U.S. DEPARTMENT of ENERGY | Office of Critical Minerals and Energy Innovation

Critical Minerals and Materials Accelerator Informational NOFO Webinar

cmmaccelerator@ee.doe.gov

WELCOME

This webinar is being recorded and will be published on the DOE Funding Opportunity Exchange website.

You will not be able to connect to DOE personnel or other participants via voice or video conferencing in today's webinar.

All prospective Applicants that have general NOFO questions, or questions during this webinar, are directed to send them to the Question-and-Answer email address found here (and later in the webinar): cmmacceleratornofo@ee.doe.gov.

DOE will attempt to respond to a question within three (3) business days unless a similar question and answer has already been posted on the website.

Notice

NO NEW INFORMATION OTHER THAN THAT PROVIDED IN THE NOFO DOCUMENTS WILL BE DISCUSSED IN THE WEBINAR.

- There are no particular advantages or disadvantages to the application evaluation process with respect to participating in the webinar today.
- Your participation is completely voluntary.
- All applicants are strongly encouraged to carefully read the Notice of Funding Opportunity DE-FOA-0003589 (“NOFO”) and adhere to the stated submission requirements.
- This presentation summarizes the contents of the NOFO. If there are any inconsistencies between the NOFO and this presentation or statements from DOE personnel, the NOFO is the controlling document, and applicants should rely on the NOFO language.

Presenters

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Agenda

1. Funding Opportunity Overview
2. Phase One Topic and Subtopic Areas
3. Phase Two Overview
4. Submission Details
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   - 5.3 Cost Sharing Requirements
5. Merit Review and Selection Process
6. Method of Inquiry

Funding Opportunity Details

U.S. DEPARTMENT of ENERGY | Office of Critical Minerals and Energy Innovation

Critical Minerals and Materials Accelerator Notice of Funding Opportunity DE-FOA-0003589

ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE:

Notice of Funding Opportunity Issue Date	4/7/2026
Informational Webinar	4/16/2026
Required Letter of Intent Deadline for All Topic Areas	4/21/2026
Application Deadline – Topic Area 1	5/26/2026
Application Deadline – Topic Area 2	6/22/2026
Application Deadline – Topic Area 3	7/20/2026
Anticipated Selection Notification Date	July – August 2026
Anticipated Award Date	September – December 2026
Estimated Period of Performance	December 2026 – December 2029

All timelines tentative and subject to change.

Funding Opportunity Description

This funding provides **up to $69 million** to support collaborative industry partnerships **to prototype and pilot innovative processing technologies** that are currently only proven at the bench scale to address critical minerals and materials challenges in high-impact areas.

The CMM Accelerator Program establishes a pipeline to **support these mid-stage innovations to technology maturation** to ultimately unlock private capital investments.

It also will **leverage other DOE lab-based activities**, such as the Critical Materials Innovation Hub (CMI Hub) and the Minerals to Materials Supply Chain Research Facility (METALLIC), along with DOE's Critical Materials Collaborative (CMC).

Funding Opportunity Goals and Cost Share

Foster industry partnerships to prototype and pilot technologies.

Derisk and validate the effectiveness of technologies and processes that reduce critical materials demand.

Enable informed decisions, optimize processes, and build confidence in technology scale up through Life-Cycle Assessment and Techno-Economic Analysis.

Address the urgency to meet material demand with secure manufacturing technologies to access untapped and under-explored resources.

Cost Share Requirements

Phase 1: 20% minimum | Phase 2: 50% minimum

Funding Opportunity Overview

Phase 1: Prototype-scale Funding Opportunity

Topic Area 1	Topic Area 2	Topic Area 3
Production and material efficiency for critical materials including rare earth elements **Approx. Total Available Funding:** $24 million **Anticipated Number of Awards:** 10 – 14 **Approx. Dollar Amount of Individual Awards:** Up to $2 million	Processes to refine and alloy gallium, gallium nitride, germanium, and silicon carbide for use in semiconductors **Approx. Total Available Funding:** $6 million **Anticipated Number of Awards:** 1 – 5 **Approx. Dollar Amount of Individual Awards:** Up to $2 million	Cost-competitive direct lithium extraction, separation, and processing, exploration, and co-production **Approx. Total Available Funding:** $23 million **Anticipated Number of Awards:** 10 – 21 **Approx. Dollar Amount of Individual Awards:** Up to $3 million (varies by subtopic)

