

March 9, 2012

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (FFO)
National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace (NSTIC) Steering Group Secretariat
Cooperative Agreement**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Federal Agency Name:** National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), United States Department of Commerce (DoC)
- **Funding Opportunity Title:** National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace (NSTIC) Steering Group Secretariat Cooperative Agreement
- **Announcement Type:** Initial
- **Funding Opportunity Number:** 2012-NIST-NSTIC-02
- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:** 11.609, Measurement and Engineering Research and Standards
- **Dates:** All proposals, paper and electronic, must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, April 11, 2012. Proposals received after this deadline will not be reviewed or considered. Review, selection, and award processing is expected to be completed in May 2012. The earliest anticipated start date for the award made under this FFO is expected to be July 1, 2012.
- **Proposal Submission Address:**
 - Paper Submission: Dr. Barbara Cuthill
National Institute of Standards and Technology
NSTIC Steering Group Secretariat Cooperative Agreement
100 Bureau Drive, Mail Stop 2000
Gaithersburg, MD 20899-2000

Phone: 301-975-3273
 - Electronic Submission: www.grants.gov
- **Funding Opportunity Description:** NIST is soliciting proposals from eligible proposers to establish a Steering Group in support of the NSTIC Program (see http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/NSTICstrategy_041511.pdf) and to provide ongoing secretarial, administrative, and logistical support for the Steering Group. The recipient organization will support the Steering Group consistent with the *Recommendations for Establishing an Identity Ecosystem Governance Structure for the National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace* (“Governance Recommendations”) (see <http://www.nist.gov/nstic/2012-nstic-governance-recs.pdf>).

The role of the Steering Group Secretariat will be to administer the process for policy and standards development for the Identity Ecosystem Framework in accordance with the

NSTIC Guiding Principles in the Strategy. The Steering Group Secretariat will also ensure that accreditation authorities validate participants' adherence to the requirements of the Identity Ecosystem Framework. The Strategy describes accreditation authority on page 25 as: "An **accreditation authority** assesses and validates identity providers, attribute providers, relying parties, and identity media, ensuring that they all adhere to an agreed-upon trust framework. Accreditation authorities can issue trustmarks to the participants that they validate."

- **Total Funds Available:** Approximately \$2,500,000 may be available to fully fund one (1) award.
- **Total Amount to be Awarded:** NIST anticipates fully funding one (1) project for up to two (2) years in the range of approximately \$2,000,000 to \$2,500,000.
- **Funding Instrument:** Cooperative agreement.
- **Who Is Eligible:** Accredited institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, and commercial organizations located in the United States and its territories. Proposers are expected to maintain a neutral stance toward the outcome of the Steering Group process and must agree not to become a voting member of the Steering Group.
- **Cost Sharing Requirements:** This FFO does not require cost sharing.
- **Webinar Information Session:** NIST will hold an information session for organizations considering applying to this opportunity. The information session will be in the form of a webinar to be held on Monday, March 19, 2012, from approximately 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Organizations wishing to participate in the webinar must register at the NIST public Web site <https://cc.readytalk.com/cc/s/showReg?udc=gstxhwgvhxl>.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

The statutory authority for the NSTIC Program is 15 U.S.C. § 272(b)(1), (b)(4), (c)(12), and (c)(14).

In April 2011, President Obama signed the National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace (NSTIC or Strategy), which charts a course for the public and private sectors to collaborate to raise the level of trust associated with the identities of individuals, organizations, networks, services, and devices involved in online transactions. The NSTIC can be found at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/NSTICstrategy_041511.pdf.

The Strategy's vision is that individuals and organizations utilize secure, efficient, easy-to-use, and interoperable identity solutions to access online services in a manner that promotes confidence, privacy, choice, and innovation.

The NSTIC acknowledges and addresses three major challenges in cyberspace:

1. A lack of confidence and assurance that people, organizations, and businesses are who they say they are online. Both businesses and governments are unable to offer many

services online because they cannot effectively identify the individuals with whom they interact.

2. A de-facto requirement in the current online environment for individuals to maintain dozens of different usernames and passwords, typically one for each Web site with which they interact. The complexity of this approach is a burden to individuals, and it encourages behavior – like the reuse of passwords – that makes online fraud and identity theft easier. This requirement has created a number of problems for online businesses who face ever-increasing costs for managing customer accounts and the loss of business that results from individuals' unwillingness to create yet another account, consequences of online fraud. Spoofed Web sites, stolen passwords, and compromised accounts are all symptoms of inadequate authentication mechanisms.
3. A growing list of online privacy challenges, ranging from minor nuisances and unfair surprises, to disclosure of sensitive information in violation of individual rights, injury or discrimination based on sensitive personal attributes that are improperly disclosed, actions and decisions in response to misleading or inaccurate information, and costly and potentially life-disrupting identity theft. In the aggregate, even the harms at the less severe end of this spectrum have significant adverse effects, because they undermine consumer trust in the Internet environment. Diminished trust, in turn, may cause consumers to hesitate before adopting new services and may impede innovative and productive uses of new technologies.

