET)<sup>1</sup> also align with the objectives of this SCoE.

CET areas of current priority to NIST include, but are not limited to, the following: biotechnology, quantum technology, artificial intelligence, next generation communications, and semiconductors and microelectronics.

Each CET area poses a unique set of standardization challenges as well as the need for tailored approaches to address those challenges considering the area's level of "standardization readiness." A framework to assess standardization readiness must consider technology maturity, market need, and stakeholder commitment. Applicants interested in learning more about standardization readiness levels and information regarding the USG NSSCET should refer to [www.standards.gov](http://www.standards.gov).

## **2. Program Requirements and Priorities**

This NOFO solicits competitive applications from eligible nongovernmental organizations (see Section III.1. of this NOFO) to establish and maintain a SCoE to support the growth of U.S. engagement in international standardization for CETs that are essential to U.S. economic competitiveness and national security.

The SCoE will focus on four broad areas:

### **A. Pre-Standardization Engagement.** This includes:

- (1) purposeful convening to produce seed documents to lay the foundation for standardization;
- (2) convening of underrepresented groups, such as small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), to understand their needs and provide the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/US-Gov-National-Standards-Strategy-2023.pdf>.

U.S. standards community a sense of their input (e.g., by relaying them to U.S. Technical Advisory Groups (TAG) and equivalent entities to broaden U.S. input into standardization); and  
(3) information sharing (e.g., via briefing documents describing current standardization activities in a focused format).

- B. Workforce Capacity Building.** This includes experiential learning workshops, simulation exercises, and boot camps to facilitate engagement of early- to mid-career professionals, and appropriately tailored workshops for decision-making executives, in international standardization by providing an orientation to the international standardization system ecosystem.
- C. Collaborative Pilot Program in CETs.** In collaboration with NIST, drive the acceleration of standardization readiness in selected CETs via NIST-industry engagement and collaboration in pre-standardization and metrology efforts.
- D. Information and Data Sharing Hub.** Develop and implement tools and information resources to enable the U.S. private sector to engage and influence international standardization more efficiently and effectively. These efforts may include purposeful convening opportunities (e.g., workshops), experiential learning, assessments/studies, standardization landscapes and roadmaps, mentorships, timely information about standards activities/ballots, and other tools and resources to support both engagement in standards development and use of standards information to provide competitive products to the global marketplace. These tools and resources will be developed so that they can be tailored, customized, or scaled to meet specific needs or priorities of a particular CET. Also, it is expected that the tools and resources be made available to stakeholders via a well-designed, user-friendly information and data sharing hub. It is anticipated that any outputs that will be developed as a result of this award will be open access. In the event that any intellectual property (other than data) will be developed under this award, it is anticipated that the recipient will develop an intellectual property (IP) management plan, consistent with Section C.03., Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions for Financial Assistance Awards, “Intellectual Property Rights,” and authorities referenced therein, which addresses ownership and licensing of all IP created or acquired under the award and pre-existing IP used under the award by any of the award participants, including subrecipients, contractors, and/or unfunded collaborators, who participate in the project. It is expected that the recipient will obtain the concurrence of each award participant to the recipient’s IP management plan. “Given the objective under this NOFO of providing information, data, documents, and tools, NIST may require the recipient to either license its intangible property (for example, copyright for a data architecture or data management tool) openly (as CC-BY, for example), place it in the public domain, or transfer copyright to NIST. Research supported by

the center shall comply with NIST's public access and data management and sharing policy." See Section VI.2.b. of this NOFO for a link to the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions.

The SCoE must complement and leverage the work of the private sector, academia, NIST, and other government agencies through meaningful and impactful collaboration and partnerships. The scope of the SCoE includes, but is not limited to, the following aspects of standardization engagement and workforce capacity building:

- Awareness and promotion of standardization opportunities;
- Fostering opportunities to inform the development of newly proposed standards;
- Enhancement of U.S. stakeholder understanding of international standards governance;
- Exploration of standardization landscapes and/or development of standardization roadmaps;
- Establishment of relationships with standardization leaders and facilitation of their input into international standards;
- Fostering exploration of future standardization areas; and
- Other mechanisms to incentivize the engagement of the private sector in international standardization.

Applications must address the following:

- Outcome-focused objectives to be accomplished with the federal funding;
- Programmatic activities to be supported to achieve these objectives;
- Measurements and reporting on progress toward achieving objectives, specifically the extent to which international standardization engagement and workforce capacity building has occurred;
- Approach(es) to broad outreach to engage stakeholders in specific CET areas and to build meaningful and impactful collaborations and partnerships;
- Approach(es) to identify key interested parties in a broad array of CET areas;
- Approach(es) for prioritization, development, and implementation of tools and information resources;
- Approach(es) to tailoring, customization, and scaling of tools and resources to meet the needs for different CET areas;
- Approach(es) to the development, documentation, and dissemination of standardization landscapes, roadmaps, and other outputs after they are developed to stakeholders;
- Approach(es) for the SCoE to collaborate with NIST to drive the acceleration of standardization readiness in selected CETs via NIST-industry engagement and collaborative pre-standardization and metrology efforts; and
- Extent (amount and duration) to which non-federal funding is being

leveraged to advance the scope of this funding opportunity.

## **II. Federal Award Information**

### **1. Funding Instrument.**

The funding instrument that will be used is a Cooperative Agreement. Where cooperative agreements are used, the nature of NIST's "substantial involvement" will generally include collaboration with the recipient organization in developing and implementing the approved scope of work, consistent with the definition of cooperative agreement in [2 CFR § 200.1](#).

### **2. Multi-Year Funding Policy.** When a proposal for a multi-year award is approved, funding will usually be provided for only the first year of the program. If a program is selected for funding, NIST has no obligation to provide any additional funding in connection with that award. Continuation of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the sole discretion of NIST. Continued funding will be contingent upon satisfactory performance, continued relevance to the mission and priorities of NIST and the Standards Coordination Office, and the availability of funds.

Under this NOFO, NIST may also provide additional multi-year institutional funding and extend the original period of performance for up to an additional five (5) years. The amount of additional funding will be based on funding availability at that time. The additional period of performance will be commensurate with available funds. A revised Project Narrative and Budget Narrative will be requested from the recipient and must be approved by NIST before proceeding. NIST cannot guarantee that the additional funding and period of performance will be authorized. Factors that include the availability of funding, strategic priorities, NIST's assessment of the quality of the management of the award (for example, timeliness and quality of progress reports), and NIST's assessment of the progress of the work funded under the award will be considered.

### **3. Funding Availability.**

In Fiscal year 2024 (FY24), NIST anticipates funding one (1) award up to \$6,000,000 for the first two (2) years of the award, and then up to \$3,000,000 per year for up to three (3) years, for a total of five (5) years, subject to availability of appropriated funds and satisfactory annual performance review. After (5) five years, upon independent review and evaluation of the program and the recipient, NIST may provide to the recipient additional multi-year funding with performance periods of up to five (5) years. The award of additional performance periods will be on a non-competitive basis as an institutional award.