Phase 2: Pilot-scale Funding Opportunity

Approx. Total Available Funding: $16 million | **Anticipated Number of Awards:** 0 – 4
Approx. Dollar Amount of Individual Awards: Up to $8 million

Points of Note

- Letters of Intent are **required** to submit Full Applications for this funding opportunity.
- This NOFO has 3 topic areas.
  - April 21st, 2026, is the Letter of Intent deadline for all 3 topic areas.
  - Each topic area has a **unique deadline** for full applications.

Topic Area 1: 5/26/2026	Topic Area 2: 6/22/2026	Topic Area 3: 7/20/2026

  - Each topic area has a **unique NOFO webpage** on eere-exchange.energy.gov.

Topic Area 1 Exchange link	Topic Area 2 Exchange link	Topic Area 3 Exchange link

- This NOFO is divided into two phases: **prototyping** and **pilot demonstration**.
  - Projects from **Topic Areas 1, 2, and 3A** that complete Phase 1 will be **eligible to compete for Phase 2** funding through a **down-select process**.

Technical Scope Requirements

The CMM Accelerator Program targets innovative CMM production technologies that have demonstrated promising results at the bench scale (**Technology Readiness Level 3-4**) but require further development to achieve commercial viability.

Topic Area	Materials of Interest	Goal
1	rare earth elements (particularly magnet rare earth elements neodymium, praseodymium, dysprosium and terbium), gallium, germanium, silicon, nickel, cobalt, copper, aluminum, and electrical steel	prototype recycling and recovery methods for these CMMs from various secondary sources
2	gallium (Ga), gallium nitride (GaN), germanium (Ge), and silicon carbide (SiC)	extract and purify these elements to semiconductor-grade specifications, and/or form them into alloyed compositions or specific material presentations, suitable for downstream product manufacturing
3	lithium from brine and clay sources	develop cost-competitive methods to extract, separate, and process lithium from brine and clay sources

Phase One Topic and Subtopic Areas

U.S. DEPARTMENT of ENERGY | Office of Critical Minerals and Energy Innovation

Topic Area 1

Production and material efficiency for critical materials, including rare earth elements

Approx. Total Available Funding: $24 million | **Anticipated Number of Awards:** 10 – 14
Approx. Dollar Amount of Individual Awards: Up to $2 million per project

Inclusive of the following subtopics:

1A	1B	1C
Recovery and production from postindustrial manufacturing scrap	*Recovery and production from postconsumer scrap (with an emphasis on electronic waste and drivetrains)*	*Recovery and production from blended feedstocks including mine tailings, postindustrial scrap, and postconsumer scrap*

Project Timeline: Advancing technologies from TRL 3 to TRL 6 within a 12–18-month project timeline. [Proposals for R&D concepts advancing from TRL 2 to TRL 6 over a 24–36-month period are also permissible.]