The Strategy envisions addressing these challenges through a user-centric Identity Ecosystem, which is defined as: “an online environment where individuals and organizations will be able to trust each other because they follow agreed upon standards to obtain and authenticate their digital identities—and the digital identities of devices.”

NSTIC specifies four guiding principles to which the Identity Ecosystem must adhere:

1. Identity solutions will be privacy-enhancing and voluntary;
2. Identity solutions will be secure and resilient;
3. Identity solutions will be interoperable; and
4. Identity solutions will be cost-effective and easy to use.

The Strategy will only be a success – and the ideal of the Identity Ecosystem will only be achieved – if identity solutions fulfill all of these guiding principles. Achieving them separately will not only lead to an inadequate solution but could serve as a hindrance to the broader evolution of cyberspace.

The Identity Ecosystem is designed to securely support transactions that range from anonymous to fully-authenticated and from low- to high-value. The Identity Ecosystem, as envisioned by NSTIC, will increase:

- **Privacy protections** for individuals, who will be able to trust that their personal data is handled fairly and transparently;
- **Convenience** for individuals, who may choose to manage fewer passwords or accounts than they do today;
- **Efficiency** for organizations, which will benefit from a reduction in paper-based and account management processes;

- **Ease-of-use**, by automating identity solutions whenever possible and basing them on technology that is simple to operate;
- **Security**, by making it more difficult for criminals to compromise online transactions;
- **Confidence** that digital identities are adequately protected, thereby promoting the use of online services;
- **Innovation**, by lowering the risk associated with sensitive services and by enabling service providers to develop or expand their online presence; and
- **Choice**, as service providers offer individuals different—yet interoperable—identity credentials and media.

NSTIC emphasizes that some parts of the Identity Ecosystem exist today but recognizes that there is still much work to be done. NIST has established a National Program Office (NPO) to lead the implementation of NSTIC, with a focus on promoting private-sector involvement and engagement; supporting interagency collaboration and coordinating interagency efforts associated with achieving programmatic goals; building consensus on policy frameworks necessary to achieve the vision; identifying areas for the government to lead by example in developing and supporting the Identity Ecosystem, particularly in the Executive Branch’s role as a provider and validator of key credentials; actively participating within and across relevant public- and private-sector fora; and assessing progress against the goals, objectives and milestones of NSTIC.

In implementing the Strategy, the NSTIC NPO seeks to promote the existing marketplace, encourage new solutions where none exist, and establish a baseline of privacy, security, interoperability, and ease of use that will enable the market to flourish.

More information about the NSTIC NPO is available at <http://www.nstic.gov>.

NSTIC Steering Group Secretariat Cooperative Agreement Description

NIST is soliciting proposals from eligible proposers to establish a Steering Group in support of the NSTIC Program (see http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/NSTICstrategy_041511.pdf) and to provide ongoing secretarial, administrative, and logistical support for the Steering Group. The recipient organization will support the Steering Group consistent with the *Recommendations for Establishing an Identity Ecosystem Governance Structure for the National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace* (“Governance Recommendations”) (see <http://www.nist.gov/nstic/2012-nstic-governance-recs.pdf>).

The role of the Steering Group Secretariat will be to administer the process for policy and standards development for the Identity Ecosystem Framework in accordance with the NSTIC Guiding Principles in the Strategy. The Steering Group Secretariat will provide the infrastructure to support the accreditation authorities’ validation of the participants’ adherence to the requirements of the Identity Ecosystem Framework, as discussed in the Governance Recommendations. As such, the recipient organization will maintain ongoing collaboration with NIST, NSTIC, and the Steering Group.

The Governance Recommendations should be viewed as a “touchstone” for proposers, since the primary objective of this award is to establish an organization that implements the Governance Recommendations. While it may not be possible for the recipient to implement every one of the Governance Recommendations on its own – since many decisions will be

made by the members of the Steering Group itself – the way in which the recipient executes its secretariat duties is likely to have a significant impact on whether the Governance Recommendations are in fact realized. The purpose of the NSTIC Steering Group Secretariat Cooperative Agreement is to fund a secretariat for the Steering Group during its initial and early phases. A major role of the Steering Group Secretariat is to serve as an honest broker between multiple stakeholders, with a focus on facilitating the creation of consensus standards and policies that will serve as the foundation of the Identity Ecosystem. Given this, it is important that the entity selected through this FFO to support the Steering Group in these efforts be objective and independent, and not have real or potential incentives to skew the work of the Steering Group to support the interests of any single firm or stakeholder.

