Slide 1:
Good [afternoon/morning] everyone and welcome to our webinar. Thank you for your interest in the U.S. Department of Energy's efforts on renewable energy and energy efficiency. You are joining us for the Informational Webinar for Applicants and other interested parties for the Advanced Systems Integration for Solar Technologies Funding Opportunity Announcement, or ASSIST FOA, which was issued on October 15th, 2018. My name is David Walter and I am a Technology Manager in the solar office within the DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

Before we begin, I'd like to draw your attention to the email address on the left hand side of this cover page. This is the official mailbox to direct all of your questions during the entire FOA process. Please do not contact EERE individuals directly with questions, including myself. All questions received at this mailbox are posted publicly at the Q&A section of the FOA page on EERE Exchange in an anonymous way. The official answers to your questions will typically also be posted within 3 business days. Please be careful not to submit any language that might be business sensitive, proprietary or confidential.

In addition to emailing this inbox, you may type in the chat bar any questions you have as they come up. Again, please be careful not to submit any language that might be business sensitive, proprietary or confidential. We will be posting answers to these questions to EERE Exchange as well; note that we will not be able to answer these today during the webinar.

Also, just to be clear, there are no particular advantages or disadvantages to the application evaluation process with respect to participating on the webinar today. Your participation is completely voluntary.

Let's get started!

Slide 2: This slide shows the anticipated schedule for the FOA. The FOA has already been posted, and we are conducting the FOA Informational Webinar now. Please note that there are a few requirements that we will go over in the presentation that are different than in past FOAs, such as Replies to Reviewer Comments – we will cover all requirements for this FOA later in the presentation.

Slide 3: READ SLIDE

Slide 4: READ SLIDE

Slide 5:   READ SLIDE

Slide 6:   The agenda for this presentation is as follows: READ SLIDE
We encourage you to have a copy of the FOA in front of you for reference as we go through the presentation.

Slide 7:   READ SLIDE

Slide 8:   Topic 1.1 is on Solar situational awareness, This topic will support applications to research, develop and validate unique solutions to enhance the grid operator's situational awareness of solar energy systems. These systems can be deployed throughout the bulk power system and associated substations, distribution systems or behind the meter. Areas of interest are READ SLIDE

Slide 9:   Proactive resilience solutions for critical infrastructure is topic 1.2. This topic will support applications to research and develop and provide technology transfer for topic 1.1, including field validation of proposed solutions. Validation should demonstrate how unique and innovative solutions enhance resiliency of the bulk power system and/or distribution systems (including microgrids) with high penetrations of solar PV systems. Areas of focus include validation of architecture relations and interoperability, protection of system networks and data from cyber threats, and developing functional requirements for bulk and distribution system planning platforms.

Slide 10:   For both topics, applicants should describe their strategies and plans for maintaining interoperability and cybersecurity while utilizing open standards wherever possible. Cybersecurity plans should provide defense in depth, not ceding responsibility to the external boundary of their solution or adding it at a later stage. Post award, Recipients will be required to submit an Interoperability Plan and a Cybersecurity Plan, detailing how they propose to implement and maintain these aspects of their solution.

Slide 11: Projects from each subtopic will be funded from the same pool of expected federal funds of $46Million based on the review of proposed projects. We will discuss cost share requirements in a later slide.

We expect to make 10 awards for projects that will span a period of 36 months.

EERE intends to fund mostly cooperative agreements under this FOA, but may also fund Grants, TIAs, Work Authorizations, and Interagency Agreements. Cooperative Agreements include Substantial Involvement, which we will discuss later in the presentation.

Slide 12: READ SLIDE

Please note that nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that engaged in lobbying activities after December 31, 1995, are not eligible to apply for funding.

Also, note that all Prime Recipients receiving funding under this FOA must be incorporated (or otherwise formed) under the laws of a State or territory of the United States. If a foreign entity applies for funding as a Prime Recipient, it must designate in the Full Application a subsidiary or affiliate incorporated (or otherwise formed) under the laws of a State or territory of the United States to be the Prime Recipient. The Full Application must state the nature of the corporate relationship between the foreign entity and domestic subsidiary or affiliate.

Slide 13: The following types of applications will be deemed nonresponsive and will not be reviewed or considered for an award. Examples of non-responsive applications include:

Undifferentiated research, products, and/or solutions: This FOA seeks innovative solutions that help achieve SETO goals. Incremental advancement of undifferentiated or duplicative efforts is insufficient to meet SETO goals and is not of interest to this FOA.