### **4. Indirect (F&A) Costs.**

NIST will reimburse applicants for proposed indirect (F&A) costs in



accordance with [2 CFR § 200.414](#). Applicants proposing indirect (F&A) costs must follow the application requirements.

### **III. Eligibility Information**

- 1. Eligible Applicants.** Eligibility for the program listed in this NOFO is open to all nongovernmental organizations (including, but not limited to academic institutions, trade associations, and professional societies), located in the United States or its territories. Eligible applicants include contractors that operate Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) where the applicant is permitted to receive federal financial assistance award funds. Non-domestic (non-U.S.) Entities (Foreign Institutions) are not eligible to apply. Non-domestic (non-U.S.) components of U.S. organizations are not eligible to apply.
- 2. Cost Sharing or Matching.** Cost sharing or matching funds is not required for awards issued pursuant to this NOFO but is encouraged. Non-federal cost share included in an award issued pursuant to this program will become a binding legal commitment of the award recipient in accordance with the definition of “voluntary committed cost sharing” in 2 C.F.R. 200.1.

Non-federal cost sharing is that portion of the program costs not borne by the Federal Government. The applicant’s share of expenses may include cash, services, and third-party in-kind contributions, as described at [2 CFR § 200.306](#). The source and detailed rationale of the cost share, including cash, full- and part-time personnel, and in-kind contributions, must be documented in the Budget Narrative and Justification submitted with the application and will be considered as part of the review under the evaluation criterion found in Section V.1 of this NOFO. As with the Federal share, any proposed costs included as non-Federal cost sharing must be an allowable/eligible cost under this program and under the Federal cost principles set forth in 2 CFR part 200, Subpart E.

Non-federal cost sharing incorporated into the budget of an approved financial assistance award is subject to audit in the same general manner as Federal award funds. See 2 CFR part 200, Subpart F.

### **IV. Application and Submission Information**

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

The application package is available at [Grants.gov](#) under Funding Opportunity Number 2024-NIST-SCOE-01.

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

- a. **Required Forms and Documents.** The Application must contain the following:

**(1) SF-424 (R&R), Application for Federal Assistance.** The SF-424 (R&R) must be signed by an authorized representative of the applicant organization.

For SF-424 (R&R), Items 5, 14, and 19, use the Zip Code + 4 format (##### - ####) when addresses are called for.

SF-424 (R&R), Item 18. If the SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form (item (5) below) is applicable, attach it to field 18.

The list of certifications and assurances referenced in Item 17 of the SF-424 (R&R) is contained in the Federal Financial Assistance Certifications and Representations (Certs and Reps) as part of the SAM.gov entity registration.

Instructions for filling in the SF-424 (R&R) can be found on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), as well as at the NIST Grants Management Division [grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/r-r-family](https://grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/r-r-family)

**(2) Research & Related Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed).** The budget should reflect anticipated expenses for the full term of the program, considering all potential cost increases, including cost of living adjustments.

The budget should be detailed in these categories:

- A. Senior/Key Personnel;
- B. Other Personnel;
- C. Equipment Description;
- D. Travel;
- E. Participant/Trainee Support Costs;
- F. Other Direct Costs;
- G. Direct Costs (automatically generated);
- H. Indirect Costs;
- I. Total Direct and Indirect Costs (automatically generated);
- J. Total Costs and Fee (automatically generated); and
- K. Budget Narrative and Justification document (item (8) below) should be attached to field L.

A separate detailed R&R Budget must be completed for each budget period during the proposed award (e.g., annual basis). To add additional budget periods (e.g., year 2), click “Add Period” embedded at the end of the form. Information regarding the Research & Related Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) is available in the [R&R Family Section](#)

of Grants.gov, as well as at the NIST Grants Management Division [grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/r-r-family](https://grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/r-r-family).

**(3) CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying.** Enter “2024-NIST-SCOE-01” in the Award Number field. Enter the title of the application, or an abbreviation of that title, in the Program Name field.

**(4) Research and Related Other Project Information.** Answer the highlighted questions and use this form to attach the Program Narrative (item (6) below); Resume(s) or CV(s) (item (7) below); the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (item (9) below); the Letters of Commitment (item (11) below); the Data Management Plan (item (12) below); and the Current and Pending Support Form (item (13) below).

Instructions for completing the Research and Related Other Program Information form can be found in [grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/r-r-family](https://grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/r-r-family) by scrolling down to Research And Related Other Project Information and clicking the Instructions link, as well as in the NIST Grants Management Division [grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/r-r-family](https://grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/r-r-family).

**Please note that the Project Summary/Abstract is not relevant to this competition. However, Grants.gov requires an attachment to field 7 of the Research and Related Other Project Information form to successfully pass through Grants.gov. Please attach a document to field 7 stating, “A Project Summary/Abstract is not relevant to this competition”.**

**(5) SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities** (if applicable).

**(6) Program Narrative.** The Program Narrative is a word-processed document of no more than twenty (20) pages (single-spaced between lines), which is responsive to the program description and the evaluation criteria.

The page limit includes: *Cover Page; Table of Contents (if included); Executive Summary; and Program Narrative with all required information, including figures, graphs, tables, images, and pictures.*

The Program Narrative must contain the following information:

- a. Executive Summary.** An executive summary of the proposed approach, consistent with the evaluation criteria. The executive summary should include information indicating how each evaluation criterion and its sub-factors are addressed. A table can

be helpful in providing this information. The executive summary should not exceed two (2) pages.

- b. Program Approach and Program Execution Plan.** A detailed discussion of the applicant's approach in planning for and in executing the proposed program consistent with the requirements and priorities of this program (see Section I. of this NOFO). This section should provide a description of the proposed program plan and execution strategy sufficient to permit evaluation of the proposal, in accordance with details included in the proposal Evaluation Criteria (see Section V.1. of this NOFO). This section should also specifically provide descriptions of how the applicant will develop and maintain a Standardization Center of Excellence; and describe their pathway to becoming self-sufficient to support continuing development of tools and information resources to support engagement in international standardization and workforce capacity building.
- c. Statement of Work.** A complete statement of work covering all aspects of the program, including a schedule of measurable events and milestones as well as measurable performance objectives that can be used to determine the success of the program. This section should address the V.1.a.ii.1. of the evaluation criterion.
- d. Program Impacts and Evaluation:** A detailed discussion of the: (i) anticipated impacts of the proposed program; (ii) methodology for identifying and evaluating program outcomes; and (iii) methodology to measure and report the extent to which international standardization engagement and workforce capacity building with federal funding pursuant to this effort has occurred. This section should address the V.1.a.ii.2. of the evaluation criterion.
- e. Qualifications.** A description of the qualifications of the key personnel, the time commitments of the key personnel, and how the program staff qualifications will enable them to complete the program work. This section should address the Staff and Institution Capability to Perform the Work evaluation criterion (see Section V.1.b. of this NOFO).
- f. Dissemination and Communications Plan.** A description of the applicant's approach to broadly disseminate the results of the program to the public. The plan should include an approach to broadly disseminate tools and information resources regarding the

SCoE and to solicit participation in SCoE activities through meaningful and impactful collaborations and partnerships. The Dissemination Plan should include annual reporting that is released to the public documenting the performance and accomplishments of the SCoE as required in Section V.1.ii.3. and VI.3. of this NOFO.

