



OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY TRANSITIONS
FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT (FOA)
NUMBER: DE-FOA-0002425
ENERGY PROGRAM FOR INNOVATION CLUSTERS (EPIC)
QUESTION AND ANSWER LOG

Q #	Subject	Date Submitted	Question	Answer
1	Eligibility	11/5/20	We recently won an EPIC Prize award (\$50,000), and I was wondering if we are still eligible to apply for this funding opportunity?	Yes. EPIC Prize winners are eligible to apply to the EPIC FOA.
2	Eligibility	11/13/20	Is a DOE government-owned and government operated laboratory eligible under section 3.A.i of the subject FOA?	Yes. As stated in the modified Section 3.A of the FOA, "DOE/NSA FFRDCs and DOE Government-Operated Government-Owned laboratories (GOGOs) are eligible to apply for funding as a subrecipient, but are not eligible to apply as a prime recipient."
3	Eligibility	11/16/20	Is there a limit on how many people per institution may apply to this funding opportunity?	<p>As stated in Section 3.A of the FOA, eligible applicants are domestic entities, foreign entities, and incorporated consortia.</p> <p>As stated in Section 3.F, "applicants may submit only one Letter of Intent, and may only submit a Full Application that corresponds to an eligible and compliant LOI. If an applicant submits more than one Letter of Intent, OTT will only consider the last timely submission for evaluation.... . This limitation does not prohibit an applicant from collaborating on other applications (e.g., as a potential Subrecipient or partner) so long</p>

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				<p>as the entity is only listed as the Prime Applicant on one LOI and Full Application submitted under this FOA.”</p> <p>An applicant’s team may comprise as many individuals it deems appropriate.</p>
4	Partnership/ collaborative agreements	11/18/20 (Webinar)	What are the required qualifications from private actors for regional engagement? Is it required to have a legal partnership agreement in place or a signed collaborative agreement?	<p>As stated on page 24 the FOA, OTT is looking for letters of commitment from state, regional, and/or local entities, including in low income and/or under-represented areas, partners/clients/members (1 page maximum per letter).</p> <p>Prime recipients are responsible for meeting cost share requirements, and should make their own determinations about which mechanism to employ – including legal partnerships or signed collaborative agreements – to ensure that contributing partners meet their commitments to them.</p> <p>OTT leaves it to applicants to determine which qualifications make prospective partners, team members, or stakeholders best suited to join their projects’ regional engagement efforts.</p>
5	Hardware focus/ Eligibility	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Is the focus only on hardware? Are organizations that also support software development related to energy innovation also able to apply - or organizations that support both?	<p>As stated on page 2, “[t]he EPIC FOA seeks to recognize innovation-accelerating organizations focused on stimulating energy and related hardware technology development and supportive clusters.”</p> <p>OTT’s eligibility requirements do not prevent organizations that support software development from applying.</p>
6	Physical space/ Applicant Characteristics/ Elements of the Regional	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Does physical space need to include lab space?	<p>As stated in the list of Applicant Characteristics (page 4), OTT is looking for applicants that provide physical spaces for startups to operate. On page 5, lab space is included under Elements of the Regional Engagement Strategy as an example of the kind of prototyping, testing, and demonstration facilities that</p>

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	Engagement Strategy			applicants might offer – either directly or through partners. High-scoring proposals will include many, if not all, of the attributes listed in Applicant Characteristics and under Elements of the Regional Engagement Strategy.
7	Member startups/Stages	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Do you have any preference related to stage for participating startups? In other words, should the accelerating activity focus on pre-seed, seed, series A, etc.?	No, OTT does not have a preference related participating startups' stages.
8	Eligibility/ Unincorporated Consortia	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Are multi-party public/private consortiums that have not formally incorporated welcome or encouraged to apply or are only existing incorporate consortiums considered?	Please see Section 3.A.iv of the FOA, which discusses Unincorporated Consortia specifically.
9	Applicants	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Do groups that find entrepreneurs and help them build startups around energy technologies fit within the FOA's goals?	<p>Under this FOA, OTT is looking for innovation-accelerating, entrepreneurially-focused organizations. As stated on page 1 of the FOA, OTT “welcomes as applicants organizations that aid in the development of new business ventures, business incubators and accelerators, co-working startup communities, or any other organizations and multi-organizational applicants that self-identify as advocates for innovation and entrepreneurship.”</p> <p>Groups that find entrepreneurs and help them build startups around energy technologies may fit into this deliberately broad category.</p> <p>Please review the FOA, including the Applicant Characteristics identified on page 4.</p>
10	Hardware/FOA focus	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Is prototyping and hardware developing support a necessary part (i.e. would a commercialization-focused submission be sufficient)?	As stated a number of times in the FOA, including in discussions about its purpose (page 1) and technology space and strategic goals (page 2), as well as in the lists of Applicant Characteristics (page 4) and Elements of the Regional Engagement Strategy (page 5), hardware development and commercialization is a key

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				goal of this initiative – and is also reflected in the merit review criteria.
11	Stakeholder support	11/18/20 (Webinar)	FOA says "support from regional stakeholders must concentrate on commercializing hardware within DOE's energy..," is that to say that the regional entities need to mention support to relevant initiatives or that themselves need to be relate DOE's portfolio?	An applicant's regional stakeholders may have myriad interests and focus areas. Their specific support of this particular project must, as stated on page 5, "concentrate on commercializing hardware within DOE's energy and related technology portfolio" As cited in the FOA, information about DOE's energy and related technology portfolio can be found here: https://www.energy.gov/office
12	Metrics	11/18/20 (Webinar)	How strict will you be about some of the metrics? We have not tracked patents, for example.	As stated on page 6 of the FOA, "OTT considers it critically important to track awardee performance metrics during the award period." Awardees should expect to provide the metrics listed on page 6 during the life of the project. OTT does not anticipate requesting metrics retroactively.
13	Unallowable costs/ Construction	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Are building construction or retrofit costs appropriate for project budget?	As stated in Section 4.I.iv (Construction) of the FOA, "OTT generally does not fund projects that involve major construction (i.e., construction of new buildings, major renovations, or additions to existing buildings). Recipients are required to obtain written authorization from the Contracting Officer before incurring any major construction costs."
14	Technology areas of interest	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Are there any specific energy technology categories or areas that are of interest in the FOA (e.g., generation, transmission, distribution, storage)?	OTT does not have a particular interest in any specific technology area(s) apart from the stipulation as stated on page 4, that this FOA seeks applicants whose "efforts are focused on the formation and growth of startups, with a concentration on companies that are developing or commercializing hardware for energy-related applications within DOE's portfolio." Information about DOE's energy and related technology portfolio can be found here: https://www.energy.gov/offices

