

2016 SEP Competitive FOA Grant Application Workshop

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY

Energy Efficiency &
Renewable Energy



2016 SEP Competitive Awards

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Office of Weatherization and Intergovernmental
Programs, State Energy Program

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Questions during the Workshop

Three ways to get questions answered:

- Type questions into the chat box at any time during the presentation
- Click the yellow hand icon to raise your hand. We'll unmute your line and then prompt you when it's time to ask your question. Keep in mind that you will only be able to use the raise your hand option **if you are listening in via telephone and entered an audio PIN at the presentation's start.**
- Submit questions to the FOA mailbox: SEPFY16FOA1415@ee.doe.gov. Check the Q&A's in Exchange as valuable info/clarification is transmitted that way too.



Please note that we will be unable to answer questions specific to proposal ideas and following the suggestions from the workshop will not guarantee an award.

Agenda

- Keys to Success!
- Reasons why some Proposals Fail
- Editing
- Assembling the Right Team
- Applications of Interest
- Contents of the Full Application
- The Technical Volume
- Components of the Technical Volume
- Important to Note
- FOA Questions
- We need your Feedback!

Keys to Success!

- Read the FOA
- Read it again
- Proposals should focus on new, innovative solutions
- Take into account reviewer comments on any previous applications
- Communicate concise project goals, impacts, team roles, and implementation strategy
- Demonstrate methodology for determining estimated qualitative and quantitative impacts
- Address all merit review criteria
- Prepare well defined project tasks and milestones with logical progression

“There is no grantsmanship that will turn a bad idea into a good one, but there are many ways to disguise a good idea.” - Norm Braverman, NIH

Reasons Why Some Proposals Fail

- Merit review criteria not fully addressed
- Estimated impacts not supported by evidence
- No clear or logical progression of tasks or milestones; milestone table does not identify at least one milestone per quarter
- Roles and responsibilities of the project team are unclear or not fully defined
- Poor demonstration of need as evidenced by lack of market barriers
- Unrealistic or weak implementation plan
- No evidence of support from entities named in proposal
- Lack of innovation
- FOA Guidelines not followed

*Noland's Law: One Hour before the grant needs to go out, the copier will break. **Leave enough time!***

Editing

After you have finished your draft:

- Set it aside for a day
- Reread and revise
- Have someone else read it without taking notes
- Have them tell you what your project is about

Edit for:

- Clarity and conciseness
- Scannability – make sure reviewers can quickly identify key points
- Use bulleted items
- Use graphics
- Use headings and subheadings
- Strong introductory sentences

FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES IN THE FOA!

Assembling the Right Team

Project Manager (PM): This person, who is often the lead proposal writer, must have strong organizational and project management skills and a thorough understanding of the application requirements. The PM is the “brain center” of the project and assigns tasks and deadlines, drives the project forward, and takes the lead on assembling and submitting the application. The PM is identified to DOE as the main point of contact for the project.

Program Expert: This person can be the Executive Director, Program Director, a key staff member, or even a contractor who supports the Energy Office who understands both the inner workings of the program and the related field or discipline. Their role is to map out the program plan and contribute content for key sections (e.g., problem/need, methods, evaluation).

Administrative Leader: Often an operations or finance manager, this person provides details relating to program oversight and compliance, expertise on staffing and salaries, input on management and facility capacity, and guidance in preparing the budget. The administrative leader may also be the one to submit the required quarterly progress reports.

Applications of Interest – Area of Interest 1

(see page 2 of the FOA)

- The intent of Area of Interest 1 is to facilitate stakeholder and interagency discussions concerning (1) the future direction of the energy sector and (2) how energy efficiency and renewable energy fit into the State's long-term vision for energy planning.
- Proposals should focus on energy efficiency and/or renewable energy while also incorporating economic development, energy assurance, and environmental regulations (present and/or anticipated) considerations.
- DOE purposely crafted Area of Interest 1 broadly- recognizing that long term, strategic energy planning is highly unique to each State's and/or region's circumstances.