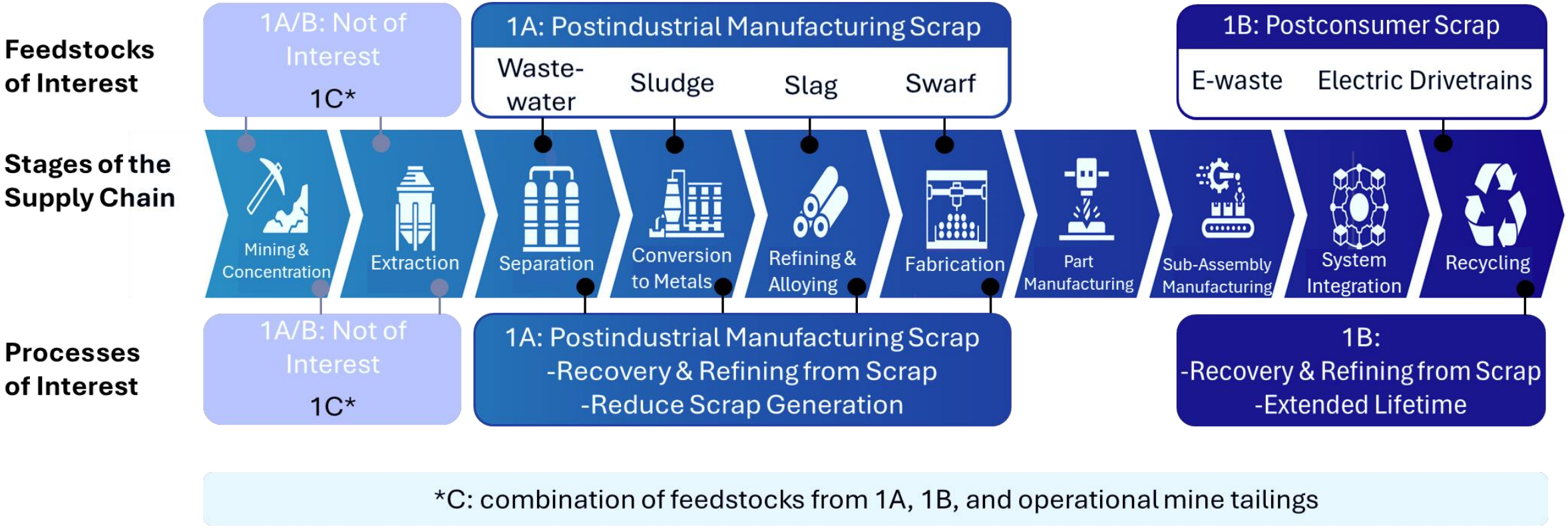
Topic Area 1

Production and material efficiency for critical materials, including rare earth elements

Applications of Interest Include:
Translational recycling technologies that can be tailored to recover different target materials.
Projects that co-produce multiple CMM and other valuable commodities contained in a given waste stream.
Projects that valorize by-production of a singular high-value CMM such as cobalt or strategically important CMM that can readily close the gap between domestic supply and demand such as gallium or germanium.
Improvements to refining and manufacturing processes that reduce the generation of CMM waste such as reduction or elimination of defects.

Topic Area 1

Production and material efficiency for critical materials, including rare earth elements



Subtopic 1A

Recovery and production from postindustrial manufacturing scrap

- **Postindustrial manufacturing scrap is defined as:**
  Waste generated during the refining of intermediate CMM products and waste containing CMM generated during the refining of other primary metal products or manufacturing of components that contain CMM.
- **Examples of scrap feedstocks of interest include, but are not limited to:**
  Slag generated from steel making, magnet swarf generated from griding and cutting magnet blocks, Version 4.0 Page 30 of 76 Notice of Funding Opportunity, Part 1 copper anode slimes generated during copper refining, and sludge generated during zinc refining.
- Projects can:
  - Advance processes to recover CMM from scrap.
  - Recover and refine intermediate products or purified products from CMM scrap.
  - Reduce waste generation during the production of intermediate products, refined/purified products, or fabricated components.

Subtopic 1B

Recovery and production from postconsumer scrap

- Postconsumer scrap of interest includes **electronic waste (e-waste)** and **electric drivetrains** containing permanent magnet machines (motors or generators).
  - **Note:** Postconsumer lithium batteries are **not** of interest.
- **For purposes of this NOFO, e-waste is defined as:** Waste electrical and electronic equipment such as consumer electronics, home appliances, medical or office equipment, and anything else powered by electricity.
- **Electric drivetrains refer to:** Any permanent magnet machine-containing drivetrain. Devices that contain permanent magnet motors or actuators such as heat pumps and power tools are **considered e-waste.**

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2"></th><th>E-waste</th><th>Electric Drivetrains</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Valorization</td><td colspan="2">• Collection</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">• Disassembly
• Sorting
• Multi-material recovery</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Specific Challenges</td><td rowspan="2">• Hard disk drive recycling
• Integration of CMM separation into existing recycling infrastructure.</td><td rowspan="2">• Short loop recycling of electrical steel
• Removal of impurities to enable secondary production of high-purity copper and aluminum</td></tr>
<tr></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">• Power electronics recycling
• Efficient separation of critical materials from components</td></tr>
</table>

Subtopic 1C

Recovery and production from combinations of feedstocks including mine tailings, postindustrial scrap, and postconsumer scrap

- By developing processes that can refine CMM from multiple feedstocks, we can introduce agility into the midstream of CMM supply chains.
- **These feedstocks may include:**
  - Postconsumer scrap.
  - Postindustrial manufacturing scrap.
  - Operational mine tailings (such as phosphoric acid sludge, red mud from bauxite).
  - Tailings from metal mines (such as nickel, gold, copper and platinum).