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15	Advice about ideas	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Can someone at DOE tell us if a proposed idea is worth submitting? We're thinking of refining a prior EPIC [Prize] proposal.	No. OTT is unable to offer advice to applicants about this competitive funding opportunity. Please review the FOA for information about its goals, as well as the evaluation and selection criteria.
16	Non-profit applicants	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Are non-profit applicants required to be a 501(c)-3 entity?	<p>No, non-profit applicants are not required to be 501 (c) 3 entities.</p> <p>As stated on page 9 of the FOA, “nonprofits that are incorporated (or otherwise formed) under the laws of a particular state or territory of the United States and have a physical location for business operations in the United States are eligible to apply for funding as a prime recipient or subrecipient. 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.”.</p>
17	Technology areas of interest	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Would AI and analytics technologies for the energy sector be eligible to this call?	Innovation-accelerating, entrepreneurially-focused organizations (often referred to as accelerators or incubators) that support startups in AI and analytics technologies for the energy sector are eligible to apply to this FOA. Applicants should consider OTT’s stated focus on energy and related hardware technology development and supportive clusters in framing their proposals.
18	Introductions to startups/opportunities to work with DOE	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Are you looking for introductions to the startups we accelerate? As part of your involvement in the project, will you provide opportunities for the startups to work with DOE, such as for testing and implementation?	OTT can foresee elective opportunities that may develop over the course of the period of performance for introductions between its staff and awardee startups, but there is no such requirement in the FOA. OTT’s substantial involvement is unlikely to include its facilitating opportunities for startups to work with DOE, such as for testing and implementation. OTT anticipates that awardees would facilitate such opportunities directly through outreach to project partners and local

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				providers (i.e., labs/universities/private and public organizations), as outlined on page 5 of the FOA.
19	Awardee viability/sustainability	11/18/20 (Webinar)	There is no mention in the FOA about operational viability beyond funding period. How is this crucial aspect of EPIC addressed if there is no model required for ongoing funding?	<p>As stated on pages 3 and 4 of the FOA, “it is DOE’s hope that this funding opportunity will enable successful applicants to enhance their organization’s resilience and operational sustainability.”</p> <p>Technical Review Criterion 1, “Technical Merit, Innovation, and Impact” includes a sub-bullet that addresses the “strength of the project plan to promote sustained movement of energy hardware technologies into the marketplace beyond the award period.” Applicants can reasonably infer that their ability to address this aspect of the merit review criteria would depend on their plan for and articulation of their own operational viability beyond the funding period.</p> <p>OTT offers no model or requirement in part because it does not want to constrain post-period of performance planning.</p>
20	Eligibility/non-profits	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Regarding eligible applicants, will a successful applicant have to necessarily be an incubator/accelerator, or organization that exclusively focuses on energy innovation? What about 501(c)3 whose work is sometimes in those spaces?	<p>As stated on page 1 of the FOA, “OTT welcomes as applicants ... organizations and multi-organizational applicants that self-identify as advocates for innovation and entrepreneurship.”</p> <p>While eligible applicants may include organizations that do not focus exclusively on energy innovation –such as 501(c) 3s whose work is sometimes in those spaces – OTT encourages prospective applicants to review the FOA, including the articulation of its goals, the attributes in the Applicant Characteristics and Elements of the Regional Engagement Strategy, and the Technical Review Criteria. High-scoring applicants will submit proposals that meet many, if not all, of the attributes described in the FOA.</p>

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21	Unresponsive applications	11/18/20 (Webinar)	I represent an existing innovative entrepreneurial business doing software and modeling work in the green energy ecospace. Can companies apply directly for funding to fund innovative project development? If not, how would a business find funding from an organization which was given funding through this program?	<p>No. As stated on page 3 of the FOA, its goal is to fund four to eight innovation-accelerating organizations to propose and implement regional engagement plans, and guide companies as they scale to production and enhance our energy manufacturing competitiveness.</p> <p>OTT anticipates announcing in Spring 2021 which applicants it selects for award negotiations.</p> <p>In the meantime, OTT refers companies that seek funding for innovative project development to Grants.gov, the centralized location to find and apply for federal funding opportunities: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants</p>
22	Page limits/ Technical Volume	11/18/20 (Webinar)	What is the page limit for the technical volume?	As stated on page 20 of the FOA, "the Technical Volume to the Full Application may not be more than 20 pages, including the cover page, table of contents, and all citations, charts, graphs, maps, photos, or other graphics, and must include all of the information in the table" that begins on page 21.
23	Property Disposition	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Can you expand and clarify Section 4.I.vi regarding Property Disposition at the end of project?	<p>For additional information about property disposition at the end of a project, please consult the references cited in the FOA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For profit entity disposition requirements are set forth at 2 CFR 910.360.• Property disposition requirements for other non-federal entities are set forth in 2 CFR 200.310 – 200.316.
24	Webinar materials	11/18/20 (Webinar)	<p>I joined a few minutes late. Will this presentation be sent to everyone on the webinar?</p> <p>Will you be sharing the slides as well as the recording?</p>	<p>The webinar materials are available here: https://ott-exchange.energy.gov/#Foald715036e7-e111-442c-bf38-1e33a4633fa5</p> <p>OTT is not sending the webinar materials directly to individuals.</p>