Tip: *The merit review criteria on pages 30-32 of the FOA offers clues as to what proposals are of most interest to DOE. For example, under 'Criterion 1: Program Strategy and Plan,' we ask that proposals "represent a coordinated vision for energy planning that can help meet State policy goals, including environmental policy goals, reliability and resiliency, and economic development goals."*

Applications of Interest – Area of Interest 2

(see pages 3-5 of the FOA)

- Of most interest to DOE are proposals that represent replicable models of action that are innovative. For example, proposals that take the next step past data gathering towards implementing a strategy or policy. Potential ideas for proposals are suggested in the FOA under each Topic of Emphasis.
- The five Topics of Emphasis are related to specific questions in the State Energy Assessment that are identified in Appendix F of the FOA.
- Proposals that address more than one Topic of Emphasis will be scored based on how well the topics are integrated into a uniform policy or program strategy.

Tip: *Print pages 3-5 of the FOA along with Appendix F and do a side-by-side comparison of the ideas listed under each Topic of Emphasis and the specific State Energy Assessment questions.*

Applications of Interest – Area of Interest 3

(see page 6 of the FOA)

Under Area of Interest 3, technical assistance activities must be related to the expansion of existing, or adoption of new, formula work and can be related to any activity allowable within SEP formula award guidelines. Some options include but are not limited to:

- Development of model legislative or regulatory language
- Development of program level guidance documents
- Clean energy market assessments
- Technical analysis of new or existing energy efficiency or renewable energy programs
- Auditing and facility benchmarking
- Development of facility energy load monitoring practices
- Evaluation, measurement and verification
- Development of clean transportation policies or programs
- Development of policies to promote energy efficient new construction standards (such as LEED or stretch codes)
- Development of retrocommissioning practices
- Resource planning and scheduling
- Development of long term energy plans

***Tip:** Base proposals on project ideas that have already been considered and – ideally – where a level of feasibility has already been determined. For example, you may have already identified a specific barrier that is preventing a greater impact of existing formula work that technical assistance could help overcome **OR** you have identified an opportunity for new formula work that could be made possible through technical assistance.*

Applications not of Interest

(see page 7 of the FOA)

- a) Construction, such as construction of mass transit systems and exclusive bus lanes, or for construction or repair of buildings or structures
- b) Purchase of land, a building, or a structure or any interest therein
- c) Subsidizing fares for public transportation
- d) Subsidizing utility rate demonstrations or State tax credits for energy conservation or renewable energy measures
- e) The purchase of equipment to conduct, research, development or demonstration of energy efficiency or renewable energy technologies not commercially available
- f) Loan guarantees or loan forgiveness (10 CFR section 420.18)
- g) Programs that include government assets other than buildings and facilities, such as fleets***
- h) Programs targeted to making new construction energy-efficient***
- i) Programs that use award funds to implement specific project-level energy efficiency retrofits and upgrades
- j) Programs that use project funds to capitalize financing programs
- k) Proposals that establish new energy efficiency registries unless partnered with a State to develop a registry already underway
- l) Proposals that establish new voluntary national energy efficiency (EE) registries to increase transparency and standardize the methodology to track and report projected and realized energy savings

Contents of the Full Application

(see page 16 of the FOA)

- 1) **Technical Volume (pdf)**
- 2) SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance (pdf)
- 3) Budget Justification – EERE 335 (Excel)
- 4) Summary for Public Release* (pdf)
- 5) Summary Slide* (Powerpoint)
- 6) Subaward Budget Justification (if applicable) – EERE 335 (Excel)
- 7) SF-LLL (pdf)
- 8) Resume File (pdf)
- 9) Letters of Commitment (pdf)
- 10) 2016 State Energy Assessment (pdf)
- 11) Statements of Support from Key Partners*(pdf)

Tip: Consider printing page 16 to use as a submission checklist

* The Summary for Public Release and the Summary Slide are not required for applications submitted under Area of Interest 3. Statements of Support are also not a requirement for Area of Interest 3 applications but will be required if the proposal is selected for award.

