

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for the Research Opportunities in Accelerator Stewardship FOA and LAB Solicitations

What's New in FY 2018?

In FY 2018, the call for design studies for Track 1 topic 3 “High Power Electron Accelerator Technology for Energy and Environmental Applications” has **closed**. Once the design studies from the two rounds of solicitations are evaluated, a future FOA may call for proposals to initiate R&D on one or more system types.

What is a “Stewardship Customer” and what is considered satisfactory “evidence” of the Customer’s interest?

As defined in V(A)2, the term “Stewardship Customer” is used broadly to refer to the entity (other than HEP) whose mission or research objectives encompass the proposed work. The Stewardship customer can be another Office of Science (e.g., BES, NP, FES), another DOE program office (e.g., NNSA, EERE, ARPA-E) another federal agency (e.g., NIH, DoD), or industries that use accelerator technology.

Evidence of the Stewardship Customer’s interest may be found in advisory committee reports, workshop reports, white papers, or R&D roadmaps issued by the Stewardship Customer that identify the issue as important. More significant evidence is provided by substantial and material participation of the Stewardship Customer in the effort (e.g., by co-funding, cost-sharing, in-kind donation or equipment, or donation of effort).

How can teams apply?

Teams of collaborating institutions are always strongly encouraged to apply. With the introduction of Track 3 has come a change on how teams apply:

For Track 1 and Track 2 applicants: A single proposal must be submitted by the lead institution, with subawards provided to collaborators if needed. A single award will be issued to the lead institution, which must then write subcontracts to the subawardees to disburse the funds. The sole exception is if a DOE National Laboratory is a subawardee, in which case DOE will provide funds directly to the Lab by field work authorization, per section II(H).

For Track 3 applicants: A collaborative proposal must be submitted, with the non-DOE entity being the lead institution. The Host Lab must submit a collaborative proposal.

What are you looking for in a “team”?

Teaming is strongly encouraged for proposals to any Track. “Teaming” in the context of this solicitation means the substantial collaboration of two or more institutions to achieve the proposal’s goals. It is a central aim of Accelerator Stewardship that technologies developed for basic research find use in a wealth of other applications, and often an excellent way to achieve this is through teams composed of people with expertise in (1) the accelerator technology, (2) the requirements of the new application, and (3) what’s required to make a viable commercial product. Track 1 proposals (applied R&D) in particular are expected to be from multi-institutional teams. Track 2 proposals (basic R&D) are encouraged to be from teams, but this should be determined by the nature of the work. Track 3 proposals (Test Facility Program) must have at least two institutions participating.

The quality of the team is an explicit review criteria, please see section V(A)2.

In the case of Track 3 proposals, teaming between the non-DOE entity and a DOE Office of Science Laboratory is enforced by the requirement that a Collaborative proposal be submitted by both entities. This is to ensure that proposals take accurate account of the capabilities, availability, and cost of working at the national lab, and to ensure the national lab has agreed to support the work.

What if a DOE National Lab is a collaborator on my proposal? What should the budget include? Who receives the funding, and what does section II(H) mean?

Collaborating with a DOE National Laboratory is much like collaborating with any other institution. However, because DOE already has contracts with the Labs, there are some subtle differences:

What should the budget and budget narrative include?

For Track 1 and Track 2 proposals, a single proposal must be filed and the budget and budget narrative should include (and explain) funding requests from **all** participants, **including** any participating DOE National Laboratories.

For Track 3 proposals, a collaborative proposal must be filed, and each institution’s submission must include the budget and budget narrative for **that institution only**. Since the DOE National Lab will be submitting its own collaborative proposal, it will submit its budget request **separately**. DOE will combine the separate submissions into a single proposal with a single budget.

Who receives the funding, and what does section II(H) mean?

In all cases, funds that are destined for a DOE National Laboratory will be provided directly to the lab through the DOE Field Work Authorization System. This applies even if the Lab is a subawardee. We will provide further instructions during award negotiations.

Is a Letter of Intent (LOI) required?

No, but a Pre-Application (FOA applicants) or Pre-Proposal (LAB applicants) is required. See the Funding Opportunity Announcement section IV(B) for further details.

Should I apply to the DOE Comparative Review in HEP or to the Accelerator Stewardship solicitation?