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25	Advice	11/18/20 (Webinar)	If we won an EPIC prize in October, can we propose the same plan for this prize as we did for that prize?	OTT is unable to offer advice to applicants about this competitive funding opportunity. Please review the FOA for information about its goals, as well as the evaluation and selection criteria.
26	Period of Performance	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Does the project need to be 3 years, or can it be less than that time, say, 18-24 months?	As stated in the FOA, OTT is looking to fund projects for up to three-year periods of performance. OTT leaves it to prospective applicants to decide if a shorter timeframe is better for their project.
27	DOE's portfolio of technologies	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Clarify DOE's portfolio? Is this just EERE or all of DOE including fossil fuel arm?	Please visit OTT's website (as cited on page 5 of the FOA) for a full picture of DOE's portfolio of technologies and offices, which includes the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy as well as the Office of Fossil Energy: https://www.energy.gov/offices
28	Eligibility/ National labs	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Are national labs allowed to be partners in projects and receive grant funding?	Please see Section 3.A.i. of the FOA about DOE/NNSA FFRDC (i.e., DOE's national laboratories) eligibility. ADD NETL/mod information.
29	Program History	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Is this a new program? If not a new program, who were prior grantees?	OTT launched its Energy Program for Innovation Cluster (EPIC) earlier this year with a prize component, which is different than this FOA in a number of important ways. The list of EPIC Prize winners is here: https://www.energy.gov/articles/departments-energy-announces-energy-incubator-prize-selections
30	Similar DOE-funded Programs	11/18/20 (Webinar)	What are prior [or] current similar accelerator support programs funded by the DOE?	Page 3 of the FOA cites several examples of earlier DOE-funded programs in this general space, including the DOE Small Business and Clean Energy Alliance Partnership, Innovation Ecosystem Development Initiative, National Incubator Initiative for Clean Energy (NIICE) and Innovative Pathways. Additional examples of DOE-funded programs to support accelerators may be available on DOE's website: https://www.energy.gov/
31	EPIC Background	11/18/20 (Webinar)	Why this program, and why now? What are drivers?	In 2019, U.S. House of Representatives Report 116-83 (https://www.congress.gov/116/crpt/hrpt83/CRPT-

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				116hrpt83.pdf) made a recommendation to provide \$5,000,000 above the budget request for the Office of Technology Transitions for a competitive funding opportunity for incubators supporting energy innovation clusters. These incubators should have the support of state, regional, and local entities. The funds were subsequently appropriated, and OTT developed the Energy Program for Innovation Clusters (EPIC), which comprises a prize and this funding opportunity announcement.
32	Meaning of “region”	11/18/20 (Webinar)	What do you mean by “region” related to regional engagement? City, county, multiple counties? What about a region within a half-day’s drive? From Houston to New Orleans?	OTT does not wish to limit the definition of “region” given the size of the United States and its geographic and other differences. The examples you cite in your question could all reasonably be considered a “region” for purposes of this FOA.
33	FOA topic area	11/18/20 (Webinar)	How important is regional engagement vs. focusing on accelerating hardware startups in the cohort? I am getting at whether you are interested in regional collaboration that builds overall regional capacity.	As articulated in the FOA, regional engagement is a key element of this FOA – as is an applicant’s activities to support energy and related hardware technology development and testing. OTT anticipates that an outcome of this FOA will be regional collaboration that builds overall regional capacity.
34	Virtual tools and telework capabilities	11/18/20 (Webinar)	What are examples of virtual and remote capabilities?	The FOA mentions virtual tools and telework capabilities specifically. Especially under the current conditions, OTT encourages applicants to think creatively and expansively about how their organizations can support startups – especially those working on energy and related hardware within DOE’s technology portfolio – independent of a physical space. Without wanting to prescribe solutions, it is some of these very ideas that OTT is eager to see in proposals to this FOA.
35	Nascent vs. established programs	11/18/20 (Webinar)	The metrics from this program, along with some other aspects, seem aimed at accelerators/incubators that already are fully operational as opposed to just getting started. Do you expect a proposal to build up a nascent program to be competitive?	Yes. OTT anticipates competitive proposals from nascent programs.

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36	Differences between the EPIC Prize and EPIC FOA	11/18/20 (Webinar)	What is the difference between incubator prize selections and this program?	<p>Among other differences between it and the Prize, the EPIC FOA focuses on hardware, and seeks implementation plans for regional engagement that awardees with execute--with OTT's substantial involvement--over the course of their up to three-year periods of performance.</p> <p>Please see the response to Q # 29 for a link to the EPIC Prize selection announcement. The Epic rules document is available here: https://americanmadechallenges.org/epic/</p>
37	Page limits/LOI	11/18/20	Can you indicate the preferred or required number of pages for the LOI?	<p>Corrected answer 12/8/20:</p> <p>There is no document or upload at the LOI. Instead, applicants use text boxes to supply information, including an abstract of no more than 4,000 characters.</p> <p>OTT apologizes for the confusion.</p>
38	Location on webinar materials and Q&A	11/24/20	Is there a place on the website where I can access the slides from the information webinar that was held on Nov 18 regarding the Innovation Cluster EPIC Prize, along with a place I can view all the Q&A following the webinar?	<p>The webinar materials and Q&A are available on OTT Exchange: https://ott-exchange.energy.gov/#Foald715036e7-e111-442c-bf38-1e33a4633fa5.</p>
39	Cost Share	11/24/20	We are curious about the cost-share portion of the grant. What components qualify for the 20% cost share? Does it have to be on a cash investment basis, or do things such as equipment, travel, salary, consulting fees, etc. count toward that share?	<p>As stated in Section 3.B (Cost Sharing) of the FOA cost share contributions may be in cash or in-kind. In addition to Section 3.B., the FOA contains other important information about cost share such as in Section 4.I.i., Appendix A, and Appendix B.</p>
40	Eligibility	11/25/20	Can an organization serve as a prime (lead) on one proposal but also be proposed sub recipient on another primes proposal?	<p>Yes. See Section 3.F. of the FOA as well as the answer to Q# 3 above.</p>
41	Award Funds	11/25/20	Can part of the federal funding can be used for awards, prototyping grants or prizes to the startups/entrepreneurs in the energy space that would be supported by the proposed project? (These would not be	<p>No. Federal funding provided to the Prime recipient under the EPIC FOA shall be related to proposed direct/indirect cost as its relates to the Statement of Project Objectives.</p>

