

Slide 1 – We will keep you muted during this call. If you have questions, please submit them via the chat box.

Slide 2-

Good afternoon, I'm Garrett Nilsen. I'm the Program Manager of the Manufacturing and Competitiveness team at DOE's Solar Energy Technologies Office and the FOA Manager for this Funding Opportunity Announcement. I am here with Fania Barwick, who is the FOA Administrator for the FOA. Thanks very much for joining us. This Funding Opportunity being a collaboration between multiple offices we are also joined by Madeline Salzman from the Building Technologies Office and Mark Smith from the Vehicle Technologies Office. I'd like to give them a moment to introduce themselves.

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Hi everyone, my name is Maddy Salzman and I manage workforce development activities for DOE's Building Technologies Office (or "BTO" for short). The Building Technologies Office focuses on research, development, and demonstration of energy efficient technologies that are found across the U.S.'s 123 million residential and commercial buildings. These technologies include everything from new heating and cooling equipment, thermal storage technologies, building energy management systems, lighting technologies, appliances, windows, and new materials for insulation and air sealing. BTO is excited to be working collaboratively with the Solar Energy and Vehicle Technologies Offices on the EMPOWERED FOA to make progress on training for first responder, building, and safety officials for distributed energy resources that include building technologies.

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Hello, I'm Mark Smith and I am the Program Manager for Technology Integration in DOE's Vehicle Technologies Office. We manage the outreach, education, and demonstration activities for the office. We are excited to play a role in this funding opportunity as it builds upon past work we have done in the area of training for codes & safety officials and first responders as it pertains to alternative fuel vehicles and the fueling infrastructure.

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We will give you an overview of our recently announced Educational Materials for Professional Organizations Working on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Developments (or EMPOWERED) funding program. We still, of course, encourage you to read carefully through the FOA document itself, where you'll find comprehensive information regarding how to apply. Our intention with the webinar today is to summarize the contents of the FOA and make that more accessible and hopefully understandable to those of you on the phone.

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.

If you have questions during this webinar, you can send them to the email address on this slide and we'll post the answers on EERE Exchange. Alternately, you can type in your questions in the chat field 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 all Q&As to EERE Exchange after the webinar.

Slide 3

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.

Slide 4

- All applicants are strongly encouraged to carefully read the Funding Opportunity Announcement DE-FOA-0002258 ("**FOA**") aka EMPOWERED and adhere to the stated submission requirements.
- This presentation summarizes the contents of FOA. If there are any inconsistencies between the FOA and this presentation or statements from DOE personnel, the FOA is the controlling document and applicants should rely on the FOA language and seek clarification from EERE at empowered-workforce@ee.doe.gov.

Slide 5

This slide shows the anticipated schedule for the FOA. The FOA has already been posted. We will cover all requirements for this FOA later in the presentation. Any changes to the FOA schedule will be posted as a modification to the FOA on the EERE Exchange website where you originally found the FOA document.

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The agenda for this presentation is as shown on the 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—FOA Description

The EMPOWERED funding program is a collaborative effort across EERE's Solar Energy Technologies Office (SETO), Vehicle Technologies Office (VTO), and Building Technologies Office (BTO), to provide educational materials and training resources to professionals in fields newly interacting with distributed energy resources (DER). The offices are working together on this opportunity because the technologies our offices fund come together in the built and other environments. The offices would like to deliver information to the target audiences with a single voice to efficiently use government funds and ensure there is not contradictory information provided to the end consumers of the educational materials.

In this program, DER includes distributed solar, like on homes and businesses, as well as efficient building technologies and sustainable transportation technologies, such as electric vehicles.

The goal of this program is to create resources that will help those on the front lines of DER adoption—like first responders, safety officials, and building managers and owners—keep up with these rapidly emerging and advancing technologies.

I want to be sure to emphasize the bolded language. Projects funded under this FOA should both develop educational and training materials, which can mean from scratch or modify existing materials, and test the efficacy of those with the target population. Additionally, and this is important, we are not looking to develop new means by which to deliver these materials. The target professions for this FOA have well developed training delivery pipelines and we would like to see those leveraged as best as possible.

Slide 8 –Topic Areas

Topic Area 1: Emergency Response and Resilience Planning

Topic Area 1 seeks to support the rapid growth of clean energy technologies by training and educating firefighters, first responders, and other relevant emergency response professionals.

Topic Area 2: Safe DER Building Integration: Building, Fire, and Safety Department Officials

Topic Area 2 seeks to support the rapid growth of clean energy technologies by training and educating safety officials, and building managers and owners.

Finally, as noted the FOA, this FOA does not pertain to efforts encouraging, discouraging, or otherwise influencing the National Fire Protection Association, International Code Council, American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers or other code development entities. Proposals seeking to accomplish such tasks will be deemed nonresponsive.