**(7) Resume(s) of Key Personnel.** Resumes for all key personnel assigned to the program must be provided. Resumes are limited to two (2) pages per individual. Additional pages beyond the two pages per resume will not be considered during the evaluation of the application. Resumes are not included in the page count of the Program Narrative. See Section V.1.b. of this NOFO.

**(8) Budget Narrative and Justification.** There is no set format for the Budget Narrative and Justification, however, the written justification should include the necessity and the basis for the cost, as described below. When cost share is included in the budget, the written justification must also identify the Federal and non-Federal portion of each cost, to include indirect costs, as applicable. (see Cost Sharing section of this NOFO for match requirements and Section V.1.c. of this NOFO). Proposed funding levels must be consistent with the program scope, and only allowable costs should be included in the budget. Information on cost allowability is available in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which apply to awards in this program.

The Budget Narrative does not count against the twenty (20) page limit of the Program Narrative.

This section will be evaluated in accordance with the Budget Narrative evaluation criteria. It will also be reviewed to determine if all costs are reasonable, allocable, and allowable under 2 C.F.R. Part 200 Subpart E, Cost Principles.

Information needed for each category is as follows (categories not listed are automatically generated by the form or are not relevant to this competition):

**A. Senior/Key Personnel** – At a minimum, the budget justification for all personnel should include the following: name; job title; commitment of effort on the proposed program in terms of average number of hours per week or percentage of time; salary rate; total direct charges on the proposed program per person; and

description of the role of the individual on the proposed program and the work to be performed.

- B. Fringe Benefits** – Fringe benefits should be identified separately from salaries and wages and based on rates determined by organizational policy. The items included in the fringe benefit rate (e.g., health insurance, parking, etc.) should not be charged under another cost category.
- C. Equipment Description** – Equipment is defined as an item of property that has an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more (unless the organization has established lower levels) and an expected service life of more than one year. The budget justification should list each piece of equipment, the cost, and a description of how it will be used and why it is necessary to the successful completion of the proposed program. Please note that any general use equipment (computers, etc.) charged directly to the award should be allocated to the award according to expected usage on the program. Any items that do not meet the threshold for equipment can be included under the Materials and Supplies line item in Section G, Other Direct Costs.
- D. Travel**– For all travel costs, required by the recipient to complete the program, including attendance at any relevant conferences, the budget justification for travel should include the following: destination; names or number of people traveling; dates and/or duration; mode of transportation; lodging and subsistence rates; and description of how the travel is directly related to the proposed program. For travel that is yet to be determined, please provide best estimates based on prior experience. If a destination is not known, an approximate amount may be used with the assumptions given for the location of the meeting.
- E. Participant/Trainee Support Costs** – Participant support costs are stipends; subsistence allowances; travel; and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees, who are not employees of your organization, for conferences or training programs. The budget justification should indicate the names or number of participants or trainees, a description and calculation of costs per person, a description and date of the event, and a description of why the cost is necessary for the successful completion of the proposed program.
- F. Contractual (i.e., Contracts or Subawards)** – Each contract or subaward should be treated as a separate item. Identify the cost

and describe the services to be provided and the necessity of the subaward or contract to the successful performance of the proposed program. Contracts are for obtaining goods and services for the non-Federal entity's own use and creates a procurement relationship with the contractor. A subaward is for the purpose of carrying out a portion of a Federal award.

**G. Other Direct Costs** – For costs that do not easily fit into the other cost categories, please list the cost and the breakdown of the total costs by quantity or unit of cost. Include the necessity of the cost for the completion of the proposed program. Only allowable costs can be charged to the award. Under this category, include materials and supplies, which are defined as all tangible personal property other than that described as equipment. Provide a list of each supply, and the breakdown of the total costs by quantity or unit of cost. Include the necessity of the cost for the completion of the proposed program. Under this category, provide a description of information technology and other technology needed to establish, implement, and maintain the efforts of the SCoE.

**H. Indirect Costs** – Commonly referred to as Facilities & Administrative Costs, Indirect Costs are defined as costs incurred by the applicant organization that cannot otherwise be directly assigned or attributed to a specific program. For more details, see Section IV.2.b.(9) of this NOFO.

**(9) Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.** If indirect costs are included in the proposed budget, provide a copy of the approved negotiated agreement if this rate was negotiated with a cognizant Federal audit agency. If the rate was not established by a cognizant Federal audit agencies provide a statement to this effect. If the successful applicant includes indirect costs in the budget and has not established an indirect cost rate with a cognizant Federal audit agency, the applicant will be required to obtain such a rate in accordance with Section B.06 of the [Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions](#), dated November 12, 2020.

Alternatively, in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f), applicants that do not have a current negotiated (including provisional) indirect cost rate (except for those non-Federal entities described in [appendix VII, paragraph D.1.b.](#) of 2 CFR Part 200) may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (MTDC). Applicants proposing a 10 percent de minimis rate pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f) should note this election as part of the budget portion of the application. Please be aware that Foreign applicants will be limited to

use of the de minimis rate and will not have the opportunity to negotiate an indirect cost rate with NIST.

- (10) **Subaward Budget Form.** The Research & Related Subaward Budget Attachment Form is required if sub-recipients and contractors are included in the application budget. Instructions for completing subaward budget forms are available by visiting the [R & R Family section](#) of the Grants.gov Forms Repository and scrolling down to the R & R Subaward Budget Attachment(s) Form and selecting “Instructions.”
- (11) **Letters of Commitment.** Letters of Commitment must be submitted by all funded and unfunded entities that will have an active role in executing the activities outlined in the Program Narrative. Letters of Commitment must address the level of participation, qualifications of the personnel who will be actively involved, and how successful completion of this program would positively impact the United States engagement and leadership in international standardization for CETs. Letters of Commitment must also specify any voluntary committed cost-share, including the specific services and/or products to be used in the program. Letters of Commitment must be signed by an individual with authority to legally bind the organization to its commitment. Letters of Commitment do not count against the page limit of the Program Narrative and should not exceed two (2) pages per letter.
- (12) **Data Management Plan.** Consistent with NIST Policy 5700.00<sup>2</sup>, *Managing Public Access to Results of Federally Funded Research*, and NIST Order 5701.00<sup>3</sup>, *Managing Public Access to Results of Federally Funded Research*, applicants must include a Data Management Plan (DMP).

