

ADMINISTRATIVE QUESTION AND ANSWER LOG

DE-FOA0003250 - FY24 VTO TI FOA

Question	Question	Answer
1	The FOA for 3250 says that VTO is interested in developing "new innovations in vehicle technologies, including...innovative powertrains to reduce greenhouse gas and criteria emissions from hard to decarbonize off-road, maritime, rail, and aviation sectors...." In the Areas Of Interest, topics 1 and 2 both explicitly mention "aviation." Topic 3 mentions "off-road, marine, rail, and other non-road applications," avoiding an explicit mention of aviation.	Area of Interest 3 encourages submissions of projects that implement advanced technologies or alternative fuels in other non-road applications, which includes the aviation sector.
2	I'm reaching out with a question about DE-FOA-0003250, specifically Area of Interest 3. Can you give more detail about what specific activities EERE/VTO would consider "Promotion of a specific brand, product, or invention"? (pg. 16 of the FOA)	The intent of discouraging 'Promotion of a specific brand, product, or invention' is the application/proposed project should not be used to endorse specific brands or products. Proposed project applications can identify brands and partner with a brand name company however cannot directly promote their specific brand, product, or invention.
3	Is the DE-FOA-0003250 Program annual or a one-time opportunity?	Although the Vehicle Technologies Office (VTO) does ordinarily release an annual Funding Opportunity Announcement, the topics do vary from year to year.
4	For this FOA, would the grantee cover 50% of the total cost but would need to allocate 75% of the administration tasks to a Clean Cities coalition? Or of the 50% award (not supported by cost share), 75% of the funds go to Clean Cities coalition. This question is referring to pg.17 C. Applications Specifically Not of Interest, AO1 bullet point 1.	Applications must allocate at least 75% of the total project budget to DOE-designated Clean Cities coalitions or their host organizations. Cost sharing is not required for this AOI.
5	Can anyone apply under Topic Area 1 so long as they work with their local Clean Cities coalition? Or are the Clean Cities coalitions themselves the only ones eligible under this topic area?	The FOA allows any organization to apply, with a few exceptions, including for AOI 1 (see FOA Section III for exact information). However, under AOI 1 applications must allocate at least 75% of the total project budget to DOE-designated Clean Cities coalitions or their host organizations.
6	I have a client that has developed a green fuel alternative that would significantly reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions, particularly in off-road vehicles. Because this is their brand of fuel, would that be highly discouraged for applying for this grant?	The intent of discouraging 'Promotion of a specific brand, product, or invention' is the application/proposed project should not be used to endorse specific brands or products. Proposed project applications can identify brands and partner with a brand name company however cannot directly promote their specific brand, product, or invention.
7	I was unable to download the final document. Can you please email the document to me.	The link provided downloads and opens the file without problem, please check with your system administrator
8	I am unable to access any information for the webinar and/or how to apply for this funding. It seems the links are broken and/or missing information. Can you please send me information on the application process and info needs to complete?	The link provided downloads and opens the file without problem, please check with your system administrator
9	Could you confirm that nonprofits are eligible to apply? The website says nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status can, but I did not see this mentioned in the solicitation.	Nonprofit entities are eligible to apply, however Nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that engaged in lobbying activities after December 31, 1995, are not eligible to apply for funding. See Section III.A.i in the FOA for more information.
10	Is cost sharing only required for the third area of interest, Clean transportation demonstration and deployment?	AOI 1-2 require 0% Cost share and AOI 3 requires 50% Cost Share. Please refer to Section III.B
11	I'd like to know if electric vehicle charging stations would be covered in this funding opportunity (DE-FOA 0003250)	Yes, electric vehicle charging stations would be considered zero emission vehicle infrastructure.
12	Are CNG and Hydrogen considered eligible alternative fuel types for vehicles and infrastructure under this program?	Yes, CNG and Hydrogen are considered eligible alternative fuel types for vehicles and infrastructure under this program.