Projects lacking influential impact from federal funds: This FOA intends to fund projects where Federal funds will provide a clear and measurable impact, (e.g. retiring risk sufficiently for follow-on investment or catalyzing development.) Projects that have sufficient monies and resources to be executed regardless of federal funds are not of interest.

Re-funding the same idea at the same technology readiness level: This FOA does not intend to re-fund prior SETO awardees for the same idea at the same technology readiness level.

Solutions that do not tie to a grid or micro-grid or generic technologies that are not integrated with solar PV.

Slide 14: Under cooperative agreements, there will be what is known as "substantial involvement" between EERE and the Recipient during the performance of the project. READ SLIDE

Slide 15: The cost share requirement for each topic is as shown. Research and Development proposals will carry a cost share requirement of 20%. For topic 1.2 proposals, it is of note that during phase 2 portion, field validation, during year 3 will require a cost share of 50%.

Slide 16: Cost share contributions must be specified in the project budget, verifiable from the Prime Recipient's records, and necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient accomplishment of the project. As all sources of cost share are considered part of total project cost, the cost share dollars will be scrutinized under the same Federal regulations as Federal dollars to the project. Every cost share contribution must be reviewed and approved in advance by the Contracting Officer and incorporated into the project budget before the expenditures are incurred.

Slide 17: Cost Share must be allowable and must be verifiable upon submission of the Full Application. Please refer to this chart for your entity's applicable cost principles. It is imperative that you follow the applicable cost principles when creating your budget for the full application. Every cost share contribution must be allowable under the applicable Federal cost principles, as described in Section IV.J.1 of the FOA.

Slide 18:

Project Teams may provide cost share in the form of cash or in-kind contributions. Cost share may be provided by the Prime Recipient, Subrecipients, or third parties (entities that do not have a role in performing the scope of work). Vendors/Contractors may not provide cost share.

Cash contributions include, but are not limited to: personnel costs, fringe costs, supply and equipment costs, indirect costs and other direct costs.

In-kind contributions are those where a value of the contribution can be readily determined, verified and justified but where no actual cash is transacted in securing the good or service comprising the contribution. Allowable in-kind contributions include, but are not limited to: the donation of space or use of equipment.

Applicants are encouraged to refer to 2 CFR 200.306 as amended by 2 CFR 910.130 & 10 CFR 603.525-555 for additional guidance on cost sharing.

Slide 19: Be aware that there are items that are considered unallowable cost share. If a cost is considered unallowable, it cannot be counted as cost share. This slide provides some examples of cost share that is unallowable.

Slide 20: Cost Share must be provided on an invoice basis, unless a waiver is requested and approved by the DOE Contracting Officer.

Slide 21: EERE's Evaluation and Selection Process is shown in blue here. EERE will review Letters of Intent, Replies to Reviewer Comments (which we will cover later in the presentation), and Full Applications. The gray boxes represent the actions that apply to applicants throughout the FOA process.

Slide 22: Letters of Intent will be used by EERE to plan for the merit review process. In order to submit a Full Application, applicants are <u>REQUIRED</u> to submit a Letter of Intent by November 14, 2018 at 5pm Eastern

Slide 23: The Full Application includes:

Technical Volume: The key technical submission. Applicants submit info pertaining to the technical content, project team members, etc.

SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance: The formal application signed by the authorized representative of the applicant. Includes cost share amounts and Federal certifications and assurances.

EERE 335 Budget & Budget Justification**:** a detailed budget and spend plan for the project. Separate Sub-recipient Budget Justifications may be required.

Summary Slide: Powerpoint slide that provides quick facts about the technology. Slide content requirements are provided in the FOA.

And other Administrative Documents

Slide 24: The key technical component of the full application is the Technical Volume, which helps applicants frame the technical information that the application will be evaluated on. The Technical Volume provides information regarding what the project is, how the project tasks will be accomplished, and the project timetable.

The Technical Volume is comprised of

The Cover Page will be a one page document and provides basic information on their project, such as title, topic area, points of contact, etc.

The Project Overview provides information on project background, goals, impact of EERE funding

The Project Description, Innovation, and Impact section provides information on project relevance and outcomes, feasibility, and innovation/impacts. This ultimately provides the justification as to why EERE should fund the project.

The Summary Statement of Project Objectives (SOPO) or "Workplan" details the proposed milestones and project schedule. If selected for award negotiations, the Workplan serves as the starting point when negotiating the Statement of Project Objectives.