All applications for activities that will generate scientific data using NIST funding are required to adhere to a DMP or explain why data sharing and/or preservation are not within the scope of the program. For the purposes of the DMP, NIST adopted the definition of “research data” at 2 C.F.R. § 200.315(e)(3).

The DMP must include, at a minimum, a summary of proposed activities that are expected to generate data; a summary of the types of data expected to be generated by the identified activities; a plan for storage and maintenance of the data expected to be generated by the identified activities, including after the end of the award’s period of performance; and a plan describing whether and how data generated

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.nist.gov/system/files/documents/2018/06/19/final\\_p\\_5700.pdf](https://www.nist.gov/system/files/documents/2018/06/19/final_p_5700.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.nist.gov/system/files/documents/2019/11/08/final\\_o\\_5701\\_ver\\_2.pdf](https://www.nist.gov/system/files/documents/2019/11/08/final_o_5701_ver_2.pdf)



by the identified activities will be reviewed and made available to the public.

A template for the DMP, an example DMP, and the rubric against which the DMP will be evaluated for sufficiency is available at: [Information for Applicants and Awardees](#). An applicant is not required to use the template as long as the DMP contains the required information.

If an application stands a reasonable chance of being funded and the DMP is determined during the review process to be insufficient, the program office may contact the applicant to resolve deficiencies in the DMP. If an award is issued prior to the deficiencies being fully rectified, the award will include a Specific Award Condition (SAC) stating that no research activities shall be initiated, or costs incurred for those activities under the award until the NIST Grants Officer amends the award to indicate the SAC has been satisfied.

Reasonable costs for data preservation and access may be included in the application.

- (13) Current and Pending Support Form.** Any application that includes investigators, researchers, and key personnel must identify all sources of current and potential funding, including this proposal. Any current program support (e.g., Federal, state, local, public, or private foundations, etc.) must be listed on this form. The proposed program and all other programs or activities requiring a portion of time of the Principal Investigator (PI), co-PI, and key personnel must be included, even if no salary support is received. The total award amount for the entire award period covered, including indirect costs, must be shown as well as the number of person-months per year to be devoted to the program, regardless of the source of support. Similar information must be provided for all proposals already submitted or that are being submitted concurrently to other potential funders.

Applicants must complete the Current and Pending Support Form, using multiple forms as necessary to account for all activity for each individual identified in the PI, co-PI, and key personnel roles. A separate form should be used for each identified individual.

Applicants must download the Current and Pending Support Form from the NIST website at <https://www.nist.gov/oaam/grants-management-division/current-and-pending-support> and reference the guidance provided as it contains information to assist with accurately completing the form.

## **b. Attachment of Required Documents**

Items IV.2.a.(1) through IV.2.a.(4) above are part of the standard application package in Grants.gov and can be completed through the download application process.

Item IV.2.a.(5), the SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form, is an optional application form which is part of the standard application package in Grants.gov. If item IV.2.a.(5), the SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form is applicable to this proposal, attach it to field 18 of the SF-424 (R&R), Application for Federal Assistance.

Item IV.2.a.(6), the Program Narrative, should be attached to field 8 (Program Narrative) of the Research and Related Other Program Information form by clicking on “Add Attachment”.

Item IV.2.a.(8), the Budget Narrative and Justification, should be attached to field L (Budget Justification) of the Research and Related Budget (Total Fed + Total Non-Fed) form by clicking on “Add Attachment”.

Items IV.2.a.(7), Resume(s) or CV(s), IV.2.a.(9); the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, IV.2.a.(11); Letters of Commitment, if applicable to the submission, IV.2.a.(12); the Data Management Plan; and IV.2.a.(13), the Current and Pending Support Form, must be completed and attached by clicking on “Add Attachments” found in item 12 (Other Attachments) of the Research and Related Other Program Information form.

Item IV.2.a.(10), the Subaward Budget Form(s), if applicable to the submission, should be attached to the Research & Related Subaward Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) Attachment(s) Form in the application package.

Following these directions will create zip files which permit transmittal of the documents electronically via Grants.gov.

Applicants should carefully follow specific Grants.gov instructions at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) to ensure the attachments will be accepted by the Grants.gov system. A receipt from Grants.gov indicates only that an application was transferred to a system. It does not provide details concerning whether all attachments (or how many attachments) transferred successfully. Applicants will receive a series of e-mail messages over a period of up to two business days before learning whether a Federal agency’s electronic system has received its application. Applicants are strongly advised to use Grants.gov’s “[Download Submitted Forms and Applications](#)” option to check that their application’s required attachments were contained in their submission.

After submitting the application, check the status of your application here: [CHECK APPLICATION STATUS](#). If any, or all, of the required attachments are absent from the submission, follow the attachment directions found above, resubmit the application, and check again for the presence of the required attachments.

If the directions found on the [Grants.gov Online Help](#) page are not effective, please contact the Grants.gov Help Desk immediately. If calling from within the United States or from a U.S. territory, please call 800-518-4726. If calling from a place outside the United States or a U.S. territory, please call 606-545-5035. E-mails should be addressed to [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). Assistance from the Grants.gov Help Desk will be available around the clock every day, with the exception of Federal holidays. Help Desk service will resume at 7:00 a.m. Eastern Time the day after Federal holidays.

*Applicants can track their submission in the Grants.gov system by following the procedures at the [Grants.gov Track My Application](#) page. It can take up to two business days for an application to fully move through the Grants.gov system to NIST.*

*NIST uses the Tracking Numbers assigned by Grants.gov and does not issue Agency Tracking Numbers.*

### **c. Application Format**

- (1) Paper, Email, and Facsimile (fax) Submissions.** Will not be accepted.
- (2) Figures, Graphs, Images, and Pictures.** Should be of a size that is easily readable or viewable and may be displayed in landscape orientation. Any figures, graphs, images, or pictures will count toward the page limits for the Program Narrative.
- (3) Font.** Easy to read font (12-point minimum). Smaller type may be used in figures and tables but must be clearly legible.
- (4) Page Limit.** The Program Narrative is limited to twenty (20) pages single-spaced, noting the limit of two (2) pages for the Executive Summary.
- (5) Page Limit Exclusions:**  
SF-424 (R&R), Application for Federal Assistance;  
Research & Related Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed);

CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying;  
Research and Related Other Program Information;  
SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities;  
Resume(s) or CV(s);  
Budget Narrative and Justification;  
Indirect Cost Rate Agreement;  
Subaward Budget Form;  
Letters of Commitment;  
Data Management Plan;  
Current and Pending Support Form.