II. Award Information

1. Funding Instrument

The funding instrument that will be used is a cooperative agreement. The nature of NIST’s “substantial involvement” will generally be collaboration between the NIST and the recipient organization. This includes NIST collaboration with the recipient on the scope of work and coordination in the establishment of the Steering Group. Additional forms of substantial involvement that may arise are described in the Department of Commerce (DoC) Grants and Cooperative Agreements Interim Manual, which is available at http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/doc_grants_manual/default.htm.

2. Funding Availability

NIST anticipates a total of \$2,500,000 to be available in FY 2012 for one (1) award to an eligible proposer. The new award is expected to range from approximately \$2,000,000 to \$2,500,000 with a funded project performance period of two (2) years.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Proposers

Eligible proposers are accredited institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, and commercial organizations located in the United States and its territories. Proposers are expected to maintain a neutral stance toward the outcome of the Steering Group process and must agree not to become a voting member of the Steering Group.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing and matching are not required under this FFO.

3. Other

Pre-Proposals. NIST is not accepting pre-proposals or white papers under this FFO.

IV. Application/Proposal and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package

The standard application package, consisting of the standard forms, i.e., SF-424, SF-424A, SF-424B, SF-LLL, and the CD-511, is available at www.grants.gov. The standard application package may be requested by contacting:

Dr. Barbara Cuthill
National Institute of Standards and Technology
NSTIC Steering Group Secretariat Cooperative Agreement
100 Bureau Drive, Mail Stop 2000
Gaithersburg, MD 20899-2000

Phone: 301-975-3273

2. Content and Format of Application/Proposal Submission

a. Required Forms and Documents

- (1) SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance. The SF-424 must be signed by an authorized representative of the proposer organization. The FFO number 2012-NIST-NSTIC-02 must be identified in item 12 of the SF-424. The list of certifications and assurances referenced in item 21 of the SF-424 is contained in the SF-424B.
- (2) SF-424A, Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs (The budget should reflect anticipated expenses for each year of the two (2) years, considering all potential cost increases, including cost of living adjustments.)
- (3) SF-424B, Assurances - Non-Construction Programs
- (4) CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying
- (5) SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable)
- (6) Technical Proposal. The Technical Proposal is a word-processed document of no more than thirty (30) pages responsive to the program description (see Section I. of this FFO) and the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1. of this FFO). It should contain the following information:

- (a) **Executive Summary.** An executive summary of the proposed approach, consistent with the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1. of this FFO). The executive summary should not exceed one (1) single-sided page.
- (b) **Project Approach.** A description of the proposed approach, sufficient to permit evaluation of the proposal, in accordance with the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1. of this FFO).
- (c) **Work Plan.** A work plan that discusses the specific tasks proposed to be carried out, including a schedule of administrative and logistical objectives with measurable desired outputs and milestones. This section should be the primary, but not only, means by which the proposal will be evaluated according to the *Quality and Relevance of the Work Plan* evaluation criterion (see Section V.1. of this FFO).
- (d) **Methodology for Administering the Steering Group.** A description of the proposed plans to identify members of the Steering Group and administer the work of the Steering Group consistent with the Governance Recommendations (see <http://www.nist.gov/nstic/2012-nstic-governance-recs.pdf>). Accordingly, proposers should articulate in great detail how their specific approach to performing these duties is likely to result in the realization of the Governance Recommendations and the NSTIC vision. This section should be the primary, but not only, means by which the proposal will be evaluated according to the *Methodology for*

Administering the Steering Group evaluation criterion (see Section V.1. of this FFO).

- (e) **Qualifications of the Proposer.** A description of the qualifications and proposed operational or management activities of key personnel who will be assigned to work on the proposed project, including examples of past experience working with a wide variety of organizations including but not limited to accredited institutions of higher education; non-profit organizations; consortia; commercial organizations; standards development organizations and standards development processes; and Federal, state, local, Indian tribal, and territorial government representatives. This section should be the primary, but not only, means by which the proposal will be evaluated according to the *Qualifications of the Proposer* evaluation criterion (see Section V.1. of this FFO).
- (f) **Resource Availability and Future Planning.** A description of the facilities and overall support available to accomplish the project objectives and planning for the long term sustainability of the Steering Group organization. This section should be the primary, but not only, means by which the proposal will be evaluated according to the *Resource Availability and Future Planning* evaluation criterion (see Section V.1. of this FFO).