- **Note:** Projects that solely focus on one feedstock type are **not** of interest. Fossil fuel-derived mine tailings and legacy mine tailings are **not** of interest.

Topic Area 2

Processes to refine and alloy gallium, gallium nitride, germanium, and silicon carbide

Approx. Total Available Funding: $6 million | **Anticipated Number of Awards:** 1 – 5
Approx. Dollar Amount of Individual Awards: Up to $2 million per project

Prototyping initiatives for processes that can take primary or secondary feedstocks, extract and purify these elements to semiconductor-grade specifications, and/or form them into alloyed compositions or specific material presentations (e.g., powders, boules, ingots, single crystals) suitable for downstream product manufacturing.

	Extraction	Purification	Refining	Alloying/ Reduction	Crystallization, powder, ingot, boule formation	Recycling
Ga/ GaN	From secondary sources*	4N purity	6N purity	GaN	Ga and GaN	See topic 1B
Ge	From secondary sources	4N purity	6N purity GeO2	Reduction	Ge crystal growth, wafering, powder deposition	See topic 1B
SiC	Electronic-grade Si	6N purity Si	8N purity Si, minimize detrimental contaminants	SiC powder	SiC boule	See topic 1B

Project Timeline: Advancing technologies from TRL 3 to TRL 6 within a 12–24-month project timeline. [Proposals for R&D concepts advancing from TRL 2 to TRL 6 over a 24–36-month period are also permissible.]

Topic Area 3

Cost-competitive direct lithium extraction, separation, processing, exploration, and co-production

Approx. Total Available Funding: $23 million | **Anticipated Number of Awards:** 10 – 21
Inclusive of the following subtopics:

	3A	3B	3C
Topic Area Description	*Cost-competitive direct lithium extraction*	*Advancing pre- and post-treatment and disposal technologies for direct lithium extraction*	*Exploration and characterization of critical materials and rare earth elements from volcanic-hosted geothermal systems*
Office	Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Technologies Office	Office of Geothermal	Office of Geothermal
Approx. Total Available Funding	$8 million	$9 million	$6 million
Anticipated Number of Awards	4 – 6	3 – 9	3 – 6
Approx. Dollar Amount of Individual Awards	Up to $2 million	$1 million – $3 million	$1 million – $3 million

Topic Area 3

Cost-competitive direct lithium extraction, separation, processing, exploration, and co-production

POINTS OF NOTE:

1. Under Topic Area 3 **only**, applicants are permitted to submit one application under each subtopic area. Applicants are **not** allowed to submit multiple applications under the same subtopic.

2. DOE Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) as the Prime Applicant – Topic Areas 3B & 3C **Only**.

Subtopic 3A: Cost-competitive direct lithium extraction

Total Available Funding: $8 million	**Anticipated Number of Awards:** 4 – 6
Anticipated Award Funding: Up to $2 million	**Award Length:** Up to 24 months

Applications under this subtopic must seek to derisk technologies and ultimately reduce the cost of producing lithium domestically.

- Proposals should focus on developing DLE prototypes that demonstrate a clear pathway to cost-competitive lithium production in the U.S. using real-world, relevant lithium feedstock (e.g., geothermal brines, Smackover brine, produced water) for technology validation.
- Projects should prioritize advancements that improve economic viability by reducing chemical intensity, enhancing chemical re-use, lowering capital and operating costs, and improving energy and water efficiency.
- DLE technologies may include but are not limited to adsorption, ion-exchange, membrane, electrochemical, magnetic, or a combination of technologies.
- Other DLE technologies that show significant potential for cost reduction compared to current DLE approaches are of interest.