13	May one application include more than the required minimum number of Clean Cities Coalition, in more than one geographical area, and therefore not be limited to the maximum award cap?	Applications under AOI 1 must allocate at least 75% of the total project budget to DOE-designated Clean Cities coalitions or their host organizations. Project teams must include at least two DOE-designated Clean Cities coalitions. Applications under AOI 2 encourages the use of Clean Cities coalitions, there is no maximum number of coalitions allowable or specific funding amount for the coalitions in this AOI. Applications under AOI 3 must include at least one active and DOE designated Clean Cities coalition with a significant role (at least 10% of the Federal portion of the project budget). The anticipated maximum award size for a single award would be \$2,500,000 for AOI 2 and \$1,000,000 for AOIs 1 and 3 – See Section II.A.i for more information
14	I noticed it also requires a DoE designated Clean Cities Coalition with a significant role - do you have any recommendations for building that partnership?	For AOI 1, project teams must include at least two DOE-designated Clean Cities coalition (https://cleancities.energy.gov/coalitions/). DOE is compiling a Teaming Partner List to facilitate the formation of project teams for this FOA. The Teaming Partner List allows organizations that may wish to participate on a project to express their interest to other applicants and explore potential partnerships. The Teaming Partner List will be available on EERE eXCHANGE and will be regularly updated to reflect new teaming partners who provide their organization's information. More information about joining the Teaming Partner List can be found in the FOA in section I.A.iii.
15 Can I find someone to support me or participate with me in this innovation.....	It is the prospective applicant's responsibility to make the determination if their proposed project meets the requirements identified in the FOA/specific Area of Interest. Submittal of a concept paper will result in a recommendation regarding your proposed project.
16	An apprentice coalition is interested in submitting a concept paper and full application for AOI 3 for the funding opportunity DE-FOA-0003250. It's not clear whether apprentice coalitions are eligible partners.	DOE-designated apprentice coalitions are considered eligible partners and meet the FOA teaming arrangement requirements described within AOI-3.
17	".....Can examples of concept papers from previously successful VTO grant applicants be provided?"	DOE cannot provide samples of concept papers or full applications. For what to include in the concept paper, please refer to the FOA Section IV.C.

18	"Can I schedule a time to speak to you about this Grant? Are you available"	DOE cannot meet privately or speak privately with any interested party. If you have a question, please submit your question to de-foa-0003250@netl.doe.gov. The question and the answer will be posted for all parties to see.
19	I am reaching out with a question regarding the Vehicle Technologies Office (VTO) Technology Integration (TI) (Part B): Training on Zero Emission Vehicle and Infrastructure Technologies for Critical Emergency Response Workers Component. I am wondering what qualifies as a "Critical Emergency Response Workers". Would electric utility linemen/women be classified as a critical emergency response worker? As such, would an electric utility be eligible to apply for training program for its employees?	The intent of the AOI is for holistic Critical Emergency Response Training that involves coordination between multiple stakeholders, including decision makers relevant to the project approach. All applications are encouraged to demonstrate how they will coordinate with external entities to address risk mitigation, training, and education of first responders and emergency response professionals. Utilities, as well as all applicants, should ensure the requirements on page 12-13 of the FOA are met and discussed clearly. Applications may be viewed as weak if the focus is solely training their employees.
20	"Can you please send me a link for the webinar about DE-FOA-0003250?"	There is no informative webinar for interested parties for this FOA. Please refer to the actual FOA for information on the types of projects the DOE is interested in using this link: EERE eXCHANGE: Funding Opportunity (energy.gov)
21	Can we apply for the DOE-VTO Technology Integration Funding Program (DOE-FOA-0003250) with no nearby Clean City Coalitions? We see there may be an issue with the requirements under the solicitation since there is not Clean Cities Coalition member close to us.	Clean Cities are encouraged partners for AOI 2. Efforts under this AOI include partnership building efforts that build connections to broaden the impact and applicability of the training. 90% of the U.S. Population lives in an area serviced by a Clean Cities Coalition. The link, https://cleancities.energy.gov/coalitions/locations/ , can help identify coalitions that may be appropriate to your project.
22	Area of Interest 2 says to leverage existing training materials, curricula, websites, online tools, and other relevant information resources developed in cooperation with EERE. Where can I find these resources?	Please review the information and links found on the Vehicle Technologies Office's Technology Integration website. Additional links are Technology Integration https://cleancities.energy.gov/projects/search?project_search=Alternative+Fuel+Vehicle+Workplace+Safety+Programs https://cleancities.energy.gov/projects/search?project_search=Alternative+Fuel+Vehicle+Deployment+Initiatives#afvd-nationwide https://cleancities.energy.gov/projects/search?project_search=Alternative+Fuel+Vehicle+Deployment+Initiatives#afvd-curriculum Substantial federal funding has been spent to develop materials that are relevant for this topic area. The intent of the statement in the question posed, is to effectively leverage existing materials as much as possible rather than recreate them at the taxpayers' expense."
