



## National Incubator Initiative for Clean Energy (NIICE)

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**Second Informational Webinar:  
Pre-Full Application**

**DE-FOA-0001042**

**March 6, 2014**

# Agenda

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- 1) Award Information
- 2) FOA Description
- 3) Topic Areas/Technical Areas of Interest
- 4) Statement of Substantial Involvement
- 5) Cost Sharing
- 6) Full Applications
- 7) Merit Review and Selection Process
- 8) Pre-Selection Interviews
- 9) Selection and Program Policy Factors
- 10) Registration Requirements

# Notice

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- All applicants are strongly encouraged to carefully read the Funding Opportunity Announcement DE-FOA-00010402 (**“FOA”**) and to adhere to the stated submission requirements.
- This presentation summarizes the contents of the 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.
- If you believe there is an inconsistency, please contact [NIICEFOA@go.doe.gov](mailto:NIICEFOA@go.doe.gov).

# Questions

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- Questions about this FOA? Email [NIICEFOA@go.doe.gov](mailto:NIICEFOA@go.doe.gov).
  - All Q&As about this FOA will be posted on EERE Exchange.
  - You must select this specific FOA Number to view the Q&As .
  - EERE will attempt to respond to a question within 3 business days, unless a similar Q&A has already been posted on the website.
- Problems logging into EERE Exchange or uploading and submitting application documents with EERE Exchange? Email [EERE-ExchangeSupport@hq.doe.gov](mailto:EERE-ExchangeSupport@hq.doe.gov).
  - Include FOA name and number in subject line.
- All questions asked during this presentation will be posted on EERE Exchange.

# DE-FOA-0001042

## National Incubator Initiative for Clean Energy

### Anticipated Schedule:

<b>FOA Issue Date:</b>	<b>01/06/2014</b>
<b>Submission Deadline for Concept Papers:</b>	02/21/2014 (closed)
<b>Submission Deadline for Full Applications:</b>	03/21/2014
<b>Reviewer Comments Available to Applicants</b>	04/02/2014
<b>Submission Deadline for Replies to Reviewer Comments:</b>	04/09/2014
<b>Expected Date for EERE Selection Notifications:</b>	05/29/2014
<b>Expected Timeframe for Award Negotiations:</b>	07/09/2014



# Award Information

<b>Total Amount to be Awarded</b>	\$3,000,000*
<b>Average Award Amount</b>	EERE anticipates making awards that range from: Topic 1: \$500K - \$1,000K Topic 2: \$400K - \$765K
<b>Types of Funding Agreements</b>	Cooperative Agreements
<b>Period of Performance</b>	36 months
<b>Cost Share Requirement</b>	50% of Total Project Costs

\*Subject to the availability of appropriated funds

# NIICE Description

The U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) Technology-to-Market Sub-Program is funding a new venture, the National Incubator Initiative for Clean Energy (NIICE). NIICE seeks to advance three goals:

- Improve the performance of existing and new clean energy business incubators across the country by setting high performance standards, fostering best practices, and improving coordination among the incubator community;
- Strengthen support for early-stage companies that are developing high risk technologies and scaling from prototype to domestically-based production; and
- Catalyze investment in early-stage clean energy businesses by improving information regarding capital access for incubators, including disseminating analysis and materials on philanthropic funds, corporate venture, and other innovative financing mechanisms.

## ***National Organization – 1 Anticipated Award***

- Industry feedback, supported by empirical research, has pointed to a need for a central platform and organization to disseminate information in a streamlined format about incubators, as well as to connect entrepreneurs and industry.
- There is also a need for a “one stop shop” for technical due diligence, and for a broader set of experts and mentors to be available to technology developers and investors.



# NIICE FOA: Topic 1 – Continued

## ***National Organization – 1 Anticipated Award***

- NIICE will support a national organization to provide a centralized platform for multiple services, including: aggregating information about incubators; identifying sources of and information about capital, such as VC, grants and foundations; performing technical analysis; assisting with mentoring services; and disseminating information about prototyping capabilities and other manufacturing services provided by incubators.
- A centralized coordinating body will enable start-ups, entrepreneurs, and industry to more easily navigate the incubator and innovation space. This national organization will enable better connections between incubators, and connect industry stakeholders with incubators for greater access to innovative technology being developed across the country.

# NIICE FOA: Topic 2

## ***Individual Incubators – Up to 5 Anticipated Awards***

NIICE will fund incubators to develop and enhance programs that set a benchmark for top-performance in the sector. Through research, experiential analysis, and communication with stakeholders, EERE identified a key set of characteristics and services associated with high-performing incubators.