Subtopic 3B: Advancing pre- and post- treatment and disposal technologies for direct lithium extraction

Total Available Funding: $9 million

Anticipated Number of Awards: 3 – 9

Anticipated Award Funding: $1 million – $3 million

Award Length: 12 – 24 months

Applications under this subtopic must address pretreatment and/or posttreatment of a geothermal brine that increase the selectivity, yield, and purity of DLE process and reduce the steps needed to produce a battery-grade lithium product. Applications must also address removal or reduction of materials that directly affect the selection of lithium during extraction process, and/or reduce posttreatment of lithium material to achieve battery-grade product.

Projects may seek to demonstrate:

- Reduced number of steps needed to pre-treat or post-treatment of geothermal brine to achieve a market-ready or battery-grade product.
- Reduced cost of pre-treatment technologies.
- Reduced or reused water, reagent, and energy consumption.
- Ensuring pre-treatment technologies can integrate with downstream DLE technologies.
- Ensuring all economic minerals are extracted.
- Documenting proper disposal of materials post mineral extraction.

Subtopic 3C: Exploration and characterization of critical materials and rare earth elements from volcanic-hosted geothermal systems

Total Available Funding: $6 million

Anticipated Award Funding: $1 million – $3 million

Anticipated Number of Awards: 3 – 6

Award Length: 12 – 36 months

Applications under this subtopic must explore and characterize critical materials and REEs of economic quantities found in geothermal brines that are hosted in volcanic systems, and address:

1. What economic critical material(s) and/or REEs are found in a resource, and what are the quantities?
2. What controls the concentration of these critical material(s) and/or REEs, what are the potential sources, what controls the solubility, and what are the transport mechanisms (i.e., how are these materials getting into the geothermal brines)?
3. How fast will these resources decrease over time due to co-production of geothermal power or direct use generation and extraction of critical material(s) and/or REEs?
4. What is the size and nature of the geothermal resource, and what are the potential geothermal power or direct use applications at the site?

Phase Two Overview

Will Handy

Technical Project Officer

Phase Two Overview

Pilot-scale Funding Opportunity

Approx. Total Available Funding: $16 million | **Anticipated Number of Awards:** 0 – 4
Approx. Dollar Amount of Individual Awards: Up to $8 million per project

Awarded projects from Topics 1, 2, and 3A only will be eligible to compete for a subsequent Phase 2 pilot-scale funding opportunity through a **down-select process,** provided they:

- Successfully complete Phase 1 work and establish a compelling business case.
- Develop necessary partnerships.
- Secure commitments for a **50% cost-share**.

Note: Total project cost share % will be the combination of Phase 1 costs with 20% minimum cost share and Phase 2 costs with 50% minimum cost share.

Submission Details

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Submission Timeline

Note: This NOFO has final application deadlines specific to topic area.

All timelines tentative and subject to change.

All deadlines are 5:00 p.m. ET unless indicated otherwise.

MAY 26, 2026
Full Applications Due: Topic Area 1
Unique Exchange Application Link: Topic Area 1

JULY 20, 2026
Full Applications Due: Topic Area 3
Unique Exchange Application Link: Topic Area 3

SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER 2026
Anticipated Award Date

2026

April | May | June | July | August | September | October | November | December

APRIL 21, 2026
Required Letters of Intent Due
For All Topic Areas

JUNE 22, 2026
Full Applications Due: Topic Area 2
Unique Exchange Application Link: Topic Area 2

JULY- AUGUST 2026
Timeframe for DOE Selection Notifications

Means of Submission

- Letters of Intent and Full Applications **must** be submitted through DOE Funding Opportunity Exchange at https://eere-exchange.energy.gov.
- CMEI **will not** review or consider applications submitted through other means.
- For questions related to the DOE Funding Opportunity Exchange registration and application process, email EERE-ExchangeSupport@hq.doe.gov.

Letters of Intent

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Letters of Intent

The application process includes multiple submission phases: a Letter of Intent and a Full Application. Letters of Intent are **required** to submit Full Applications for this funding opportunity. If you do not submit a Letter of Intent, you cannot submit an application.