**(6) Page Layout.** The Program Narrative must be in portrait orientation.

**(7) Page size.** 21.6 centimeters by 27.9 centimeters (8 ½ inches by 11 inches).

**(8) Page numbering.** Number pages sequentially.

**(9) Application language.** All documents must be in English, including but not limited to the initial application, any additional documents submitted in response to a NIST request, all reports, and any correspondence with NIST.

**(10) Typed document.** All applications, including forms, must be typed; handwritten forms will not be accepted.

**d. Application Replacement Pages.** Applicants may not submit replacement pages and/or missing documents once an application has been submitted. Any revisions must be made by submission of a new application that must be received by NIST by the submission deadline.

**e. Pre-Applications.** Pre-applications will not be accepted under this NOFO.

**3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM).**

Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. part 25, applicants and recipients are required to: (i) be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency, unless otherwise excepted from these requirements pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 25.110. NIST will not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time that NIST is ready to make a Federal award pursuant to this NOFO, NIST may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award

and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

#### **4. Submission Dates and Times**

Applications must be received at Grants.gov no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, August 7, 2024. NIST will consider the date and time recorded by Grants.gov as the official submission time. Applications received after this deadline will not be reviewed or considered.

Applicants should be aware, and factor in their application submission planning, that the Grants.gov system closes periodically for routine maintenance.

Applicants should visit [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) for information on any scheduled closures.

When developing the submission timeline, please keep in mind that: (1) all applicants are required to have current registrations in the electronic System for Award Management (SAM.gov) and Grants.gov; (2) the free annual registration process in the SAM.gov generally takes between three and five business days but can take more than three weeks; and applicants will receive e-mail notifications over a period of up to two business days as the application moves through intermediate systems before the applicant learns via a validation or rejection notification whether NIST has received the application. (See [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) for full information on application and notification through Grants.gov.) Please note that a Federal assistance award cannot be issued if the designated recipient's registration in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) is not current at the time of the award.

#### **5. Intergovernmental Review**

Applications submitted by State and local governments are subject to Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," pursuant to which each State designates an entity to coordinate, and review proposed federal financial assistance and direct federal development. All other applicants should consult the Intergovernmental Review State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to determine whether the application is subject to State review pursuant to E.O. 12372. The current SPOC List may be found [here](#).

#### **6. Funding Restrictions**

Construction activities are not an allowable cost under this program. In addition, a recipient or a subrecipient may not charge profits, fees, or other increments above cost to an award issued pursuant to this NOFO. Applications for product development and/or commercialization not in accordance with the requirements of 42 U.S.C. § 18952 are not considered responsive to this NOFO.

#### **7. Other Submission Requirements**

- a. Applications must be submitted at [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Paper applications will not be accepted.**

(1) Applicants should carefully follow specific Grants.gov instructions to ensure that all attachments will be accepted by the Grants.gov system. A receipt from Grants.gov indicating an application is received does not provide information about whether attachments have been received. For further information or questions regarding applying electronically for the 2024-NIST-SCOE-01 announcement, contact the Grants.gov Help Desk at 800-518-4726.

**b. Amendments.** Any amendments to this NOFO will be announced through Grants.gov. Applicants may sign up on Grants.gov to receive amendments by e-mail.

## **V. Application Review Information**

### **1. Evaluation Criteria**

The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating applications and their assigned weights are as follows:

**a. Program Approach and Execution Plan.** Reviewers will evaluate the following subcategories for a total of 0-60 points:

**i. Program Approach: Technical Merit and Rationality (0-30 points).**

The logic and soundness of the applicant's approach and the extent to which the successful completion of the proposed work includes the following:

1. Addresses (a) standardization engagement, workforce capacity building, and collaborative pilot programs in CETs; (b) meaningful and impactful collaboration and partnerships to complement and leverage the work of the private sector, academia, NIST, and other government agencies; and (c) development and implementation tools and information resources and making them available via a well-designed, user-friendly information hub and other means to enable the U.S. private sector to engage and influence international standardization more efficiently and effectively. (See Section IV.2.(6)b. of this NOFO) (0-10 points)
2. Demonstrates how the proposed program will support the growth of U.S. engagement in international standardization for critical and emerging technologies (CETs) that are essential to U.S. economic competitiveness and national security. This includes the extent to which the proposal defines and justifies (a) outcome-focused objectives to be accomplished with the federal funding; (b) programmatic activities to be supported to achieve these objectives; (c) measurements and reporting on progress toward

achieving objectives, specifically the extent to which international standardization engagement and workforce capacity building has occurred; and (d) approaches to broad outreach to engage stakeholders in specific CET areas and to build meaningful and impactful collaborations and partnerships; prioritization, development, and implementation of tools and information resources; and tailoring, customization, and scaling of tools and resources to meet the needs for different CET areas. (See Section IV.2.(6)b. of this NOFO) (0-10 points)

3. Demonstrates the potential effectiveness of the proposed program regarding creating and maintaining a SCoE that will be sustainable after this award ends. (See Section IV.2.(6)b. of this NOFO) (0-10 points)

**ii. Program Execution Plan: Statement of Work, Impact, and Dissemination of Results (0-30 points).**

1. The extent to which the Statement of Work (SOW) is complete and appropriate, providing a coherent program execution plan to effectively manage: the program goals, objectives, and the work of all program staff; final deliverables and measurable performance objectives; key interim outputs reflecting the performance objectives; milestones and timelines; short-term and anticipated long-term impacts; the intended collaborations; and an evaluation plan of the program created under this award. This includes assessing the extent to which the proposed methodology of program management is likely to ensure effective operations and oversight and meet program goals and objectives. (See Section IV.2.(6)c. of this NOFO) (0-10 points)
2. Methodology for identifying and evaluating program outcomes; and methodology to measure and report the extent to which international standardization engagement and workforce capacity building with federal funding pursuant to this effort has occurred. (See Section IV.2.(6).d. of this NOFO) (0-10 points)
3. The extent to which the proposed approach enables broadly sharing and communicating program information, outcomes, tools, and information resources regarding the SCoE and to solicit participation on SCoE activities through meaningful and impactful collaborations and partnerships; this includes a plan for composing, disseminating, and communicating a summary of major accomplishments and conclusions in the form of Annual and Final Summary Papers as described in Section IV.2.(6)f. and Section

IV.3 and Section IV.2.(12 ) of this NOFO. (0-10 points)

**b. Qualifications and Experience of Key Personnel and Institution Capability to Perform the Work.** Reviewers will evaluate the following subcategories for a total of 0-20 points:

- i. The extent to which the key personnel's experience and education relevant to the program's proposed scope of work, including and knowledge of the current state, impact, and nature of international standards and standardization activities, demonstrates the likelihood of successfully implementing and achieving the goals and objectives of the proposed SCoE. (See Section IV.2.(6)e. and Section IV.2.(7) of this NOFO.) (0-10 points)
- ii. The demonstrated ability to collaborate with diverse stakeholders to successfully create and sustain a SCoE. Staff with different experience and expertise may be responsible for different aspects of the program. (See Section IV.2.(6).e. and Section IV.2.(7) of this NOFO.) (0-10 points)