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			the EPIC recipient or subawardees) If yes, are there restrictions on the type of expenses that the startup can use the prize for?	
42	Eligibility	11/25/20	Might you clarify whether the EPIC FOA is a limited submission in which an institution is only allowed to submit one application? I am unclear if applicant, in this case, would mean an individual PI or the institution as a whole.	The institution as a whole may submit only one application as the prime applicant, but may partner as a subrecipient on multiple applications. As stated in Section 3.A.i of the FOA, only entities are eligible to apply to the FOA. Individuals are not eligible EPIC FOA applicants.
43	Exchange	11/30/20	I mistakenly submitted our LOI for #DE-FOA-0002425 before it is ready. We still need to complete our abstract and other information. Could you return the LOI to me in the system so I can complete it, or should I submit a new LOI?	When you clicked the Create Letter of Intent button on the Letter of Intent Details page the EERE Funding Opportunity Exchange website created a Full Application record, assigned it a Control Number, Prepopulated the Full Application forms with the information that you provided on the Letter of Intent Details page. You can open the Full Application record to add to or edit any information that was provided on the Letter of Intent Details page.
44	Eligibility/ unresponsive	11/30/20	<p>The company I work for is the largest on-site recycling company in our city. I was reviewing the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) Number: DE-FOA-0002425 and was interested to see if our company would qualify for this program for an environmentally friendly waste to energy project.</p> <p>I would love to get more information about qualifying for this opportunity.</p>	No. Please see the response to Q# 21.
45	Letters of Support	12/1/20	I wanted to confirm that government entities can provide letters of support for multiple applications for this FOA?	Any entity may provide a letter of commitment for multiple applications.
46	Letters of Support/Point	12/2/20	Our project has members from several departments of the university. Should I add a contact from each department as team members on the LOI form, or only	There is a table for Team where an applicant lists the other organizations (sub-contractors) participating in the project and the lead technical point of contact for that organization.

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	of Contact & Team Member		include one contact for Rice (the lead technical contact)? When I tried adding the contacts from the other departments, the online system didn't seem to allow another team member to be added from the same organization.	<p>The Lead organization lead technical point of contact information is provided in the "Technical Point of Contact" section of the LOI details page. (below the Team Members table).</p> <p>Note: the Lead Organization Percent of Effort plus the Team Members (Sub Contractor) Percent of Project must add up to 100%.</p>
47	Exchange	12/4/20	The FOA asks that the Letter of Intent be submitted as a pdf document, but the exchange only allows for LOI response to be answered in a fillable form, with no place for an attachment. Is there another location to attach the full pdf LOI or if the online form sufficient?	Please use the online fillable form in Exchange to submit your Letter of Intent (LOI). There is no place to upload PDFs.
48	Exchange	12/3/20	<p>On page 16 of the FOA, it states: “Once a Letter of Intent is submitted, a Control Number is issued. This control number must be included with all documents...”</p> <p>It also says on page 16 that: “The Letter of Intent and Full Application must conform to the following requirements.”</p> <p>However, on page 17 it says: “The Control Number must be prominently displayed on the upper right corner of the header of every page.”</p> <p>Question: How can the Control Number be displayed on the LOI if it is only issued AFTER submission of the LOI? This seems to be logically inconsistent. Is there anything to be expected in the upper right corner of the header of the LOI?</p>	<p>Corrected Answer 12/8/20:</p> <p>The control number is generated when the Letter of Intent (LOI) is created. Please use the online form to create your LOI, which you will not see as a separate document. Information you provide in creating the LOI will be visible and editable in the Full Application under “My Submissions.”</p>
49	LOI/ Discrepancy between the	12/7/20	For the letter of intent submission it requires an abstract. The FOA mentions limits the character length to 200 words but the OTT Exchange Portal limits it at 4000	The information in Exchange is correct. The limit is 4,000 characters, not 200 words as stated in the FOA. Apologies for the error.

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	FOA and Exchange		characters. Could you clarify what is the actual abstract limit?	
50	Letters of Support/Letter of Intent	12/7/20	Is the inclusion of letters of support either required or preferred at the Letter of Intent stage? Can they be submitted during the application stage instead? What is a best practice?	Please submit letters of support during the application stage.
51	Letters of Intent/Content	12/7/20	<p>The FOA clearly indicates that EPIC LOIs must be submitted through the OTT/EERE Exchange, however, the application is open in grants.gov and indicates a different package for submission.</p> <p>Your confirmation and clarification is appreciated.</p>	<p>Please follow the instructions in the FOA, which clearly state that OTT is only accepting EPIC submissions through OTT Exchange: https://ott-exchange.energy.gov/.</p> <p>The information you are looking at on Grants.gov may be a summary of EPIC's requirements – either about the LOI or the full proposal.</p>
52	Letters of Intent/Changes in Full Proposals	12/7/20	Are the partner names and percentages that are submitted with the LOI an estimate that can be changed in the full proposal?	Yes, applicants may update this information in their full applications.
53	Letters of Intent/Revisions	12/7/20	<p>I wanted to see if it is possible to revise a LOI before the 12/9 deadline? I was reviewing the application and it looked like our abstract had bugged and it had repeated 2 paragraphs. Is there a way to revise before the deadline? If I make a revision to the abstract of the full application will that revise the LOI abstract?</p>	<p>Yes, as stated on page 17 of the FOA, applicants may revise their submissions until the deadline.</p> <p>The new deadline for LOIs is 5:00 p.m. on December 11, 2020 To edit a submission, first log into Exchange. Next, go to "My Submissions." Click the "edit" link to the far left of the proposal you want to change. You will only see an EPIC Full Application Submission with the control number that Exchange generated when you created your Letter of Intent. The information you provided in your Letter of Intent is visible and editable in the Full Application.</p>