### Characteristics

- Clean Energy Focus
  - An incubator must have a concentration, either in full or in part, on EERE's technology portfolio.
- Nonprofit Organization
  - Empirical research has shown that top performers, including those funded by DOE, have been nonprofit incubators.
- Strong and Committed Board of Advisors
  - A Board of Advisors must be established, rather than proposed.

# NIICE FOA: Topic 2 Continued

## Characteristics (Cont'd)

- Corporate and Investor Relationships
  - Either directly through the incubator or through relationships with local economic development organizations, strong evidence of corporate and investor relationships is critical.
- Strong Commitment to Data Collection
  - Incubators should collect metrics on start-ups and ventures served, as well as services provided. This includes a plan for a long-term commitment to data collection.
- Emphasis on Hardware
  - While more “Web- heavy” companies still receive support from VCs, there remains a need for an emphasis on high-tech clean energy hardware development.

# NIICE FOA: Topic 2 - Continued

## Services Provided

- Strong Mentorship Program
  - A mentorship program can include Entrepreneurs-in-Residence programs and mentorship networks that are both strong and constantly refreshed.
- Entrepreneurial Training
  - Most incubators focus on training start-ups to build revenue and businesses. These training programs emphasize skills and abilities needed to successfully create and run small businesses, and can include financial planning, marketing, accounting, hiring, computing and other basic business functions. This can potentially include integrating Lean Startup principles.
- Techno-Economic Analysis
  - Providing robust due diligence on the technology, the applications and markets, and the potential technical and market competition can support technology start-ups as they build their company and seek investment.
- Access to Capital and Strategic Partners
  - Incubators should assist early-stage companies in identifying potential investors and strategic partners, facilitating connections, and securing capital.

# NIICE FOA: Topic 2 - Continued

## Services Provided (Cont'd)

- Access to Prototyping and Demo Facilities
  - Incubators should provide in-house, or in partnership with local providers (i.e. labs/universities/organizations), demonstration or prototyping capabilities and equipment. A partnership could be based on minimal fees, reduced fees, or free access to facilities.
- Long-Term Structured Program for Start-ups
  - Incubators should have a long-term structured program for start-ups. Rather than a short timeline (6-12 weeks), incubators should provide support for start-ups as they develop their business and technology plans.
- Physical Site
  - A physical site can provide entrepreneurs space in which to operate their businesses, although the focus of the program should remain on the business assistance services provided to the start-ups.
- Connection to DOE SBIR/STTR
  - Incubators should be connected with the DOE SBIR/STTR programs, both to allow start-ups the opportunities to apply to grants, and to serve as a point of connection for companies previously funded through SBIR/STTR as a next step for further developing their small businesses.

# Statement of Substantial Involvement

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

- EERE shares responsibility with the Prime Recipient for the management, control, direction, and performance of work under this award;
- EERE reviews and approves in a timely manner project plans, including project management, testing and technology transfer plans, and recommends alternate approaches if the plans do not address the critical programmatic issues;
- EERE participates in project management planning activities, including risk analysis, to ensure EERE Technology Office requirements or limitations are considered in performance of the work elements;



# Statement of Substantial Involvement - Continued

- EERE may intervene in the conduct or performance of work under this Award for programmatic reasons. Intervention includes the interruption or modification of the conduct or performance of project activities;
- EERE promotes and facilitates technology transfer activities, including disseminating Technology Office results through presentations and publications;
- EERE may redirect or discontinue funding projects that fail to fully and satisfactorily complete the work described in the Statement of Project Objectives as evaluated at the Go/No Go decision points;
- EERE participates in major project decision-making processes; and
- More information on Substantial Involvement can be found in Section VI.C.8 of the FOA.

# Cost Sharing Requirements

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## Cost Share - 50%

- The cost share must be at least 50% of the total allowable costs for projects funded under this FOA and must come from non-Federal sources, unless otherwise allowed by law.
- To assist Applicants in calculating proper cost share amounts, EERE has included a cost share information sheet and sample cost share calculation as Appendices B and C in the FOA.