**C. Resource Availability and Cost Effectiveness.** Reviewers will evaluate the following subcategories for a total of 0-20 points:

- i. The appropriateness and cost effectiveness of the proposed budget and available resources, including cost share, if appropriate, to assess the breakdown of costs against the proposed activities to carry out the objectives of the program as compared to the program's scope. (See Section IV.2.(8) and Section IV.2.(10) of this NOFO.) (0-10 points).
- ii. The extent to which the applicant has demonstrated the overall support necessary to successfully achieve the program objectives, including the extent to which the Program Narrative and the Letter(s) of Commitment (see Section IV.2.(11) of this NOFO), demonstrate the applicant's intent to create and maintain a SCoE with an appropriate governance structure to include placement of the center within the organizational leadership structure, SCoE management and leadership, and external stakeholder oversight; access to necessary high quality infrastructure and expertise; and voluntary cost share to the program, if applicable, to successfully achieve the priorities of the SCoE. (0-10 points).

**2. Selection Factors**

- (1) The availability of funding.
- (2) Whether the program duplicates other programs funded by NIST, or other Federal agencies or other organizations.



- (3) The extent to which the proposal is aligned with the stated program requirements and priorities funded under this NOFO.
- (4) Past performance on all federal awards.

### **3. Review and Selection Process**

Proposals, reports, documents, and other information related to applications submitted to NIST and/or relating to financial assistance awards issued by NIST will be reviewed and considered by Federal employees, or non-Federal personnel who have entered into conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements covering such information, when applicable.

**a. Initial Administrative Review of Applications.** Applications received by the deadline will be reviewed to determine eligibility, completeness, and responsiveness to this NOFO and to the scope of the stated program objectives. Applications determined to be ineligible, incomplete, and/or nonresponsive may be eliminated from further review. However, NIST, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for an application that is missing non-substantive information, the absence of which may easily be rectified during the review process.

**b. Full Review of Eligible, Complete, and Responsive Applications.**

Applications that are determined to be eligible, complete, and responsive will proceed for full reviews in accordance with the review and selection process below:

**(1) Merit Review.** At least three (3) independent, objective reviewers, who may be Federal employees or non-Federal personnel, with appropriate professional and technical expertise relating to the topics covered in this NOFO, will evaluate, and score each eligible, complete, and responsive application based on the evaluation criteria outlined in Section V.1. While every application will have at least three (3) reviewers, applications may have more than three (3) reviewers if specialized expertise is needed to evaluate an application. During the review process, the reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not by consensus.

An average numerical merit review score will be calculated for each application. Applications that are numerically scored an average of 75.00 or higher on a scale of 0-100 points will be adjectivally categorized as “fundable”. Applications that are numerically scored an average below 75.00 on a scale of 0-100 points will be adjectivally categorized as “unfundable” and will not be further considered for funding.

Applicants identified as fundable may be invited to participate with reviewers in a telephone or virtual conference or invited to participate in a site visit that will be conducted by the same reviewers at the applicant's location. Upon completion of either a telephone or virtual conference or site visit, reviewers will be given an opportunity to revise their assigned numeric scores based on the evaluation criteria outlined in Section V.1. of this NOFO as a result of information obtained during the telephone or virtual conference or site visit. Scoring revisions will be made by reviewers on an individual basis.

Based on the numerical average of the reviewers' scores, a rank order will be prepared and provided to the Selecting Official for further consideration. The ranking ordering of the applications will be based solely on merit reviewers' scores and technical evaluations.

**(2) Selection.** The Selecting Official, the Director of the Standards Coordination Office or designee, will make final award recommendations to the NIST Grants Officer. The Selecting Official shall recommend applications in the rank order unless a proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based on one or more of the Selection Factors.

NIST reserves the right to negotiate the budget costs with any applicant selected to receive an award, which may include requesting that the applicant removes certain costs. Additionally, NIST may request that successful applicants modify objectives or work plans and provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to award. NIST also reserves the right to reject an application where information is uncovered that raises a reasonable doubt as to the responsibility of the applicant. NIST may select some, all, or none of the applications, or part(s) of any application. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the NIST Grants Officer. The award decisions of the NIST Grants Officer are final.

**c. Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants.** After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the NIST Grants Management Division (GMD) performs pre-award risk assessments in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.206, which may include a review of the financial stability of an applicant, the quality of the applicant's management systems, the history of performance, and/or the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities.

In addition, prior to making an award where the total Federal share is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000), NIST GMD will review and consider the publicly available [Responsibility/Qualification records](#) about that applicant in [SAM.gov](#) (formerly the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)). An applicant may, at its discretion, review, and comment on information about itself previously entered into [SAM.gov](#) by a Federal awarding agency. As part of its review of risk posed by applicants, NIST GMD will consider any comments made by the applicant in [SAM.gov](#) in making its determination about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards. Upon completion of the pre-award risk assessment, the Grants Officer will make a responsibility determination concerning whether the applicant is qualified to receive the subject award and, if so, whether appropriate specific conditions that correspond to the degree of risk posed by the applicant should be applied to an award.

#### **4. Anticipated Announcement and Award Date**

Review of applications, selection of successful applicants, and award processing is expected to be completed by September 2024. The earliest start date for awards under this NOFO is expected to be January 1, 2025.

#### **5. Additional Information**

- a. Safety.** Safety is a top priority at NIST. Employees and affiliates of award recipients who conduct program work at NIST will be expected to be safety-conscious, to attend NIST safety training, and to comply with all NIST safety policies and procedures, and with all applicable terms of their guest research agreement.
- b. Notification to Unsuccessful Applicants.** Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by e-mail and will have the opportunity to receive a debriefing after the opportunity is officially closed. Applicants must request a debrief by the date indicated in the email notification to receive a debrief from the program office. The program office will then work with the unsuccessful applicant to arrange a date and time for the debrief.
- c. Retention of Unsuccessful Applications.** Unsuccessful applications will be retained in accordance with the [General Record Schedule 1.2/021](#).