Applicants are required to submit a Letter of Intent by April 21, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. ET.

- The submission should **not** contain any proprietary or sensitive business information.
- DOE does not use Letters of Intent to determine which applications will be considered for award, and you are not obligated to apply after you submit your letter.
- You are not bound to the statements made in your Letter of Intent; it is reasonable for project partners, locations, or other factors to change during the application development process.
- DOE will not provide feedback on the Letters of Intent.

Letters of Intent

- The Letter of Intent is a web form in DOE Funding Opportunity Exchange; it is not a letter that needs to be attached and uploaded.
- To begin the Letter of Intent, click on either the Announcement Number or Title of the applicable funding opportunity in Exchange. Then, click the 'Apply' button to create the Letter of Intent.
- Each applicant should provide the adjacent information as part of the Letter of Intent:
- The letter of intent must have an abstract, which should be a short explanation of the proposed project.
- Please see NOFO Part 1 Section 4.C for full abstract requirements.

Letter of Intent Requirements	
Project Title	Be consistent with the project title across all application documents.
Technical Topic or Area	List the topic number and title planned for your application.
Lead Organization	Provide the complete legal name of the lead organization.
Percentage Effort Performed by the Lead Organization	Provide the percentage effort the lead organization will perform in terms of overall budget percentage.
Organization Type	Include your organization type: • Academic • Federal Government • Federally Funded Research and Development (FFRDC) • Government Owned and Operated (GOGO) • Indian/Native American Tribal Government • Individual • Large Business • Non-Profit • Small Business • State or Local Government
Recipient Technical Point of Contact (POC)	Provide the name and title for the Principal Investigator (PI) or Lead Project Manager (LPM)

NOFO Applicant Eligibility

Eligible applicants for this NOFO include:

1. U.S. citizens and lawful U.S. permanent residents.
2. For-profit entities.
3. Educational institutions.
4. Nonprofits.
5. State, local, and tribal government entities.
6. DOE/NNSA FFRDCs.

For more detail about eligible applicants, please see NOFO Part 1 Section II.A.

Nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that engaged in lobbying activities after December 31, 1995, are not eligible to apply for funding.

Prime Recipients must be in must be incorporated (or otherwise formed) under the laws of a State or territory of the United States and have a physical location for business operations in the United States. See Section II.A.ii for requirements applicable to foreign entities applying under this NOFO.

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Full Applications

Full Application Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must submit a Full Application by the following deadlines:

Topic Area 1: 5/26/2026	Topic Area 2: 6/22/2026	Topic Area 3: 7/20/2026

Full Applications are eligible for review if:

- The Applicant is an eligible entity pursuant to NOFO Part 1 Section II.A;
- The Full Application is compliant pursuant to NOFO Part 1 Section VI.C.1;
- The Full Application is responsive to the NOFO Part 1 Section VI.B;
- The Full Application meets any other eligibility requirements listed in NOFO Part 1 Section II.

Under normal conditions (i.e., at least 48 hours BEFORE the submission deadline): Applicants should ALLOW AT LEAST ONE HOUR to complete the DOE Funding Opportunity Exchange submission process for a Full Application.

Limitation on Number of Applications Eligible for Review

Type	Topic Area 1 (All Subtopics)	Topic Area 2	Topic Area 3A	Topic Area 3B	Topic Area 3C
Limited to 1 Full Application per Topic Area	✓	✓			
Limited to 1 Full Application per Subtopic Area			✓	✓	✓

- If an entity submits more than one application, the DOE will only review the last submission.
- This limitation does not prohibit an applicant from collaborating on other applications (e.g., as a potential subrecipient or partner)
- These limitations do not apply to Letters of Intent

Full Application: Technical Volume Content

The Key Technical Component of the Full Application

- No more than 25 pages.
- Inclusive of cover page, table of contents, and all citations, charts, graphs, maps, photos, or other graphics.
- The applicant should consider the weighting of each of the technical review criteria when preparing the Technical Volume.