You should apply to all solicitations for which you meet the eligibility requirements and for which you can submit a strong application that is responsive to the requirements of the solicitation.

If the work you propose predominantly impacts HEP, submit the proposal to the DOE Comparative Review in HEP. If the work you propose predominantly impacts non-HEP users of accelerator technology, and there is a clear stewardship customer, submit the proposal to the Accelerator Stewardship call. See the Funding Opportunity Announcement section V(A)2 “Merit Review Criteria” for further details.

What if I’ve submitted a substantially similar proposal to another solicitation at another agency? Am I forbidden from submitting my proposal?

No, but you must list the duplicative proposal in Appendix 2: Current and Pending Support. Concurrent submission of an application to other organizations for simultaneous consideration will not prejudice its review. We will, however, contact the other agency prior to making an award to establish the disposition of the duplicate request.

How many proposals may one PI (or one institution) submit?

There is no limit. However, PIs are strongly encouraged to focus their effort on one proposal where their interests and capabilities align well with the objectives of the solicitation and they can write a strong proposal.

Are letters of endorsement from collaborators helpful?

Endorsement letters are not recommended for pre-proposals, but may be helpful for full proposals.

Can DOE labs apply to Track 2?

No. See the Funding Opportunity Announcement, section III(A), Eligibility.

Can DOE labs apply to Track 3?

Yes, but not as the lead institution. The non-DOE entity must lead the collaborative proposal, and must “own” the work. Track 3 proposals that appear to be lab-driven are likely to score poorly under merit review.

What’s the difference between Track 3 and the SBIR program?

Track 3 is open to all domestic applicants, including other FFRDCs, large companies, and universities. Track 3’s primary purpose is to facilitate short-term access to unique DOE accelerator infrastructure. Track 3 awards are not renewable, and are not intended for multi-year R&D efforts.

Can labs apply to the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)?

No. DOE National Laboratories must apply to the separate Program Announcement to DOE National Laboratories (LAB). Other (non-DOE) FFRDCs may apply under the FOA. See the Funding Opportunity Announcement, section III(A), Eligibility.

Can Track 2 applications include a DOE Lab as a subaward?

Yes. The university must lead the effort, and such an arrangement must not be used to circumvent the restrictions on Track 2 eligibility. See the Funding Opportunity Announcement, sections II(H) and II(I).

What is the typical award size?

The award size depends on the Track, the topic, the work scope, the available funding, and other factors. Track 1 awards generally do not exceed approximately \$2M/3 years, Track 2 awards generally average \$500k/3 years, and Track 3 awards average \$190k/1 year. Design studies are limited to no more than \$200k/1 year. That said, the requested budget should always be driven by the research goals and proposed work scope, not the other way around.

What is the typical award duration?

The typical award duration is 3 years for Track 1 and Track 2 proposals, and 9-12 months for Track 3. Exceptions include design studies, for which the award duration is typically limited to 1 year. The duration should be chosen in light of the research goals and proposed work scope.

What does the language in section II(B) “Estimated Funding” mean?

Budget numbers listed in section II(B) refer to the specific fiscal year only. For example “It is anticipated that approximately \$X,XXX,XXX will be available in FY 20YY” means that the sum of all FY 20YY year obligations incurred as a result of new awards under this solicitation (including awards made under **both** the FOA and LAB calls) will not exceed \$X,XXX,XXX. This amount does not include prior-year or subsequent-year obligations, and is subject to appropriated funds being available.

What is the “Full Forward Funding” requirement?

Since 2014, DOE has been required by statute to fully forward fund awards of \$1,000,000 or less in the year in which the award begins. This means, for example, that an award of \$100,000 per year over 3 years must have the total value of \$300,000 set aside in the year the award is made. The PI will receive \$100,000 in the first year, and the balance will be held at headquarters for release in subsequent years. This means the subsequent years of the award are paid for up front, and that the entire value of the proposal then must be obligated from the “Estimated Funding” number listed in II(B).

Can the submitting institution be a foreign organization?

No. See the Funding Opportunity Announcement, section III(A), Eligibility.

Can a subawardee be a foreign organization?

Yes. Per 48 CFR 970.2770-4(a) § F preference should be given in such a manner as to enhance the accrual of economic and technological benefits to the U.S. domestic economy.

Can a fee be charged?

No, per 2 CFR 910.358(d), no fee or profit may be charged.