## **VI. Federal Award Administration Information**

- 1. Federal Award Notices.** Successful applicants will receive an award package from the NIST Grants Officer.
- 2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**
  - a. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements.** Through [2 C.F.R. § 1327.101](#), the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at [2 C.F.R. Part 200](#), which apply to awards in this program.
  - b. Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions.** The Department of Commerce will apply to each award in this program, the Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions in effect on the date of award. The current version, dated November 12, 2020, is accessible at [Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions](#). Refer to Section VII. of this NOFO, Federal Awarding Agency Contacts, Grant Rules, and Regulations, if you need more information.
  - c. Pre-Award Notification Requirements.** The Department of Commerce will apply the Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements dated December 30, 2014 ([79 FR 78390](#)). Refer to Section VII. of this NOFO, Federal Awarding Agency Contacts, Grant Rules, and Regulations, for more information.
  - d. Funding Availability and Limitation of Liability.** Funding for the program listed in this NOFO is contingent upon the availability of appropriations. NIST or the Department of Commerce will not be responsible for application preparation costs, including but not limited to if this program fails to receive funding or is cancelled because of agency priorities. Publication of this NOFO does not oblige NIST or the Department of Commerce to award any specific program or to obligate any available funds.
  - e. Collaborations with NIST Employees.**

All applications should include a description of any work proposed to be performed by an entity other than the applicant, and the cost of such work should ordinarily be included in the budget. If an applicant proposes collaboration with NIST, the statement of work should include a statement of this intention, a description of the collaboration, and prominently identify the NIST employee(s) involved. Any collaboration by a NIST employee must be approved by appropriate NIST management and is at the sole

discretion of NIST. Prior to beginning the merit review process, NIST will verify the approval of the proposed collaboration. Any unapproved collaboration will be stricken from the application prior to the merit review. Any collaboration with an identified NIST employee that is approved by appropriate NIST management will not make an application more or less favorable in the competitive process. NIST's costs should not be included in the application.

- f. Use of Federal Government-Owned Intellectual Property.** If the applicant anticipates using any Federal Government-owned intellectual property, in the custody of NIST or another Federal agency, to carry out the work proposed, the applicant should clearly identify such intellectual property in the proposal. This information will be used to ensure that no Federal employee involved in the development of the intellectual property will participate in the review process for that competition. In addition, if the applicant intends to use the Federal Government-owned intellectual property, the applicant must comply with all statutes and regulations governing the licensing of Federal government patents and inventions, described in 35 U.S.C. §§ 200-212, 37 C.F.R. Part 401, 2 C.F.R. §200.315, and in Section C.03 of the [Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions](#), dated November 12, 2020. Questions about these requirements may be directed to the Chief Counsel for NIST, (301) 975-2803, [nistcounsel@nist.gov](mailto:nistcounsel@nist.gov).

Any use of Federal Government-owned intellectual property by a recipient of an award under this announcement is at the sole discretion of the Federal Government and will need to be negotiated on a case-by-case basis by the recipient and the Federal agency having custody of the intellectual property if a program is deemed meritorious. The applicant should indicate within the statement of work whether it already has a license to use such intellectual property or whether it intends to seek a license from the applicable Federal agency.

If any inventions made in whole or in part by a NIST employee arise in the course of an award made pursuant to this NOFO, the United States Government may retain its ownership rights in any such invention.

Licensing or other disposition of the Federal Government's rights in such inventions will be determined solely by the Federal Government, through NIST as custodian of such inventions, and include the possibility of the Federal Government putting the intellectual property into the public domain.

**g. Research Activities Involving Human Subjects or Vertebrate Animals.**

This section summarizes the requirements for applications that potentially involve research involving human subjects or vertebrate animals. Research potentially involving human subjects may include human subjects, human tissue, data, or recordings involving human subjects including software testing. Research potentially involving vertebrate animals may include live vertebrate animals or pre-existing cell lines or tissues from vertebrate animals. Additional information that describes the NIST review process for such applications and provides details regarding the documentation required is available here:

<https://w3auth.nist.gov/oaam/grants-management-division/nist-nofo-information/nist-notice-funding-opportunity-requirements>. Both this summary and the additional information provided at the link will be incorporated into any award made under this NOFO.

## Summary

**Research involving human subjects.** Any application that includes research activities involving human subjects must satisfy the requirements of the Common Rule for the Protection of Human Subjects (“Common Rule”), codified for the Department of Commerce at [15 C.F.R. Part 27](#).<sup>4</sup> Research activities involving human subjects that fall within one or more of the classes of vulnerable subjects found in [45 C.F.R. Part 46](#), Subparts [B](#), [C](#) and [D](#) must satisfy the requirements of the applicable subpart(s). In addition, any such application that includes research activities on these subjects must comply with all applicable statutory requirements imposed upon the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and other Federal agencies, all regulations, policies and guidance adopted by DHHS, the [Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#), and other Federal agencies on these topics, and all Executive Orders and Presidential statements of policy on applicable topics. The [website of the Office of Human Research Protection](#) (OHRP) in the DHHS contains the applicable regulatory, policy and guidance and (includes links to [FDA](#), but may not include all applicable FDA regulations and policies.

If the application is accepted for [or awarded] funding, organizations that have an Institutional Review Board (IRB) are required to follow the procedures of their organization for approval of exempt and non-exempt research activities that involve human subjects. The IRB must be currently registered with OHRP that is linked to the engaged organization. Organizations that do not have an IRB must demonstrate the ability to expeditiously contract with a commercial IRB to conduct a review of the proposed activities. Also, all engaged organizations must

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<sup>4</sup> NIST uses the Common Rule definitions for research and human subjects research contained in [15 C.F.R. § 27.102](#).

possess a currently valid Federalwide Assurance (FWA) on file from OHRP. The NIST IRB is unable to serve as the IRB for financial assistance recipients.

**Research with Vertebrate Animals.** Any application that proposes research activities involving live vertebrate animals that are to be cared for, euthanized, or used by award recipients to accomplish research goals, teaching, or testing must meet the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) ([7 U.S.C. § 2131](#) et seq.), and the AWA final rules (9 C.F.R. Parts [1](#), [2](#), and [3](#)), and if appropriate, the Good Laboratory Practice for Nonclinical Laboratory Studies ([21 C.F.R. Part 58](#)). In addition, such research activities should be in compliance with the “[U.S. Government Principles for Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training](#)” (Principles).

i. **Administrative Review.** The NIST Research Protections Office (RPO) reserves the right to conduct an administrative review of all applications that potentially include research involving human subjects under [15 C.F.R. § 27.112](#) (Review by Institution). Conducting an “administrative review” means that the NIST RPO will review and verify the performing institution’s determinations made under the Common Rule and all documentation that support such determinations.

NIST reserves the right to conduct an administrative review of all applications that potentially include research activities that involve vertebrate animals. Conducting an “administrative review” means that the NIST RPO will review and verify the performing institution’s determinations made under the applicable legal and policy requirements and all documentation that support such determinations.

ii. **Requirements for Application.**

All applications involving human subjects or vertebrate animal research must clearly indicate, by separable task, all research activities believed to be human subjects or vertebrate animal research, the expected institution(s) where the research activities may be conducted, and the institution(s) expected to be engaged in the research activities. Some documents may be requested for a pre-review during the proposal review process; however, the Grants Officer may allow final versions of certain required documents to be produced at an appropriate designated time post-award. If an award is issued, no research activities involving human subjects or vertebrate animals shall be initiated or costs incurred for those activities under the award until the NIST Grants Officer issues written approval. In addition, all re-approvals, amendments, modifications, changes, annual reports, and closure will be reviewed by NIST.