Content of Technical Volume	Suggested % of Technical Volume
Cover Page	
Project Overview	10%
Technical Description, Innovation, and Impact	30%
Workplan	35%
Technical Qualifications and Resources	17%
Pilot-Scale Preparedness	8%

Full Application Process - Exchange

- You will **not** be able to start the Full Application submission until the Letter of Intent deadline has passed.
- Applicants can do the following to initiate the Full Application phase of the submission process in Exchange:
  - ✓ Login to DOE Funding Opportunity Exchange.
  - ✓ Open the “My Submissions” page.
  - ✓ Locate the Letter of Intent record.
  - ✓ Click “Start Full Application.”

Non-Responsive Applications

The following types of applications will be deemed non-responsive and will not be reviewed or considered for an award:

- Applications that fall outside the technical parameters specified in the NOFO document.
- Applications for proposed technologies that are not based on sound scientific principles (e.g., violates the law of thermodynamics).

Applications Specifically Not of Interest

DOE will not review or consider the following types of applications as determined by DOE without appeal:

- Applications that fall outside the technical parameters specified in NOFO Background and Context and NOFO Topic Areas.
- Applications for proposed technologies that are not based on sound scientific principles (e.g., violates the laws of thermodynamics).
- Project concepts or approaches not based on established scientific principles.
- *Note: The NOFO has additional details on applications specifically not of interest for each Topic Area and Subtopic Area.*

Partnering

- DOE is compiling a "Teaming Partner List" to facilitate the formation of project teams for this NOFO.
- The list allows organizations that may wish to participate on an application to express their interest to other applicants and to explore potential partnerships.
- The Teaming Partner List will be available on DOE Funding Opportunity Exchange and will be regularly updated to reflect new teaming partners who provide their organization's information.
- Information to be submitted: Investigator Name, Organization Name, Organization Type, AOI, Background and Capabilities, Website, Contact Address, Contact Email, and Contact Phone.

Statement of Substantial Involvement

DOE anticipates awarding cooperative agreements under this NOFO, which include a statement of DOE's "substantial involvement" in the work performed under the resulting awards. For cooperative agreements, DOE does not limit its involvement to the administrative requirements of the award. Instead, DOE has substantial involvement in the direction and redirection of the technical aspects of the project.
DOE's substantial involvement in resulting awards may include the following:

- DOE shares responsibility with the recipient for the management, control, direction, and performance of the project.
- DOE 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.
- DOE may redirect or discontinue funding the project based on the outcome of DOE's evaluation of the project at the Go/No-Go decision point(s).
- DOE participates in major project decision-making processes.

Cost Sharing Requirements

Project cost share must be **at least 20% of the Phase 1 project costs** for initial research and development tasks and **50% of the Phase 2 project costs** if selected for Phase 2 demonstration and commercial application tasks.

- Applications that do not meet the minimum required cost share will be deemed ineligible during the initial compliance review and will not be further reviewed.
- The cost share must come from non-Federal sources unless otherwise allowed by law.
- Applicants are encouraged to refer to 2 CFR 200.306 and 2 CFR 910.130 for additional cost sharing requirements.

Cost Share Contributions

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.

If you are selected for award negotiations, 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

Please note, vendors/contractors may NOT provide cost share. Any partial donation of goods or services is considered a discount and is not allowable.

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Merit Review and Selection Process

Standards for Application Evaluation

Applications that are determined to be eligible will be evaluated in accordance with this NOFO and the guidance provided in the "DOE Merit Review Guide for Financial Assistance," effective October 1, 2020, which is available at:

https://energy.gov/management/downloads/merit-review-guide-financial-assistance-and-unsolicited-proposals-current

See NOFO Part 1 Section VI.D. for Other Selection Factors and NOFO Part 2 Section VI.A. for Standard Evaluation and Selection Processes.

Standard Evaluation and Selection Process (Applications)

- The evaluation process consists of multiple phases; each includes an initial eligibility review and a thorough technical review.
- Rigorous technical reviews of eligible submissions are conducted by reviewers that are experts in the subject matter of the NOFO.
- Ultimately, the Selection Official considers the recommendations of the reviewers, along with other considerations such as program policy factors and risk reviews, in determining which applications to select.