Slide 9- Non-responsive applications

Besides the note I mentioned in the previous slide the following types of applications will be deemed nonresponsive and will not be reviewed or considered for an award:

- Applications that fall outside the technical parameters specified in Section I.A or I.B of the FOA
- Applications for proposed technologies that are not based on sound scientific principles (e.g., violates the law of thermodynamics).
- Applications that propose to develop technology-only solutions.
- Applications focusing on the development of new hardware or software technologies not directly related to the training needs of the target audience.
- Applications that propose to deliver training to professionals whose jobs are not related to the deployment and safety of distributed energy technologies.

Now I will pass the presentation off to Fania Barwick.

Ok. Thank you, Garrett. As Garrett mentioned, my name is Fania Barwick and I am the Administrator for this FOA- I'm going to be walking you through the portion of this presentation which covers some of the structural and the administrative aspects of how to apply for this Funding Opportunity.

Slide 10- Award Information

EERE expects to make approximately \$4.5 million of Federal funding available for new awards under this FOA subject to the availability of appropriated funds. The average award amount is anticipated to range from \$1 to \$2.25 million.

EERE intends to fund cooperative agreements under this FOA. The period of performance will be up to 36 months and there is no cost share requirement.

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EERE has substantial involvement in work performed under awards made following this FOA. EERE does not limit its involvement to the administrative requirements of the award. Instead, EERE has substantial involvement in the direction and redirection of the technical aspects of the project as a whole.

Substantial involvement includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Shared responsibility with the Recipient for the management, control, direction, and performance of the Project.
- EERE may intervene in the conduct or performance of work under this award for programmatic reasons.
- EERE may redirect or discontinue funding the Project based on the outcome of EERE's evaluation of the Project at that the Go/No Go decision point.
- EERE participates in major project decision-making processes.

Slide 12 Cost Sharing Requirements

Cost Sharing Requirements: Cost Share will not be required for this FOA.

This FOA deals with education and outreach activities which do not require cost share contributions. However, cost share is encouraged and will be taken into consideration when evaluating the potential impact of the concept paper and full application.

Slide 13, Cost Share Contributions

If you choose to include cost share, the total budget presented in the application must include both Federal (DOE), and Non-Federal (cost share) portions, thereby reflecting TOTAL PROJECT COSTS proposed. All costs must be verifiable from the Recipient's records and be necessary and reasonable for the accomplishment of the project.

Slide 14, Allowable Cost Share

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.

Slide 15

Cost share provided may be cash and/or in-kind.

It can be provided by the Prime Recipient, subs, or a third party.

Vendors and contractors MAY NOT provide cost share.

Cash contributions may include any costs where cash is transacted during the project.

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 volunteer time or the donation of space or use of equipment. *Please note, for-profit organizations cannot legally donate volunteer time.*

Slide 16

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.

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

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Next we'll talk about the FOA timeline.

Here is the timeline that we expect to follow in the administration of the Funding Opportunity.

- Concept papers are due on May 5.
- Full Applications are July 8.
- The Replies to Reviewer Comments will be due August 11th.
- We expect to notify applicants of Selection or Non-Selection in September.

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Concept Papers are required for this FOA. Concept Papers are brief descriptions of the proposed project. They allow applicants to submit their ideas with minimal time and expense. EERE will provide feedback on the proposed project so the Applicant can make an informed decision whether to expend additional resources to prepare a full application.

If an applicant fails to submit an eligible Concept Paper, the applicant is not eligible to submit a Full Application.

Concept Papers must be submitted by **May 5, at 5pm** through EERE Exchange.

EERE will provide applicants with either an encouraged or discouraged notification.

A “discouraged” notification conveys EERE’s lack of programmatic interest in the proposed project. An applicant who receives a “discouraged” notification may still submit a Full Application.

Slide 20 Concept Paper Review

Concept Paper Review Criteria. Once we receive the concept papers, they'll be evaluated based on consideration of this factor Overall FOA Responsiveness and Viability of the Project. So, just one criteria 100% weight

This criterion involves consideration of the following sub-criteria:

- The applicant clearly describes the
 - proposed solution
 - how the solution is unique and innovative, and
 - how the solution will advance the current state-of-the-art;
- The applicant has identified risks and challenges, including possible mitigation strategies, and has shown the impact that EERE funding and the proposed project would have on the relevant field and application;
- The applicant has the qualifications, experience, capabilities and other resources necessary to complete the proposed project; and
- The proposed work, if successfully accomplished, would clearly meet the objectives as stated in the FOA.

Slide 21 Full Applications

Full Applications must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on July 8th.

This slide details the minimum required documents for a full application. Please carefully review the FOA Application instructions to ensure that all required documents are included in your application package.

Slide 22 Technical Volume

The key technical component of the full application is the Technical Volume, which helps applicants frame the 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 a cover page, project overview, technical description, innovation, and impact, technical qualifications and resources. Please note that the percentages listed here are suggested and are not mandatory.