Components of the Technical Volume

(see pages 17-21 of the FOA)

Cover Page (one page)

- Project title
- Area of Interest being addressed (applicants to AOI 2 should also include topic/s of emphasis being addressed)
- Technical and business points of contact
- Names of all team member organizations/Key Partners
- Statements regarding confidentiality

Project Overview (10% or three pages)

- Organizational Background
- Project Goal
- Impact

Technical Description, Innovation, and Impact (25% or six to seven pages)

- Succinctly address each merit review criterion – consider a list/table format

Workplan (50% or fifteen pages)

- Goals
- Narrative
- Work Scope
- Management Plan

Technical Qualifications and Resources (15% or four to five pages)

- Project Team's/Key Partner's unique qualifications and expertise including resources that will facilitate the project
- The Project Team's/Key Partner's previous work efforts and demonstrated innovations
- The time commitment of each team member/Key Partner
- Roles and the work to be performed by each Key Partner and how the work will be integrated and managed
- Process for making decisions on project direction and communication plans

Technical Volume: *Project Overview (10% or 3 pages)*

The **Project Overview** should begin with a statement of need that establishes the framework for the project's goals, objectives, methods and impacts.

Questions to Consider when developing the Project Overview:

- What significant needs are you trying to meet?
- What barriers are you trying to overcome?
- What does the literature say about the significance of the problem, at a local, state, regional, national level?
- How will this competitive funding help meet the need?
- How can your organization (and Key Partners) help meet the need?
- What previous work has been done to meet this need? Was it effective?
- Is there evidence that this project will be sustainable after competitive funding is spent?
- What will be the immediate (and lasting) impacts of this project?

***Tip:** Consider the merit review criteria when developing the statement of need, including project strategy and the types of impacts to include.*

Technical Volume: *Technical Description, Innovation, and Impact* (25% or six to seven pages)

The **Technical Description, Innovation and Impact** section of the Technical Volume is where ALL merit review criteria need to be addressed.

Reviewers are instructed to rate applications based on the extent to which the proposal addresses EACH individual criterion. The easier it is for the reviewer to identify a response to criterion, the easier it will be to rate and score your proposal.

Keep in mind that the technical description section does not necessarily have to be written as a narrative. Table or bullet point formatting where each criterion is listed with a corresponding response is acceptable. Expansion on responses to criterion is asked for in the narrative section of the technical volume's Workplan (described in next slide)

Tip: Merit review criteria for each AOI begins on page 30 of the FOA. Consider printing merit review criteria applicable to your AOI to have on hand while crafting proposals.

Technical Volume: *The Workplan (50% or 15 pages)*

The **Workplan** section of the Technical Volume should expand on the framework for the project's goals, objectives, methods and impacts as outlined in the **Project Overview** section.

Components of the Workplan that DO count towards the page limit:

- 1) Project Goals and Objectives
- 2) Project Narrative
- 3) Technical Scope Summary
- 4) Project Management Approach

Attachments to the Workplan that DO NOT count towards the page limit:

- 1) Summary Table
- 2) Work Breakdown Structure
- 3) Milestone Table
- 4) Project Schedule (or Gantt Chart)

***Tip:** As long as appropriate references are included in the Workplan, applicants can opt to attach these four items to the Technical Volume in an appendices format.*

Technical Volume: *Workplan Components*

Project Goals should convey the ultimate **intent** of the proposed project. **Project Objectives** should describe the proposed work in terms of **what** will be accomplished.

Tip: Break goals down to specific measurable pieces, the outcomes of which can be measured to determine actual accomplishments.