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				<p>If you need to make a change to your Full Application after you submit it, click the “edit” link. A dialogue box opens advising you that it will need to be un-submitted before you can make any changes.</p> <p>Clicking 'Unsubmit' confirms that you intend to re-edit the application and by doing this, the application will no longer be in a submitted state.</p> <p>You will need to re-submit this application prior to the Full Application deadline.</p>
54	Letters of Intent/ Withdrawing submission	12/7/20	<p>I have a faculty member who submitted an LOI under this FOA, which generated a Control Number of 2425-XXXX. Based on my understanding they were told that they can still continue making updates to their LOI in the application form that generated once they hit “create letter of intent.” Is that correct? If so, do we then need to go as far as submitting the entire application so that the DOE can view the LOI updates (even though there are no uploads and the application is incomplete)?</p> <p>The other and most important thing is that since we were initially confused on the process for this submission, I mistakenly created another “fake” LOI (didn’t realize that by hitting “create Letter of Intent” that I was in fact submitting a letter of intent). My intent was to delete this version, which generated an application under Control Number of 2425-XXX. As this was created after the other, I don’t want my LOI to override his since this is a limited submission (one per organization).</p>	<p>Please see the answer to Q#53 for information about changing an LOI.</p> <p>If you created a “fake” LOI that you do not want OTT to confuse with your intended one, you should go into the fake one mark it as such, preferably by editing information so that it does not register as a duplicate LOI from a single applicant. You could, for example, replace all of the information with the word “test.”</p> <p>There is no way to delete an Application once you start it by creating a Letter of Intent.</p> <p>OTT advises against creating a third Letter of Intent.</p>

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			Therefore, is there a way to delete my LOI under Control Number 2425-XXX? Or, is it best that the professor submit another LOI that would replace mine and his original version, seeing as OTT will only consider the last timely submission if more than one LOI is submitted.	
55	Letters of Intent/ Submissions	12/8/20	<p>I wrote a Letter of Intent for our application and I've gone through the OTT system to submit it. But it looks like clicking "submit" is only intended for when the whole concept paper is ready to go as well. Is that right?</p> <p>Can you tell me if you are supposed to receive the Letter of Intent early? And have you received it from us? Sorry if the answer is obvious, I thought it had been submitted but now I suspect it has not and maybe shouldn't be.</p>	<p>Your Letter of Intent is created – and considered submitted – when you receive an email from Exchange that says: Your Letter of Intent has been completed. You are now in the Full Application stage of the submission process. The control number for your Full Application is 2425-XXX. If necessary, you can update any information if it has changed since the Letter of Intent by navigating to 'My Submissions' and clicking the 'Edit' button. You can then click the 'Save and Continue' button to complete the rest of your Full Application.</p> <p>There is no "submit" button for Letters of Intent. Use the "submit" button only for your Full Application. You can unsubmit a Full Application by clicking on the "edit" link in the "My Submissions" tab after you log into Exchange.</p> <p>This FOA does not have a Concept Paper submission.</p> <p>To be eligible to submit a Full Proposal to the EPIC FOA, applicants must create a Letter of Intent by 5:00 p.m. ET on December 11 2020, which is the new deadline. If you receive the email referenced earlier in this answer, you may consider this requirement satisfied.</p>
56	Creating a Full Application	12/8/20	Can I begin a new Full Application after the LOI deadline?	Even if it is possible to begin a new Full Application after 5:00 p.m. ET on December 11, 2020 (the new LOI deadline), the only

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	after 5:00 p.m. ET on 12/9/20			eligible Full Applications to the EPIC FOA will have control numbers that correspond to Letters on Intent created before 5:00 p.m. ET. on December 11, 2020. OTT will not consider Full Applications with control numbers created after the LOI deadline, which is now 5:00 p.m. ET on December 11, 2020
57	Construction Costs	12/14/20	<p>The FOA indicates that construction costs are generally not allowable (page 31). Are there any exceptions based on (small) dollar thresholds, or if we can show that a minor construction project (to upgrade a lab space to add important capabilities) is cheaper than the cost paying for similar space out of the proposed project budget?</p> <p>What is the best way to determine whether the potential construction costs may be allowable in advance of submitting the full application?</p>	<p>As stated in the answer to Q#13, “recipients [emphasis added] are required to obtain written authorization from the Contracting Officer before incurring any major construction costs.”</p> <p>There is no mechanism for the Contracting Office to determine whether an applicant’s potential construction costs may be allowable in advance of submitting the full application. Its review of such expenses would not come sooner than during award negotiations.</p> <p>Language in the FOA—e.g., in Elements of the Regional Engagement Strategy, and in the Technical Volume and Technical Review Criteria sections—explicitly refers to “existing” facilities and equipment. Applicants should use their best judgment in deciding whether to include generally unallowable construction costs in their full applications.</p>
58	Unincorporated Consortia (section 3(A)(iv))	12/14/20	<p>If we have submitted a Letter of Intent as a Prime applicant, can we apply under the full application as the lead applicant of an Unincorporated Consortia (assuming we follow the guidance regarding collaboration agreements)?</p> <p>If a member of an unincorporated consortia signs on to the consortia's collaboration agreement (per the guidance in section 3(A)(iv), pgs 10-11, and their work scope is less</p>	<p>Yes, you would be able apply under the full application as the lead applicant of an Unincorporated Consortia.</p> <p>As stated on page 26 of the FOA, “applicants must provide a separate budget justification for each subrecipient that is expected to perform work estimated to be more than \$100,000 or 25 percent of the total work effort (whichever is less).” A separate budget justification is not required from subrecipients that are expected to perform work estimated to be less than</p>