- The Cover Page provides basic information on the project
- The Project Overview constitutes approximately 20% of the Technical Volume and provides information on project background, goals, and impact of EERE funding
- The Technical Description, Innovation, and Impact section is approximately 60% of the Technical Volume. It 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 Technical Qualifications and Resources section is approximately 20% of the Technical Volume. It 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.

Slide 23 - Eligibility

Full Applications are eligible for review if they are submitted by the application deadline and

- The Applicant is an eligible entity as per Section III.A of FOA;
- The Applicant submitted an eligible Concept Paper;
- The Full Application is compliant with Section III.C of FOA; and
- The proposed project is responsive to the FOA Section III.D of FOA
- Application is Eligible for Review as per Section III of FOA

Slide 24 - Who is Eligible to Apply?

Eligible applicants for this FOA include: all US citizens and lawful permanent residents, for-profit entities, educational institutions, nonprofits, state and local tribal entities.

DOE/NNSA FFRDCs may apply as subrecipients only.

Please note that nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(3) 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 under the laws of a State or territory of the United States and have a physical location for business operations in 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 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. Foreign entities may also request a waiver of the requirement to designate a domestic subsidiary or affiliate as the prime recipient in the Full Application

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Any entity may submit more than one concept paper and Full Application to this FOA, provided that each application describes unique and distinct project and meets all the eligibility requirements that we've discussed.

Garrett will now walk you through the review and selection process

Slide 26

The Merit Review and Selection Process. The Merit Review process consists of multiple phases that include an eligibility review and a thorough technical review of each application that we received. The technical reviews are conducted by reviewers that are experts in the subject matter in which they're reviewing. Ultimately, the selection official considers the recommendations of the reviewers along with other considerations such as the program policy factors to make the selection decisions.

Slide 27 Criterion 1

Technical Merit will be 30% of the scoring weighting. I will not go into details on each of these bullets. Feel free to review them and submit any questions to the FOA inbox.

Slide 28 Criterion 2

Similarly to Technical Merit, the Project Plan will also be 30% of the scoring weighting. In short, we want to be sure the goals of your project are clear and quantifiable to show you have an understanding on how to execute on this kind of work. Again, you can read these in the FOA and submit any questions you might have.

Slide 29 Criterion 3

Finally, Team and resources is the highest weighting at 40%. We want to be sure the team who will do work is well positioned to execute on all goals of the FOA. Once again, you can read these in the FOA and submit any questions you might have.

Slide 30 Replies to Reviewer Comments

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 comments will be provided as soon as all reviews are complete and applicants will be given a minimum 72 business hours to respond ahead of the deadline. 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 the FOA for additional information regarding Replies to Reviewer Comments

Slide 31 Selection factors

The Selection Official may consider the merit review recommendation, program policy factors, and the amount of funds available in arriving at selections for this FOA

Slide 32 Program Policy Factors

After the Merit Review process, the Selection Official may consider program policy factors to come to a final selection decision. In developing your application you may consider these program policy factors.

Slide 33 Registration Requirements

Finally, Registration Requirements. To apply for this FOA, as we mentioned, all applicants must register with and submit application materials through EERE-Exchange. Will not accept application materials submitted any other way. You must obtain a control number at least 24 hours before the first submission deadline. Although not required for the application process, you are also ultimately successful in obtaining an award, you will also have to register with these other government websites and get a DUNS number, a SAM registration, and get registered in FEDConnect.

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Concept papers, Full Applications, Replies to Reviewer comments must be submitted through EERE-Exchange. We will not review or consider applications submitted through any other means.

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Check that you have successfully submitted all application materials on EERE-Exchange. Submissions could be deemed ineligible due to an incorrect entry.

We strongly encourage all applicants to submit their application materials 1 or 2 days prior to the deadline to allow for the upload of application documents and to avoid any potential glitches in EERE-Exchange. Glitches sometimes happen when lots of applicants try to upload their information in the final hours or minutes before the deadline. Please try to submit your application materials in advance of the deadline and make sure you hit the submit button after you upload your materials.

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Please be sure to designate a primary and backup point-of-contact in Exchange with whom we can communicate. It is imperative that those two individuals be responsive to all questions during the award selection negotiation process.

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If you have any questions, you may submit them via the chat box or directly to the FOA inbox and we will respond to those questions and post them on EERE-Exchange. Please make sure that when you do that, you identify the FOA number that you're asking your question in reference to and we'll attempt to respond within 3 business days. Also, if you have any problems with the EERE-Exchange system itself, there's a separate email support you can reach out to

I just want to emphasize for those of you who do have existing projects or contact with our staff, in order to create and maintain as close as we can to a level playing field for everyone, our staff cannot respond to individual questions about the funding opportunity itself or ideas that you may have or feedback you may want on proposals. All questions related to the FOA have to go to the FOA inbox.

Thank you for your time, we look forward to seeing your concept papers.