The **Project Narrative** should provide evidence that your initial statement of need is correct and should:

- Demonstrate that you understand the problem and that this is an important problem to solve not only in your State, but regionally and nationally as well
- Clearly describe the aspects of the problem that your project will address and what gaps it will fill
- Describe the conceptual basis for your project and your knowledge of the issues surrounding your proposed project
- Provide estimated impacts **including details on how they were determined**
- Include statistical data
- Cite evidence demonstrating need for and feasibility of the proposed strategy
- Forecast the usefulness and importance of results – will the impact continue?
- Demonstrate that your approach is creative or innovative
- Describe how this project fits into the already existing goals of your State, region, and DOE

Technical Volume: *Workplan Components (continued)*

The **Technical Scope Summary** should highlight the specific **tasks** that will enable you to meet your objectives and should be:

- Distinctive
- Detailed
- **Logical in order and progression**

***Tip:** Make sure that tasks described in the Technical Scope Summary are visually represented in Work Breakdown Structures, Milestone Tables, and Project Schedules.*

The **Project Management** section of the Workplan should highlight the specific **roles** your team (including Key Partners) will play in executing project tasks.

***Tip:** Make sure that roles described in the Project Management section are visually represented in the Work Breakdown Structure.*

Technical Volume: *Workplan Attachments, Summary Tables*

Summary tables for Area of Interest 1, Area of Interest 2 and Area of Interest 3 are provided as fillable templates in EERE Exchange. **Example of a Summary Table for AOI 2, Topic of Emphasis 1:**

TOPIC 1: Working with Utilities to Advance State Energy Reduction and/or Renewable Energy Generation Goals							
Prime Recipient	Key Partners	Target Markets	Project Goals/Key Takeaway	Estimated Impacts	Related Existing Programs and Policies	Potential Leverage	Secondary Partners/ Stakeholders

Prime Recipient - Applicant State

Key Partners - List Key Partners as identified in the proposal including any other State partners, as applicable.

Target Markets - Describe the types of utilities (IOU, municipal, cooperative, etc.) and consumer sectors targeted (public, residential, commercial, and/or industrial) as well as any specific subsectors (multifamily, for example).

Project Goals/Key Takeaway – Describe the proposal’s objective – what is the intended outcome/final product including an explanation of the type of policy or program to be pursued (EERS, RPS, IRP, interconnection standard, etc.).

Estimated Impacts – List estimated annual impacts including dollar and energy savings, energy use and GHG reductions, and/or increased renewable generation in the State as a result of implementation of the policy or program.

Relevant Existing Programs and Policies– List existing programs and policies that will be affected by – or are relevant to - the project as proposed. These could include (but are not limited to), current energy efficiency resource, renewable portfolio, and/or interconnection standards; ratepayer funded efficiency and/or demand response programs; cost effectiveness testing; and integrated resource planning.

Potential Leverage - Describe any potential for leveraging the project with existing public or private programs, initiatives or funding sources.

Secondary Partners/Stakeholders - List secondary partners and stakeholders who may be involved in the project but who do not have specific tasks identified in the proposal.

Technical Volume: *Workplan Attachments, Work Breakdown Structure*

(see pages 19-20 and Appendix E of the FOA)

The Work Breakdown Structure should:

- 1) Fully describe the work to be accomplished
- 2) Explain how milestones will be achieved
- 3) Explain how final project goals will be accomplished
- 4) Be structured with a hierarchy of performance period task and subtasks
- 5) Include all milestones that appear on the Milestones Summary Table

***Tip:* Make sure to read pages 19-20 of the FOA for specific details on what should be included in the Work Breakdown Structure. Further formatting guidance is provided in Appendix E of the FOA.**

Technical Volume: *Workplan Attachments, Milestone Summary Table*

(see page 20 of the FOA)

A fillable template is provided in Exchange and specific components are described on page 20 of the FOA. **Make sure that all milestones listed here are expanded on in the text of the Work Breakdown Structure. There should be at least one milestone identified per quarter.**