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			than \$100,000 or 25 percent of the total work effort, does that subrecipient still submit separate budgets, or does the designated lead applicant of the Unincorporated Consortia submit the only project budget?	\$100,000 or 25 percent of the total work effort (whichever is less), however, the costs of the subrecipients must be included in the total project budget and shown on the "Contractual" Tab of the Budget Justification Form submitted by the Prime Applicant.
59	FFRDC involvement	12/14/20	We are collaborating with an FFRDC that is interested in supporting our EPIC initiative, but as a result of bureaucratic complexities, is not intending to receive grant dollars or contribute cost-share. Is there a good way to demonstrate their commitment and involvement to the EPIC project in question besides writing a letter of support - such as participating as an advisory member of an Unincorporated Consortia?	OTT is unable to offer advice about good ways to demonstrate third-party commitment to and involvement in EPIC applications. Applicants should discuss roles and strategies to highlight them directly with their prospective partners and interested parties.
60	Indirect Costs	12/14/20	Does the indirect cost rate of the Prime applicant apply to other project subrecipients, or do subrecipients utilize their own separate indirect cost rates in their separate subrecipient budgets?	No, the subrecipients use their own separate Indirect Rates based on their own General Ledger of costs which capture both direct and indirect costs (fringe, Overhead, G&A, etc.).
61	Submission Process	12/15/20	I submitted a Letter of Intent. Am I able to go ahead and start the full application now or do we need to be invited after review of the LOI that we submitted?	<p>As stated on page 16 of the FOA, "OTT will not make eligibility determinations about potential applicants prior to the date on which applications to this FOA must be submitted. The decision whether to submit an application in response to this FOA lies solely with the applicant."</p> <p>Applicants who submitted an LOI in Exchange by the deadline may work on their full proposals now.</p>
62	Budget Period	12/17/20	The FOA states DOE plans to fund four to eight innovation-accelerating organizations OTT anticipates making awards that will run up to 36 months in length, comprised of one or more budget periods.	DOE anticipates making awards for projects that will run up to 36 months. Project Periods should be based on the amount of time (up to 36 months) that is needed for the Applicant to accomplish the stated goals of the project that respond to the FOA objectives. Budget Periods will be 12 months in duration. Awards that have project periods longer than 12 months will

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			Individual awards may vary between approximately \$500,000 and approximately \$1,000,000. OTT may establish more than one budget period for each award and fund only the initial budget period(s). Question: Does this mean that we may assume an initial budget period of 1 year and submit a budget of up to \$1M for one year or must we assume an initial budget period of 3 years and submit a 3-year budget of up to \$1M?	have more than one budget period. The total Project Budget, which includes DOE Funding and a minimum 20 % Applicant Cost Share, should be broken out across the total Project Period. The distribution of Costs across the Budget Period(s) should reflect the funding needed for the project activities during that Budget Period. The total costs of all Budget Period(s) should equal the total cost of the project.
63	Cost Share	12/18/20	Can a FFRDC or GOGO provide in-kind cost share?	No. FFRDCs and GOGOs may contribute cost share only if the contributions are paid directly from the contractor's Management Fee or another non-federal source. Please see FOA Section 3.b.iv and Section 3.b.vi.
64	Budget Period	12/23/20	On p.7, it says, "OTT anticipates making awards that will run up to 36 months in length, comprised of one or more budget periods." May I select 36 months as one budget period, or do I have to break down to 12 months for each budget period?	The Project Period for an award can be up to 36 months. Each Budget Period during this Project Period will be a maximum of 12 months in length. A 36 month Project Period would have three 12 month Budget Periods, a 24 month Project Period would have two 12 month Budget Periods and a 12 month Project Period would have one 12 month Budget Period. Please also see the answer to Q #62.
65	Cost Share	12/28/20	Can funds from third parties obligated before the proposal is submitted be included in the non-federal cost share? Can funds from third parties spent before the proposal is submitted be included in the non-federal cost share?	Third party funds obligated or spent before the proposal is submitted would not be allowable as cost share. The FOA includes several references to pre-award costs and reimbursements. As stated on page 30, "Pre-award costs cannot be incurred prior to the Selection Official signing the Selection Statement and Analysis. Pre-award expenditures are made at the selectee's risk."

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			Can funds from third parties obligated before the recipient EPIC contract starts be included in the non-federal cost share ? Can funds from third parties spent before the recipient EPIC contract starts be included in the non-federal cost share?	Please see Appendix A of the FOA (Cost Share Information) for additional resources about cost share.
66	Cost Share	12/28/20	Can relevant recipient or subrecipient software (e.g., startup and mentor collaboration, investor research) be included in cost share?	Possibly. It would depend, among other things, on whether the software was created during the period of performance.
67	Cost Share	12/28/20	Can relevant vendor software (e.g., startup and mentor collaboration, investor research) be included in cost share?	No. As stated on page 12, "Vendors/contractors may not provide cost share. Any partial donation of goods or services is considered a discount and is not allowable."
68	Letter of Commitment Template	12/28/20	Please provide a template for Letters of Commitment.	<p>There is no template for letters of commitment. As stated on page 24, letters of commitment are limited to one page per letter and must be submitted as a single PDF with this naming convention: "ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_LOCs"</p> <p>Applicants should use their best judgement as to the substance and format of letters of commitment from subrecipients and third-party cost share providers.</p>
69	Resume Template	12/28/20	Please provide a template for resumes.	<p>There is no template for resumes. As stated on page 24, "Applicants are required to submit one-page resumes for key participating team members. Multi-page resumes are not allowed." Resumes must be submitted as a single PDF with this naming convention: "ControlNumber_LeadOrganization_Resumes".</p> <p>Applicants should use their best judgement as to the substance and format of key team members' resumes.</p>