23	For AOI3, Clean Transportation Demonstration and Deployment, can the cost of EVSE equipment and installation be used as cost share for a project?	Equipment and installation costs are generally allowable cost share contributions. Reference cost share details described within the FOA document: Section III.B. – Cost Sharing (page 22) and Appendix A – Cost Share Information (page 80).
24	Can one Concept Paper / Application address multiple Topic Areas of Interest?	There must be one concept paper submitted for EACH Topic Area of Interest, even if the core technology is the same.
25	".....Is the definition of Pre-Award costs "commitments issued" or "payments released"? In other words -- are selected awardees allowed to seek reimbursement for costs that have been contracted and committed (but not yet paid) prior to the effective date of federal award?"	pre-award costs are costs incurred prior to the effective date of the award. Prior authorization in the form of a letter signed by the Contracting officer is needed for costs incurred outside of the 90 day window before the effective date of the award. All pre-award costs that are incurred are at the recipient's risk; if for some reason the award does not get signed at the last minute, no pre-award costs will be reimbursed.
26	"Regarding AOI 2 (Training on Zero Emission Vehicle and Infrastructure Technologies for Critical Emergency Response Workers) from DE-FOA-0003250, please advise if there will be any consideration for near-zero or net-zero vehicle technology solutions....."	Topic Area of Interest 2 is for zero-emission technologies
27	"....We are putting together grant applications with several Clean Cities Coalition nationally. A question that has emerged is whether you can leverage technology delivered in stream 3 (Demonstrate Deployment) into a project of stream 1 (outreach and engagement) to form a larger national program. In other words, a larger grant that leverages technology to drive engagement more efficiently?"	The objective of AOI 3 is to explore novel solutions to transportation and related clean energy challenges through small-scale demonstration and deployment projects not otherwise addressed in this FOA. Projects proposed under this AOI must address replicability through a project structure that produces results and insights useful to others across the country. Therefore, outreach and engagement, as it relates to project replicability, would be an acceptable project activity of AOI 3. As stated in the FOA, applications specifically not of interest to AOI 1 include projects that include demonstration of any pre-commercial technology or deployment of any vehicles or fueling infrastructure. Therefore, combining deployment activities with activities in AOI 1 would not be considered of interest under AOI 1.
28	".....Can an entity apply for two separate topics (Topic area 1 and Topic area 2)?"	Yes, an entity may apply to more than one Topic Area of Interest (AOI). See Section III.F in the FOA titled Limitation on Number of Full Applications Eligible for Review
29	Can project partners be added or changed after submitting the concept paper? In other words, if the concept paper gets encouraged can I add or modify project partners for the application?	It is allowable to change or add team members between the concept paper and the full application
30	"Would it be possible to meet with the program manager(s) of this opportunity to discuss?"	DOE cannot meet privately or speak privately with any interested party. If you have a question, please submit your question to de-foa-0003250@netl.doe.gov. The question and the answer will be posted for all parties to see.

31	".... is interested in submitting a concept paper in consideration for DE-FOA-0003250. They have not yet received a UEI or SAM number at this point. I understand that these are required for the full application. Can they still submit a Concept Paper while they await their UEI and SAM registrations?"	Potential applicants can submit concept papers and applications without having a UEI, however an award cannot be processed without it, if the application is selected.
32	"Are there any restrictions on the composition of proposed project teams? For instance, can Clean Cities Coalitions collaborate with consultant teams and private sector entities? If collaboration is allowed, is there a requirement for competitive procurement, either before submitting the application or after receiving the award?"	Collaboration is allowed amongst team members, however there are restrictions for the entities participating. For instance, a FFRDC has a limit on the level of participation dependent upon the topic AOI, and all entities should be domestic entities unless a waiver is approved. Please refer to the FOA for other participation restrictions. Further, please take into account the teaming arrangement section of each AOI. Each AOI has their own Teaming Arrangement Section which describes the requirements of each project team"
33	"If competitive procurement is required post-award, are there any conflict of interest constraints regarding consultant firms aiding in the preparation of the grant application? In other words, if a consultant assists a Coalition in preparing the application, would they be prohibited from participating in the procurement process for the awarded project?"	Collaboration is allowed amongst team members who assist in the preparation of the application and participation of the procurement process of the awarded project.