# Allowable Cost Share

- Cost Share must be allowable and must be verifiable upon submission of the Full Application.
- Refer to the following applicable Federal cost principles:

Entity	Cost Principles
Educational Institutions	2 C.F.R. §220
State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments	2 C.F.R. §225
Nonprofit Organizations	2 C.F.R. §230
For-profit Organizations	48 C.F.R. §31

# Allowable Cost Share - Continued

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- Cash Contributions
  - May be provided by the Prime Recipient, Subrecipients, or a Third Party.
- In-Kind Contributions
  - Can include, but are not limited to: personnel costs, indirect costs, facilities and administrative costs, rental value of buildings or equipment, and the value of a service, other resource, or third party in-kind contribution.

# Unallowable Cost Share

The Prime Recipient may not use the following sources to meet its cost share obligations including, but not limited to:

- Revenues or royalties from the prospective operation of an activity beyond the project period;
- Proceeds from the prospective sale of an asset of an activity;
- Federal funding or property;
- Expenditures reimbursed under a separate Federal Technology Office;
- Independent research and development (IR&D) funds; and
- The same cash or in-kind contributions for more than one project or program.

# Cost Share Contributions

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- Contributions must be:
  - Specified in the project budget;
  - Verifiable from the Prime Recipient's records;
  - Necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient accomplishment of 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.



# Cost Share Payment

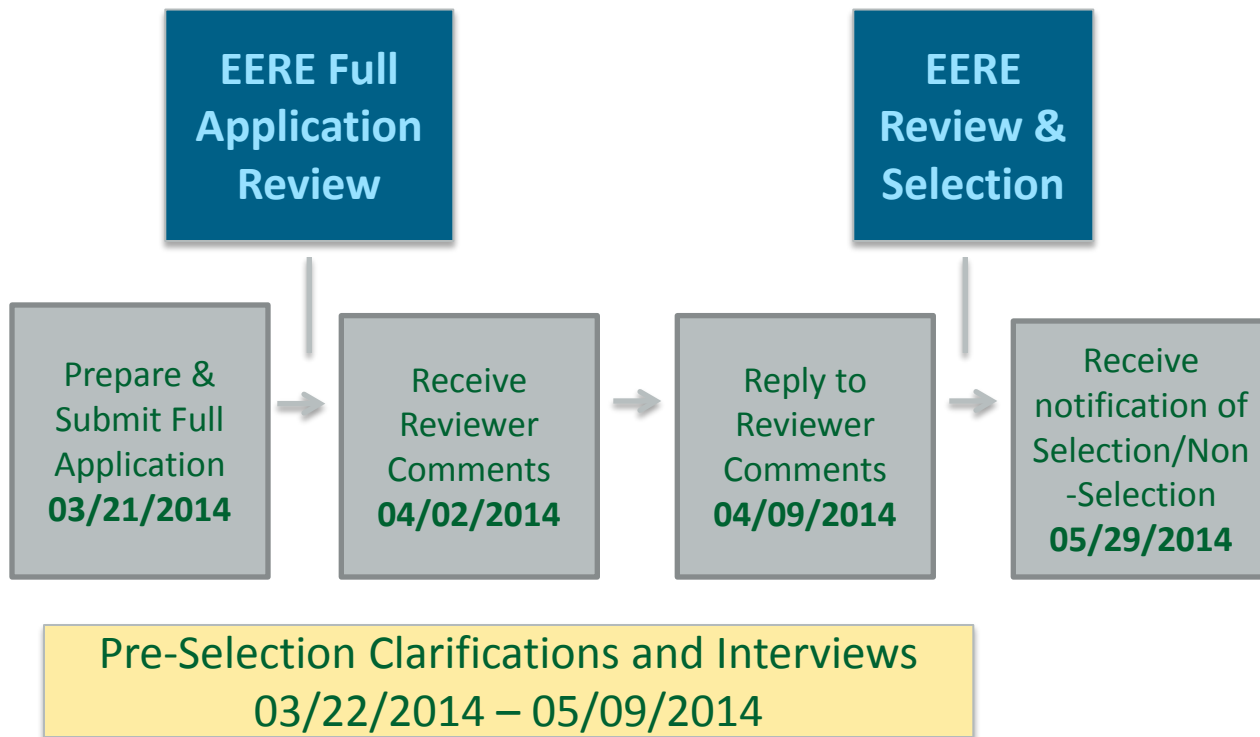
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- Prime Recipients must provide documentation of the cost share contribution, incrementally over the life of the award.
- The cumulative cost share percentage provided on each invoice must reflect, at a minimum, the cost sharing percentage negotiated.