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70	SAM registration	12/28/20	Are subrecipients required to have a SAM's registration?	No. SAM registration is a requirement only for prime recipients.
71	Fringe. G&A and overhead rates	12/28/20	Can fringe. G&A and overhead rates in an applicant's current contract with NREL be used as "approved" rates in this proposal? Can fringe. G&A and overhead rates in a subrecipient's current contract with DOE be used as "approved" rates in this proposal?	Applicants may use the rates in a current contract—with a lab or subrecipient—in their EPIC proposals. Approval of those rates would be part of EPIC award negotiation process.
72	Cost Share	1/5/21	What is the maximum amount to be included in the budget if let's say, I apply for the \$1,000,000 award. Would I budget for 1,000,000 + 20% cost share for a total of \$1,200,000 ? Appendix B alludes to this but just want to confirm.	Applicants should provide total projects costs – both federal and cost share unless otherwise stated in a particular entry on a form.
73	Templates	1/5/21	The FOA states that a SOPO template is available in OTT exchange, similarly for the Budget Justification Workbook. I was able to obtain the following documents attached? Are those the correct ones? If not, could you please provide me with the appropriate links. Specially since the SOPO seems to be a form to be filled after awarding. Please advice.	Applicant forms and templates for the EPIC FOA are available on Exchange. See "Required Application Documents" in the EPIC FOA section of Exchange: https://ott-exchange.energy.gov/#Foald715036e7-e111-442c-bf38-1e33a4633fa5 . The forms are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">•SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance (Last Updated: 12/15/2020 03:00 PM ET)•Summary Slide Template (Last Updated: 12/16/2020 02:09 PM ET)•Budget Justification Form (Last Updated: 12/15/2020 02:53 PM ET)•Disclosure of Lobbying Form (Last Updated: 12/15/2020 04:14 PM ET)•Statement of Project Objectives (SOPO) Template (Last Updated: 12/16/2020 02:10 PM ET)

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			Can you provide an example of the Indirect Rate Proposal?	Indirect Rate Proposal Example can be found at: https://www.energy.gov/eere/funding/downloads/sample-indirect-rate-proposal-and-profit-compliance-audit
74	FOA Goals	1/5/21	Please list primary goals of the FOA?	The FOA's goals, as articulated in the document, are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “. ... to support the formation and development of regional clusters supporting entrepreneurs and startups by funding innovation-accelerating organizations that demonstrate the ability to advance energy and related technologies in collaboration with and with the support of state, regional, and/or local entities.” (page 1)• “. ... to recognize innovation-accelerating organizations focused on stimulating energy and related hardware technology development and supportive clusters.”(page 2)• to grow a community of innovators. (page 4)
75	Letter of Commitment	1/6/21	We had previously submitted an application for the \$50K HeroX EPIC prize. At that time, we submitted many support letters from partners and industry players. These letters were dated late August /early September. Do we need to go back out to our network to get new letters or may we use these, as their interaction is still envisioned to be similar in nature, as long as we notify all of them in advance of submission and permission to use the same letters?	The EPIC Prize and EPIC FOA are related but distinct programs. Letters of commitment should not be confused with letters of support. New Letters of Commitment that specifically indicate cost share support for this Project under the EPIC FOA are required. Letters of Support are not required but if submitted, they should be for this project, not previous projects..
76	Work Breakdown Structure	1/7/21	In the Technical Volume Instructions, page 22 of the FOA, it indicates “An example of a Work Breakdown Structure is provided below”. I cannot find the example nowhere in the document – Please clarify.	See FOA Amendment 00003 Section 4.C.ii. And Appendix F.
77	Regional Engagement Strategy Plan	1/7/21	On page 4 under Regional Engagement Strategy Plan, the FOA says the applicant is required to submit a Regional Engagement Strategy Plan with an implementation plan.	See FOA Amendment 00003 Section 1.B. See also page 20.

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			<p>Is this a separate document from the Technical Volume? If not, can you please clarify whether we are meant to include a complete REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY PLAN in the Technical Volume or is the Technical Volume meant to show how our project fits with the Elements of Regional Engagement Strategy listed on page 5?</p> <p>And</p> <p>The list of components and file names on pages 19-20 does not list a Regional Engagement Strategy Plan, even though the FOA says on Page 4 that the Applicant is required to submit one. Can you please clarify where/how we include the Regional Engagement Strategy Plan?</p>	
78	Summary Slide Template	1/8/21	The Summary Slide Template provided uses different font type and font size than indicated in the FOA requirements – Can we use the template as is, or do we need to change the font to Times New Roman and font size of 12?	You may use the Summary Slide Template as is.
79	Agreement Type for GOGO subrecipient	1/13/21	<p>Question 2 clarifies that Government-Owned, Government-Operated (GOGO) laboratories, such as National Energy Technology Laboratory, are eligible to apply as subrecipients under section 3.A.i of the subject FOA.</p> <p>Section 2.B.ii does not clarify the agreement type for GOGOs. Please advise what kind of agreement is preferred between OTT and a GOGO as a subrecipient of an award.</p>	See FOA Amendment 00003 Section 2.B.ii.
80	SF-424	1/14/21	Do you require one SF-424 submission for an entire application, or must each collaborating organization submit an individual SF-424?	Only the Prime Applicant submits an SF-424 Form. The DOE Award is contractually set with the Prime Applicant. The Prime's SF-424 includes all costs for the Project.