This section and the information provided here:

<https://w3auth.nist.gov/oaam/grants-management-division/nist-nofo-information/nist-notice-funding-opportunity-requirements> reflect the existing NIST policy and requirements for Research Involving Human Subjects and vertebrate animals. Should the applicable policy be revised prior to award, a clause



reflecting the applicable policy current at time of award may be incorporated into the award. If the applicable policy is revised after award, a clause reflecting the updated applicable policy may be incorporated into the award.

For more information regarding research programs involving human subjects, contact Anne Andrews, Director, NIST Research Protections Office (e-mail: [anne.andrews@nist.gov](mailto:anne.andrews@nist.gov); phone: (301) 975-5445).

### 3. Reporting

**a. Reporting Requirements.** The following reporting requirements described in Sections A.01, Reporting Requirements, of the [Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions](#), dated November 12, 2020, apply to awards in this program:

- (1) Financial Reports.** Each award recipient will be required to submit an SF-425, Federal Financial Report on a semi-annual basis for the periods ending March 31 and September 30 of each year. Reports will be due within 30 days after the end of the reporting period. A final financial report is due within 120 days after the end of the program period.
- (2) Performance Progress Report (PPR).** Each award recipient will be required to submit a PPR on a semi-annual basis for the periods ending March 31 and September 30 of each year. Reports will be due within 30 days after the end of the reporting period. The PPR shall conform to the requirements in [2 C.F.R. § 200.329](#) and [Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions](#), Section A.01. A final PPR shall be submitted within 120 days after the expiration date of the award, and publication citation information as well as links to publicly available data shall be submitted as soon as they become available.
- (3) Annual Reports.** An annual combined Summary Financial and Performance Progress Report shall be submitted to the NIST Standards Coordination Office Federal Program Officer within forty-five (45) days of each twelve (12) month period of performance. Annual Reports must be in a publicly releasable format and must not contain any personal or proprietary information.
- (4) Final Summary Paper.** A Final Summary Paper shall be submitted within 120 days after the expiration date of the award. At a minimum, it will include: 1) an executive summary; 2) a description of the original goals, objectives, and their importance, and how each may have transformed over time and why; 3) major accomplishments and conclusions; 4) how the work was evaluated, including any relevant



data; 5) lessons learned; 6) the benefit to NIST; 7) the benefit to the public; and 8) how the SCoE will be sustained in the future. The Final Summary Paper must be in a publicly releasable format and must not contain any personal or proprietary information.

**(5) NIST Review of Reports and Publications.** The NIST Standards Coordination Office may collaborate with the award recipient by reviewing any proposed publication prior to release and assisting in dissemination of the publication. See also Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions (November 12, 2020), Section C.03., Intellectual Property Rights, and G.05.k.3., Publications, Videos and Acknowledgment of Sponsorship.

**(6) Patent and Property Reports.** From time to time, and in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Requirements and other terms and conditions governing the award, the recipient may need to submit property and patent reports.

**(7) Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters.** In accordance with section 872 of Public Law 110-417 (as amended; see 41 U.S.C. 2313), if the total value of a recipient's currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds \$10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of an award made under this NOFO, then the recipient shall be subject to the requirements specified in [Appendix XII to 2 C.F.R. Part 200](#), for maintaining the currency of information reported to SAM that is made available about certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings involving the recipient.

**b. Audit Requirements.** The Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, Section D.01, and 2 C.F.R. Part 200 Subpart F, adopted by the Department of Commerce through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, require any non-Federal entity (i.e., including non-profit institutions of higher education and non-profit organizations) that expends Federal awards of \$750,000 or more in the recipient's fiscal year to conduct a single or program specific audit in accordance with the requirements set out in the Subpart. Additionally, unless otherwise specified in the terms and conditions of the award, entities that are not subject to Subpart F of 2 C.F.R. Part 200 (e.g., for-profit commercial entities) that expend \$750,000 or more in DOC funds during their fiscal year must submit to the Grants Officer either: (i) a financial related audit of each DOC award or subaward in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards; or (ii) a program specific audit for each award or subaward in accordance with the requirements contained in 2 C.F.R. § 200.507. Applicants are reminded that NIST, the Department of Commerce Office of Inspector General, or another authorized Federal agency may conduct an audit of an award at any time.

- c. Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006.** In accordance with 2 C.F.R. Part 170, all recipients of a Federal award made on or after October 1, 2010, are required to comply with reporting requirements under the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Public Law No. 109-282). In general, all recipients are responsible for reporting sub-awards of \$25,000 or more. In addition, recipients that meet certain criteria are responsible for reporting executive compensation. Applicants must ensure they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the reporting requirements should they receive funding. Also see the Federal Register notice published September 14, 2010, at [75 FR 55663](#).

## **VII. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts**

Questions should be directed to the following:

<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Point of Contact</b>
Programmatic and Technical Questions	Mary Jo DiBernardo E-mail: <a href="mailto:sco@nist.gov">sco@nist.gov</a> with '2024-NIST-SCOE-01' in subject line
Technical Assistance with Grants.gov Submissions	<a href="https://grants.gov">grants.gov</a> Phone: 800-518-4726 E-mail: <a href="mailto:support@grants.gov">support@grants.gov</a>
Grant Rules and Regulations	Michael Teske E-mail: <a href="mailto:michael.teske@nist.gov">michael.teske@nist.gov</a>

## **VIII. Other Information**

### **1. Personal and Business Information**

The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the Department of Commerce in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed, and evaluated by Department of Commerce employees, other Federal employees, and also by Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information

and data in an accurate and timely manner, and by cooperating with Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a Department of Commerce financial assistance award.

In addition, Department of Commerce regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. Sec. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this Federal Funding Opportunity may be subject to requests for release under the Act. If an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information that should be exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information. In accordance with 15 CFR § 4.9, the Department of Commerce will protect from disclosure confidential business information contained in financial assistance applications and other documentation provided by applicants to the extent permitted by law.

## **2. Webinar Information Session:**

NIST's Standards Coordination Office will host a webinar information session for applicants that are interested in learning about this funding opportunity. The webinar will provide general information regarding 2024-NIST-SCOE-01 and offer general guidance on preparing proposals. Please reference visit <https://www.standards.gov> for the most up to date information, including scheduling details about the webinar. Proprietary technical questions about specific proposal ideas will not be permitted, and NIST will not critique or provide feedback on any proposal ideas during the webinar or at any time before the deadline for all applications. However, questions about the funding opportunity, eligibility requirements, evaluation and award criteria, selection process, and the general characteristics of a competitive application will be addressed at the webinar and by e-mail to [sco@nist.gov](mailto:sco@nist.gov). There is no cost to attend the webinar, but participants must register in advance. Participation in the webinar is not required and will not be considered in the review and selection process.