# Cost Share Payment - Continued

- In limited circumstances, the Prime Recipient may submit a waiver request to meet its cost share requirements on a less frequent basis, such as monthly or quarterly.
- Such waiver requests must be sent by email to the Contracting Officer during award negotiations and include:
  - 1) A detailed justification for the request;
  - 2) A proposed schedule of payments, including amounts and dates;
  - 3) A written commitment to meet that schedule; and
  - 4) Such evidence as necessary to demonstrate that the Prime Recipient has complied with its cost share obligations to-date.
- The Contracting Officer must approve all such requests before they may go into effect.

# FOA Review Timeline



EERE anticipates making awards by **07/09/2014**

# Full Application Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must submit a Full Application by March 21, 2014

- Full Applications are eligible for review if:
  - The Applicant is an eligible entity per Section III.A of FOA;
  - The Applicant submitted an eligible Concept Paper;
  - The Cost Share requirement is satisfied Section III.B of FOA;
  - The Full Application is compliant Section III.C of FOA;
  - The proposed project is responsive to Section III.D of FOA;  
and
  - The Full Application meets any other eligibility requirements listed in Section III of the FOA.

# Who's Eligible to Apply?

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Eligible applicants for this FOA include:

- 1) Individuals
- 2) Domestic Entities
- 3) Foreign Entities
- 4) Incorporated Consortia
- 5) Unincorporated Consortia

For more detail about eligible applicants, please see Section III.A of the FOA.

# Multiple Applications

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- Applicants may apply to both topic areas, however Applicants must have submitted one Concept Paper for each topic and submit a Full Application for each topic area of this FOA.
  - This limitation does not prohibit an Applicant from collaborating on other applications (e.g., as a potential Subrecipient or partner) so long as the entity is only listed as the Prime Applicant on one Full Application submitted under this FOA.



# Multiple Applications - Continued

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- Applicants may only submit one Full Application for each topic area of this FOA.
- If an Applicant submits more than one Full Application, EERE will only consider the last timely submission for evaluation.
- Any other submissions received listing the same Applicant will be considered non-compliant and not eligible for further consideration.

# Full Applications

The Full Application includes:

- **Technical Volume:** The key technical submission, with information relating 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.
- **SF-424A Budget & Budget Justification:** A detailed budget and spend plan for the project.
- **Summary for Public Release**
- **Summary Slide**
- **Administrative Documents:** E.g., FFRDC Authorization (if applicable), Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

# Full Applications: Technical Volume Content

## Technical Volume:

The key technical component of the Full Application

Content of Technical Volume	Suggested % of Technical Volume
Cover Page	
Project Overview	10%
Program Description, Innovation and Impact	25%
Workplan	50%
Technical Qualifications and Resources	15%

# Merit Review and Selection Process - Full Applications

- The Merit Review process consists of multiple phases that each include an initial eligibility review and a thorough technical review.
- Rigorous technical reviews are conducted by reviewers that are experts in the subject matter of the FOA.
- Ultimately, the Selection Official considers the recommendations of the reviewers, along with other considerations such as program policy factors, to make the selection decisions.

# Technical Merit Review Criteria

## Criterion 1: Technical Merit, Innovation, and Impact (40%)

### Technical Merit and Innovation

- Extent to which the proposed program or process is innovative and has the potential to advance the state of the sector;
- Extent to which the application specifically and convincingly demonstrates how the applicant will advance performance and best practices; and
- Sufficiency of technical detail in the application to assess whether the proposed work is meritorious and revolutionary, including relevant data, discussion of prior work, literature review, and analysis that supports the viability of the proposed work.

### Impact of Advancement

- How the project supports the topic area objectives and target specifications and metrics; and
- The potential impact of the project on advancing sector best practices and increasing market acceleration.

# Technical Merit Review Criteria - Continued

## Criterion 2: Project Research and Commercialization Plan (40%)

### Research Approach and Workplan

- Degree to which the approach and critical path have been clearly described and thoughtfully considered; and
- Degree to which the task descriptions are clear, detailed, timely, and reasonable, resulting in a high likelihood that the proposed workplan will succeed in meeting the project goals.

### Identification of Programmatic Risks

- Discussion and demonstrated understanding of the key risk areas involved in the proposed work, and the quality of the mitigation strategies to address them.

### Baseline, Metrics, and Deliverables

- The level of clarity in the definition of the baseline, metrics, and milestones;
- Relative to a clearly defined baseline, the strength of the quantifiable metrics, milestones, and mid-point deliverables defined in the application, such that meaningful interim progress will be made.