The Technical Qualifications and Resources section provides applicants and opportunity to provide information about the proposed project team and demonstrate how the applicant will facilitate the successful completion of the proposed project.

Full Application may not be more than 20 pages, including the cover page, table of contents, and all citations, charts, graphs, maps, photos, or other graphics. Letters of Commitment do not count towards page limit. The applicant should consider the weighting of each of the evaluation criteria (see Section V.A.2 of the FOA) when preparing the Technical Volume

Slide 25: As we previously pointed out, applicants must submit full applications by December 7th, 2018. EERE will conduct an eligibility review, and full application will be deemed eligible if:

READ SLIDE

Slide 26: Multiple Applications are allowed, provided that each application describes a unique scientifically distinct project.

Slide 27: READ SLIDE

Slide 28: Applications will be evaluated against the following merit review criteria:

READ SLIDE

Slide 29: READ SLIDE

Slide 30: READ SLIDE

Slide 31: The Full Application are reviewed by experts in the FOA topic area(s). After those experts review the applications, EERE will provide applicants with reviewer comments. Applicants will have a brief opportunity to review the comments and prepare a short Reply to Reviewer Comments responding to comments however they desire. The Reply to Reviewer Comments is due by the date and time provided on this slide. Applicants should anticipate receiving the independent reviewer comments approximately three business days before this due date. The Reply to Reviewer Comments is an optional submission; applicants are not required to submit a Reply to Reviewer Comments.

This a **customer centric** process that provides applicants with a unique opportunity to correct misunderstandings and misinterpretations and to provide additional data that might influence the selection process in their favor. The Replies are considered by the reviewers and the selection official.

Replies to Reviewer Comments must conform to the content and form requirements listed here, including maximum page lengths. If a Reply to Reviewer Comments is more than three pages in length, EERE will review only the first three pages and disregard any additional pages.

Please see Sections IV.F. and V.A.3 for additional information regarding Replies to Reviewer Comments

Slide 32: As part of the evaluation and selection process, EERE may invite one or more applicants to participate in Pre-Selection Interviews. Pre-Selection Interviews are distinct from and more formal than pre-selection clarifications (See Section V.D.3 of the FOA). The invited applicant(s) will meet with EERE representatives to provide clarification on the contents of the Full Applications and to provide EERE an opportunity to ask questions regarding the proposed project. The information provided by applicants to EERE through Pre-Selection Interviews contributes to EERE's selection decisions.

EERE will arrange to meet with the invited applicants in person at EERE's offices, a mutually agreed upon location, or virtually via web conference. EERE may also arrange site visits at certain Applicants' facilities.

EERE will not reimburse applicants for travel and other expenses relating to the Pre-Selection Interviews, nor will these costs be eligible for reimbursement as pre-award costs.

EERE may select applications for funding and make awards without Pre-Selection Interviews. Participation in Pre-Selection Interviews with EERE does not signify that applicants have been selected for award negotiations.

Slide 33: READ SLIDE

Slide 34: After the Merit Review process, the Selection Official may consider program policy factors to come to a final selection decision.

READ SLIDE

Slide 35: READ SLIDE

Slide 36: There are several one-time actions before submitting an application in response to this FOA, and it is vital that applicants address these items as soon as possible. Some may take several weeks, and failure to complete them could interfere with an applicant's ability to apply to this FOA, or to meet the negotiation deadlines and receive an award if the application is selected.

DUNS Number
Obtain a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number.

S*ystem for Award Management*
Register with the System for Award Management (SAM). Designating an Electronic Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) and obtaining a special password called an MPIN are important steps in SAM registration. Please update your SAM registration annually. We specifically want to emphasize the importance of SAM registration as we have run into numerous problems in the past. Selections and Awards cannot be made without SAM registration.

Fedconnect
Register in FedConnect. To create an organization account, your organization's SAM MPIN is required.   For more information about the SAM MPIN or other registration requirements, review the FedConnect Ready, Set, Go! Guide at the FedConnect site.

Grants.gov
Register in Grants.gov to receive automatic updates when Amendments to this FOA are posted. However, please note that Letters of Intent, Concept Papers, and Full Applications will not be accepted through Grants.gov.

Slide 37: All required submissions must come through EERE Exchange. EERE will not review or consider applications submitted through any other means.

Slide 38: READ SLIDE

Slide 39: READ SLIDE

Slide 40: READ SLIDE