34	"Are construction costs for the building of the charging stations covered?"	Construction costs for charging stations would not be applicable for Topics AOI 1 & 2. Equipment and installation costs are generally allowable provided that the project aligns with the AOI-3 Objective stated within the FOA documents.
35	"I'm planning on submitting a concept paper for this exciting grant opportunity. I am wondering if there are any specific requirements for the structure of the concept paper. (e.g., I know single spaced, and 12 font?)"	Please refer to Section IV.C titled "Content and Form of Concept Papers" for the requirements and instructions for composing concept papers
36	We are intending to submit for the Vehicle Technologies Office FOA number: DE-FOA-0003250. However, we have not yet received our SAM number, which we applied or a few weeks ago. Is it possible to still submit the context paper for grant?	Potential applicants can submit concept papers and applications without having a SAM, however an award cannot be processed without it, if the application is selected.
37	We are in the process of submitting the Concept paper. for FOA: DE-FOA-0003250. Do we have to mention the dollar (\$\$) amount and estimated budget for the project in the content page of the concept paper?	It is not necessary to disclose project amount within the concept paper. Please refer to Section IV.C titled "Content and Form of Concept Papers" for the requirements and instructions for composing concept papers
38	"I have my Concept Paper completed for FOA 003250. However, my UEI number has not been established yet. Can I submit my Concept Paper without the UEI and add later?"	Potential applicants can submit concept papers and applications without having a UEI, however an award cannot be processed without it, if the application is selected.
39	On the first page of the FOA it states "Applicants must submit a Letter of Intent and a Concept Paper by 5:00 p.m. ET on the due date listed above to be eligible to submit a Full Application." There is no other mention of a Letter of Intent Can our concept paper serve as our Letter of Intent? Or do we need to submit it separately from the concept paper? If it must be separate, what should be contained within the Letter of Intent?	No Letters of Intent are necessary.
40	Per page 82 of the FOA, "Here "cost matching" for the non-federal share is calculated as a percentage of the federal funds only, rather than the Total Project Cost." Can you clarify for AOI 3 whether the match must be of the total project cost vs of the federal funds only?	Cost Sharing for Topic Area of Interest 3 will be calculated based off the total cost of the project
41	"If our project is to show that technology works and the technology is made of non-US manufactured components, will that project be disqualified because the components are not US-made?"	No, that will not disqualify you using components manufactured outside the US. To the greatest extent practicable, all equipment and products purchased with funds made available under this FOA should be American-made. This requirement does not apply to used or leased equipment.
42	Will you accept any FOA application submissions late or outside the EERE Exchange system	NO. The EERE Exchange system will be the only method to submit the application package for consideration. Applications are due 4/30 @ 5:00 PM EST SHARP. There is a 1 hour grace period from 5-6 PM EST built within the Exchange system to allow submissions if you are already logged in. However, it is the sole discretion of the Contracting Officer as to whether these late submissions will be accepted. In order to ensure consideration of the application, please make sure the package is submitted through the Exchange system by the cutoff time.
43	"In most cases, partnering FFRDCs will be funded independently of the project team. Should those partnering FFRDCs still provide their project lead a completed sub-recipient budget justification for the Full Application submission if the FFRDCs' proposed federal share exceeds \$250K or 25% of the total project costs?"	Although a FFRDC may be funded independently, the budget will still need to be evaluated. Therefore, yes, a FFRDC proposing a budget with a total subrecipient cost exceeding \$250k will need to provide a budget justification.
44	"I am currently helping to put together our organization's application for this funding opportunity. For the letters of commitment requirement, it says "Submit letters of commitment from all subrecipient and third-party cost share providers." Does this mean that the prime applicant/recipient does not need to submit a specific letter of commitment? "	Letters of commitment are only required for subrecipients and third-party cost share providers. A letter of commitment is not required from the prime applicant.