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81	"Regional Engagement"	1/14/21	<p>What does the OTT mean by "regional engagement"? Is it purely focused on geographical regions or could it be interpreted as programmatic regions?</p> <p>If the program is focused on geographical regions, would cross-regional approaches be of interest (i.e. Texas & MA)?</p>	<p>As stated on page one of the FOA, OTT is using the term "regional" in the context of geography. That said, "regional innovation clusters—geographic concentrations of specialized skills, industries, and technology sectors" could, as stated, encompass more than one programmatic or technology area.</p> <p>Please see the response to Q #32, which asks about the meaning of the term "region."</p>
82	Budget Justification Form	1/14/21	<p>Should subrecipients itemize all their specific costs the same way as the prime? For example, should a subrecipient separately list Personnel, Fringe, Supplies and Indirects? If so, how should this be entered in the Workbook?</p> <p>Can subrecipients have their own dedicated subcontractors?</p>	<p>Subrecipients shall submit a Budget Justification describing all project costs and calculations when their total proposed budget exceeds either (1) \$250,000 or (2) 25% of total award costs. Subrecipients will complete a separate budget justification using the same budget justification form as the Prime Applicant. These sub-recipient forms may be completed by either the sub-recipients themselves or by the Prime. The budget totals on the sub-recipient's forms must match the sub-recipient entries shown on the Prime Applicants budget form.</p> <p>Subrecipients are allowed to have subcontractors and vendors as part of their project budget as needed.</p>
83	Milestone Table	1/15/21	<p>We are trying to work through our technical narrative for the EPIC FOA, and have a question on the requirements under the "Project Plan" section of the Technical Narrative. According to the FOA, it states under Milestones in the Project Plan section, "In addition to describing milestones in the Workplan text and including them in the schedule, the Applicant is required to complete the Milestone Summary Table shown below." The only reference to the Milestone Table we can find is for the required attachment of the SOPO. Are we required to have the Milestone Table in the SOPO as well as the</p>	<p>Applicants are required to describe the Milestones in the Technical Narrative, and have the complete breakdown in a table format in the SOPO.</p>

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			Technical Narrative, or is it intended that we will simply describe the Milestones in the Technical Narrative, and have the complete breakdown in a table format in the SOPO? Any clarification you can provide would be greatly appreciated.	
84	Budget Periods	1/15/21	The budget period is 36 months. Can we set in two budget periods, BP1--18 months and BP2--18 months?	Please see the response to Q# 62.
85	Additional proposal information by external link(s)	1/15/21	In Technical Volume, may I insert a website address to show some design method using video?	The expectation is that proposals will contain all relevant information within them without links to external sources or media.
86	Use of EPIC funds/hiring staff	1/15/21	Are dedicated staff expected to be hired for this FOA?	OTT has no expectation about EPIC awardees hiring staff. As stated on pages 2 and 3 of the FOA, "... it is DOE's hope that this funding opportunity will enable successful applicants to enhance their organization's resilience and operational sustainability." OTT leaves it to awardees to determine if hiring staff would enhance their resilience and operational sustainability.
87	Use of EPIC funds	1/15/21	Is the expectation that some of the funding we would receive would go directly to support startups? Are there other expectations related to the breakdown of funding across capital expenditures, headcount, etc?	As stated in multiple places in the FOA, incubator support to startups is a crucial to this initiative. But the FOA makes no statement about whether awardees must use their EPIC money to fund startups directly. There are no expectations related to the breakdown of funding across capital expenditures, headcount, etc.
88	Letters of Support	1/15/21	Are we allowed to submit letters of support from previous partners along with the submission?	Letters of commitment should not be confused with letters of support. As stated on page 25, OTT is looking for "letters of commitment from all subrecipient and third party cost share providers." Letters of support are not required, but

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				OTT advises if applicants submit letters of support, they should be for this Project.
89	Use of EPIC funds/hiring staff	1/19/21	Is it okay to include plans to hire someone to fill a role to support the proposal (if awarded), or does the OTT recommend only relying on the existing team?	Please see the response to Q# 86.
90	Time commitments the technical lead	1/19/21	Can you please elaborate on the time commitments to the project required for the technical lead?	As stated on pages 35 and 36, merit review criteria #3 is Criterion 3: Team and Resources, which makes up 20% of the overall score. The criterion specifically includes “time commitment of the individuals on the team” and the “[l]evel of participation by project participants as evidenced by letter(s) of commitment and how well they are integrated into the workplan.” Applicants should use their best judgement in allocating their resources while accurately reflecting team members’ availability and level of commitment. There is no set requirement for a technical lead’s time commitment.
91	Time split for consortium of partners	1/19/21	Is there an ideal split for a consortium of partners? I.e. 80% 20%	No, there is no ideal split for a consortium of partners. The split you propose--80%/20% for lead/partners—seems reasonable.
92	Letters of commitment	1/19/21	I am working with an applicant who is trying to determine who to address letters of commitment to (name, title, address, etc.) and wanted to know if you could give me some direction.	Letters of commitment may be addressed to the lead applicant’s EPIC FOA project manager or to OTT. If you prefer that project partners address the letters to OTT, the address is: U.S. Department of Energy Office of Technology Transitions 1000 Independence Ave. SW Washington DC 20585 Attn: EPIC FOA Manager
93	Direct investment in startup companies	1/19/21	I am wondering if it would be worth the applicant’s time to propose direct investment in startup companies as part of its match where that is a core function of the program?	Applicants should describe their programs they propose using EPIC funding to launch or expand upon, which may include direct investment in startups.

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94	Contract POC	1/20/21	I am working on a proposal for the DE-FOA -0002425. Could you please let me know who is the DOE HQ point of contact for this FOA to address the contract letter?	You would address the letter to the DOE EPIC contracting officer: Krystal Paige
95	WBS vs. SOPO	1/20/21	It looks like the 'Work Breakdown Structure' (WBS) and the SOPO are very similar, can you briefly describe for me, or provide a link that explains the different between the WBS and the SOPO?	They are similar. By definition, a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) is a deliverable-oriented hierarchical decomposition of the work to be executed by the project team to accomplish the project objectives and create the required deliverables. It organizes and defines the total scope of the project over the project period by listing Task-level activities and their timing and duration over the entire project period. A Statement of Project Objectives (SOPO) is a narrative overview of the entire project that lists the Scope, Objectives, Tasks and Milestones of the project. The SOPO includes a narrative description of each Task whereas a WBS simply lists the Tasks and indicates their placement and duration over the project timeline.
96	Regional engagement strategy plan /Technical Volume	1/20/21	There is a FOA requirement of providing a regional engagement strategy plan within the Technical Volume. But where specifically in the Technical Volume do we space the Regional Engagement Strategy? Should it be placed in a specific section and weaved throughout the document?	Either approach you suggest is acceptable. OTT leaves it to applicants to decide how best to integrate their regional engagement strategies into their Technical Volumes.

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