Milestones Summary Table						
Recipient Name:						
Project Title:						
Task Number	Task or Subtask Title	Milestone Number	Milestone Description	Deliverable(s)	Anticipated Date (months from start of project)	Anticipated Quarter (quarters from start of project)
1.0	Stakeholder Engagement					
		1.1	Hold Initial Stakeholder Meeting with 20 participants from Utilities, and User groups		2	1
		1.2	Hold Second Stakeholder Meeting with 30 participants from Utilities, User groups and PUC	Meeting agenda, sign in sheet, notes, action items, etc.	5-8	2-3
2.0	Targeted Outreach and Education					
		2.1	Develop of targeted informational and outreach materials to include educational papers, meeting agendas, and technical materials.	Educational papers, meeting agendas, and technical materials; requests by stakeholders and the community for additional resources and support	10-15	4-5
		2.2	Conducting successful outreach which demonstrate continued stakeholder interest and support.	Meeting agenda, sign in sheet, meeting notes, meeting action items, etc.	16-21	6-7
		3.1	Develop Implementation Model	Deliver Implementation Model	22-36	8-12

Technical Volume: *Workplan Attachments, Project Schedule*

The **Project Schedule** should provide a detailed timeline for the entire project, including task and subtask durations, and milestones and should mirror timeframes as outlined on the Work Breakdown Structure and Milestone Summary Table. The format of the Project Schedule is flexible and can be a Gantt chart or similar.

***Tip:** Although DOE doesn't endorse any specific format or template, templates and project scheduling software are available for download online.*

Technical Volume: *Technical Qualifications and Resources (15% or four to five pages)*

The **Technical Qualifications and Resources** section of the Technical Volume should demonstrate that you and your team are the right people for the project.

- Do not simply state “See resume”
- Convince DOE that you are capable of accomplishing what you say you can accomplish
- Highlight the expertise of all key personnel
- Include experience you have had managing other projects
- Explain how Key Partners or consultants will add to the success of the project and what they bring to the table
- Indicate responsibilities of all members of your team and their level of effort

Important to Note

- All applicants to this FOA are required to complete and submit the fillable 'State Energy Assessment' template or equivalent found in EERE Exchange that includes a statement from the State Energy Office Director confirming approval of the responses provided.
- For Area of Interest 1 and 2 applications, all entities with specific tasks assigned in the Workplan are considered Key Partners and must provide a Statement of Support for inclusion with the application.
- For Area of Interest 3 applications, the technical assistance provider must be identified in the application. A Statement of Support from the provider (and any other Key Partner identified in the Workplan) will be required if the proposal is selected to enter award negotiations.
- An application will only be considered as a multistate proposal if more than one State has specific tasks assigned in the Workplan and Statements of Support from each are included. Proposals with a regional impact but with only one State executing the project will not be considered eligible for funding as a multistate proposal.

Important to Note

- States that have not been selected to receive an award in the past four years (FY12-FY15) may submit up to two applications as a Prime Recipient – one under Area of Interest 3 **and** one under Area of Interest 1 **or** Area of Interest 2. States that do not apply under Area of Interest 3 may submit one application as a Prime Recipient – one under Area of Interest 1 **or** one under Area of Interest 2.
- Multistate applications will not be accepted under Area of Interest 3. However, there is no limit on the number of times a State can be listed as a Key Partner or a subrecipient on multistate applications in Area of Interest 1 and Area of Interest 2 applications.

Tip: Make sure to familiarize yourself with the Program Policy Factors listed on page 35 of the FOA. The Selection Official may consider these factors when making final award selections.

FOA Questions

FOA Managers: **Kelsie Hammond and Lauren Hall**

Email Address: SEPFY16FOA1415@ee.doe.gov

- All questions and answers related to this FOA will be posted on EERE Exchange at: <https://eere-exchange.energy.gov>
- Regularly check the Q&A's in Exchange as it will serve as a valuable repository for information and clarification
- Please note that you must first select this specific FOA Number in order to view the questions and answers specific to this FOA.
- EERE will attempt to respond to a question within 3 business days, unless a similar question and answer has already been posted on the website.
- Questions related to the registration process and use of the EERE Exchange website should be submitted to: EERE-ExchangeSupport@hq.doe.gov



We need your Feedback!

Thank you for attending! We welcome your feedback. Tell us how we can improve on the Workshop!

Send your comments to:

SEPFY16FOA1415@ee.doe.gov