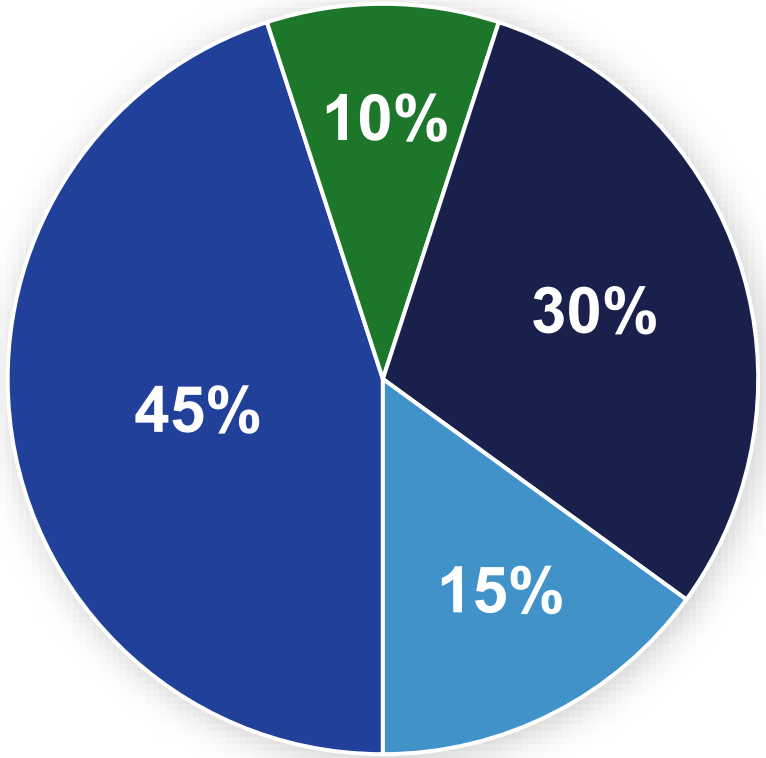
Merit Review Criteria (Phase One)

Criterion 1: Technical Merit, Innovation, and Impact (45%)

Criterion 2: Market Transformation Plan (10%)

Criterion 3: Project Workplan, Project Management, and Risk Mitigation (30%)

Criterion 4: Team and Resources (15%)



Program Policy Factors

The Selection Official may consider the following program policy factors to determine which applications to select for award negotiations:

- The degree to which the proposed project exhibits technological diversity when compared to the existing DOE project portfolio and other projects selected from the subject NOFO.
- The degree to which the proposed project team includes a variety of applicants.
- The degree to which the proposed project, including proposed cost share, optimizes the use of available DOE funding to achieve programmatic objectives.
- The level of industry involvement and demonstrated ability to accelerate demonstration and commercialization and overcome key market barriers.
- The degree to which the proposed project is likely to lead to increased high-quality employment and manufacturing in the United States.
- The degree to which 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.

Program Policy Factors (cont.)

- The degree to which the proposed project demonstrably advances the President's policy priorities.
- All else being equal, preference will be given to institutions with lower indirect cost rates
- The degree to which the applicant contributes to a broad range of recipients likely to produce immediately demonstrable results and recipients with the potential for potentially longer-term, breakthrough results, consistent with the objectives of the NOFO.
- The degree to which the proposed project avoids duplication/overlap with other publicly or privately funded work.
- The degree to which the proposed project supports complementary efforts or projects, which, when taken together, will best achieve the research goals and objectives.
- The degree to which the proposed project enables new and expanding market segments.
- The degree to which the project's solution or strategy will maximize deployment or replication.
- The degree to which the project promotes increased coordination with nongovernmental entities for demonstration of technologies and research applications to facilitate technology transfer.

Method of Inquiry

Questions about this funding opportunity can be submitted to **cmmacceleratornofo@ee.doe.gov.**

Questions

- All Q&As related to this NOFO will be posted on DOE Funding Opportunity Exchange, along with this webinar recording and presentation slides.
- You must select this specific NOFO Number in order to view the Q&As.
- CMEI 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 DOE Funding Opportunity Exchange or uploading and submitting application documents with DOE Funding Opportunity Exchange?
    - Email ExchangeSupport@hq.doe.gov (include NOFO name and number in subject line).

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