# Technical Merit Review Criteria - Continued

## Criterion 2, Continued

### Market Transformation Plan

- Identification of target market, competitors, and distribution channels for proposed program along with known or perceived barriers to market penetration, including mitigation plan; and
- Comprehensiveness of sustainability plan including but not limited to product development and/or service plan, financing, product marketing, legal/regulatory considerations including intellectual property, infrastructure requirements, data dissemination, and product distribution.
- The strength of a plan that promotes sustained movement of clean energy technologies into the marketplace beyond the award period.

# Technical Merit Review Criteria - Continued

## Criterion 3: Team and Resources (20%)

- The capability of the Principal Investigator(s) and the proposed team to address all aspects of the proposed work with a good chance of success. Qualifications, relevant expertise, and time commitment of the individuals on the team;
- The sufficiency of the facilities to support the work;
- Degree to which the proposed consortia/team demonstrates the ability to facilitate and expedite further development and commercial deployment of the clean energy technologies;
- Level of participation by project participants as evidenced by letter(s) of commitment and how well they are integrated into the workplan; and
- Reasonableness of budget and spend plan for proposed project and objectives.

# Replies to Reviewer Comments

- EERE provides applicants with reviewer comments.
- Applicants have approximately three business days to prepare a Reply to Reviewer Comments (“Reply”) to respond to comments.
  - Page Limit: 3 Pages, including charts, graphs, etc.
- Applicants are not required to submit a Reply. It is optional.
- To be considered by EERE, a Reply must be submitted by the deadline and submitted through EERE Exchange.
- Please see Sections IV.F. and V.A.3 of the FOA for additional information regarding Replies to Reviewer Comments.

# Pre-Selection Interviews

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- EERE may invite one or more applicants to participate in Pre-Selection Interviews.
- All interviews will be conducted in the same format.
- 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.
- Participation in Pre-Selection Interviews with EERE does not signify that applicants have been selected for award negotiations.

# Selection Factors

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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.

# Selection Factors - Program Policy

The Selection Official may consider the following program policy factors in making selection decisions:

- The degree to which the proposed project, including proposed cost share, optimizes the use of available EERE funding to achieve programmatic objectives;
- The level of industry involvement and demonstrated ability to commercialize energy or related technologies;
- Technical, market, organizational, and environmental risks associated with the project;
- Whether the proposed project is likely to lead to increased employment and manufacturing in the United States;
- Whether the proposed project will accelerate transformational technological advances in areas that industry by itself is not likely to undertake because of technical and financial uncertainty; and
- The degree to which the proposed project directly addresses EERE's statutory mission and strategic goals.

# Registration Requirements

- To apply to this FOA, Applicants must register with and submit application materials through EERE Exchange: <https://eere-exchange.energy.gov>.
- Use the “control number” associated with the Concept Paper submission.
- Although not required to submit an Application, the following registrations must be complete to received an award under this FOA:

Registration Requirement	Website
DUNS Number	<a href="http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform">http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform</a>
SAM	<a href="https://www.sam.gov">https://www.sam.gov</a>
FedConnect	<a href="https://www.fedconnect.net">https://www.fedconnect.net</a>
Grants.gov	<a href="http://www.grants.gov">http://www.grants.gov</a>

# Means of Submission

- Full Applications and Replies to Reviewer Comments must be submitted through EERE Exchange at:  
<https://eere-Exchange.energy.gov>
  - EERE will not review or consider applications submitted through other means.
- The Users' Guide for Applying to the Department of Energy EERE Funding Opportunity Announcements can be found at <https://eere-Exchange.energy.gov/Manuals.aspx>



# Key Submission Points

- Check entries in EERE Exchange.
  - Submissions could be deemed ineligible due to an incorrect entry .
- EERE strongly encourages Applicants to submit 1-2 days prior to the deadline to allow for full upload of application documents and to avoid any potential technical glitches with EERE Exchange.
- Make sure you hit the submit button.
  - Any changes made after you hit submit will un-submit your application and you will need to hit the submit button again.
- For your records, print out the EERE Exchange Confirmation page at each step, which contains the application's Control Number.

# Applicant Points-of-Contact

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- Applicants must designate primary and backup points-of-contact in EERE Exchange with whom EERE will communicate to conduct award negotiations.
- It is imperative that the Applicant/Selectee be responsive during award negotiations and meet negotiation deadlines.
  - Failure to do so may result in cancellation of further award negotiations and rescission of the Selection.

# Questions

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