45	"In this concept paper, we listed an organization that has requested to be removed from the concept paper. Is it possible to submit an updated concept paper to our account? We do not wish to pull the concept paper entirely as the concept has been encouraged, but just wish to update the collaborating organizations listed in the concept paper on record."	A new concept paper will not be required to be submitted with the removal of a participant. You may submit an application with the updated list of participants, but keep in mind the teaming requirements of the respective topic area of interest (AOI). If the participant who dropped out happened to fall within the required teaming partner list, a suitable partner replacement should be included with the application.
46	"As a partner on a concept paper encouraged to move forward under DOE FOA 0003250, I am writing to request an extension of the overall application deadline by one week – from April 30, 2024 to May 7, 2024."	It is not anticipated that the submission deadline for full applications will be extended

47	"Our concept paper was discouraged. I would like to 1) know why, 2) explain our technology better, or 3) a further explanation as to why we weren't encouraged."	The notification letter received will be your sole debriefing the DOE will provide with regard to your Concept Paper. Receipt of a discouragement notification regarding your concept paper does not prohibit your organization from submitting a full application in accordance with the instructions and requirements contained within the FOA. If you so choose, you may still submit an application that would provide a better opportunity to explain the technology.
48	"Do DOE-Designated Apprentice Coalitions satisfy the Special Requirement, or must the submitting organization have completed the full DOE-Designated Coalition? If an organization is submitting an application but deadline of SPM ET April 30, 2024, while an Apprentice Designation but achieves full DOE-Designation before the expected August 5, 2024, EERE Selection Notification, would it qualify as meeting the Special Requirement? Would an Apprentice Coalition partnering with other DOE Designated Coalition meet the Special Requirements?"	DOE-designated apprentice coalition may be used to meet the FOA requirements for minimum budget amount that must go towards a DOE-designated coalition.
49	"Since DOE prohibits FFRDCs from lobbying to influence federal officials in connection with the awarding of grants or contracts, I'd like to confirm whether or not DOE federally owned and operated laboratories are still required to provide a signed "SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities" when there's nothing to report?"	All subrecipients, including FFRDCs, are required to submit the SF-LLL form
50	"To whom should DOE FFRDCs address the required "Authorization for DOE/NNSA FFRDCs"? Please provide the name, title, and mailing address. Past funding announcements have provided the DOE Grantor Contact/Contract Specialist information through the FAQ."	Mrs. Jena Barrientos-Armas US Department of Energy National Energy Technology Laboratory 3610 Collins Ferry Road PO Box 880 Morgantown, WV 26507
51	"Encouraged to submit but will be out of country on 4/30/24. Can another Clean Cities Coalition file our proposal through EERE exchange or must it be the Coalition that is the prime and/or the coalition that submitted the concept paper?"	You can designate another registered entity in Exchange to share your application with, but its not clear if that other entity can submit on your behalf. You would have to contact the Exchange help desk on that, EERE-ExchangeSupport@hq.doe.gov. It would likely be the safest route to submit your application before being unavailable to submit.
52	"How can we request a debriefing on my Concept Paper? We would like to improve for future bids."	The notification letter received will be your sole debriefing the DOE will provide with regard to your Concept Paper. However, within the notification letter, there is a link you can click on for the VTO FOA information session series spanning topics such as FOA basics, including Concept Paper phases. You may find benefit using this resource. This can be found here: https://www.energy.gov/eere/vehicles/funding-opportunities
53	"I am wondering if I can start adding the information I already have so as not to leave all of the entry to the day we submit. Is it possible to start the application, complete sections of it, and save it? Or does it need to be done all at once?"	You may enter the system and enter the information to start on the application and save. The system allows you to start the process and save, then come back to work on the application.
54	"We were asked on our most recent budget to rework from a 3 year/ 3 period budget to a single budget period budget. Can you confirm whether budget justifications for FOA 0003250 will have the same expectation, or should we prepare it as before broken out to 3 years?"	EERE anticipates making awards that will run from 24 up to 36 months, comprised of a single budget period.
55	".....who are involved in multiple projects we are requesting that the due date for this FOA be moved forward for 7-10 days. The reasons for this are as follows....."	It is not anticipated that the submission deadline for full applications will be extended
56	".....Any possibility the April 30th deadline could be extended 7 - 10 days?"	It is not anticipated that the submission deadline for full applications will be extended