- (7) Budget Narrative. There is no set format for the Budget Narrative; however, it should provide a detailed breakdown of each of the object class categories as reflected on the SF-424A. For awards to commercial organizations, audits must be conducted by an external auditor (CPA or cognizant Federal audit agency) after the first year and at the end of a two (2)-year project. If a recipient has never received Federal funding from any Federal agency, a certification will be required from a CPA to determine whether the recipient has a functioning financial management system that meets the provisions of 15 C.F.R. § 14.21. Therefore, costs for these audits and certification should be included in the budget accordingly.
- (8) Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. If indirect costs are included in the proposed budget, provide a copy of the approved negotiated agreement if this rate was negotiated with a cognizant Federal audit agency. If the rate was not established by a cognizant Federal audit agency, provide a statement to this effect. If the successful proposer includes indirect costs in the budget and has not established an indirect cost rate with a cognizant Federal audit agency, the proposer will be required to obtain such a rate.

If submitting the proposal electronically via Grants.gov, items IV.2.a.(1) through IV.2.a.(5) above are part of the standard application package in Grants.gov and can be completed through the download application process. Items IV.2.a.(6) through IV.2.a.(8) must be completed and attached by clicking on "Add Attachments" found in item 15 of the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance. This will create a zip file that allows for transmittal of the documents electronically via Grants.gov. Proposers should carefully follow specific Grants.gov instructions at www.grants.gov to ensure the attachments will be accepted by the Grants.gov system. A receipt from Grants.gov indicating a proposal is received does not provide information about whether attachments have been received.

If submitting a proposal by paper, all of the required proposal documents should be submitted in the order listed above.

b. Proposal Format

- (1) **Double-sided copy.** For paper submissions, print on both sides of the paper (front to back counts as two (2) pages).
- (2) **E-mail submissions.** Will not be accepted.
- (3) **Facsimile submissions (fax).** Will not be accepted.
- (4) **Figures, graphs, images, and pictures.** Should be of a size that is easily readable or viewable and may be landscape orientation.
- (5) **Font.** Easy to read font (10-point minimum). Smaller type may be used in figures and tables but must be clearly legible.
- (6) **Line spacing.** Single.
- (7) **Margins.** One (1) inch top, bottom, left, and right.
- (8) **Number of paper copies.** For paper submissions, one (1) signed stapled original and two (2) stapled copies. If original proposal is in color, the two (2) copies must also be in color. If submitting electronically via Grants.gov, paper copies are not required.
- (9) **Page layout.** Portrait orientation only except for figures, graphs, images, and pictures (see Section IV.2.b.(4)).
- (10) **Page Limit.** Proposals are limited to thirty (30) pages.

Page limit includes: Table of contents (if included), Technical Proposal with all required sections, including management information and qualifications, resumes, figures, graphs, tables, images, and pictures.

Page limit excludes: SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance; SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs; SF-424B, Assurances – Non-Construction Programs; SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities; CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying; Budget Narrative; and Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.
- (11) **Page numbering.** Number pages sequentially.
- (12) **Paper size.** 21.6 by 27.9 centimeters (8 ½ by 11 inches).
- (13) **Proposal language.** English.
- (14) **Stapled paper submission.** For paper submissions, staple the original signed proposal and each of the two (2) copies securely with one (1) staple in the upper left-hand corner.
- (15) **Typed document.** All proposals, including forms, must be typed.

3. Submission Dates and Times

All proposals must be received by NIST no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, April 11, 2012. This deadline applies to all modes of proposal submission, including courier services, express mailing, and electronic.

Proposals not received by the specified due date and time will not be considered and will be returned without review. NIST determines whether the proposals submitted by paper have been timely received by the deadline by the date and time receipt they are physically received by NIST at its Gaithersburg, Maryland campus. For electronic submissions, NIST will consider the date and time stamped on the validation generated by www.grants.gov as the official submission time.

NIST strongly recommends that proposers do not wait until the last minute to submit a proposal. NIST will not make any allowances for late submissions, including but not limited to incomplete Grants.gov registration, delays in mail delivery caused by Federal Government security screening for U.S. Postal Service mail, or for delays by guaranteed express mailing and/or couriers. To avoid any potential processing backlogs due to last minute Grants.gov registrations, proposers are highly encouraged to start their Grants.gov registration process at least four (4) weeks prior to the proposal due date.

Important: All proposers, both electronic and paper submitters, should be aware that adequate time must be factored into proposers' schedules for delivery of their proposal. Submitters of electronic proposals are advised that volume on Grants.gov may be extremely heavy on the deadline date, and if Grants.gov is unable to accept proposals electronically in a timely fashion, proposers are encouraged to exercise their option to submit proposals in paper format. Submitters of paper proposals should allow adequate time to ensure a paper proposal will be received on time, taking into account that Federal Government security screening for U.S. Postal Service mail may delay receipt of mail for up to two (2) weeks and that guaranteed express mailings and/or couriers are not always able to fulfill their guarantees.

In the event of a natural disaster that interferes with timely proposal submissions, NIST may issue an amendment to this FFO to change the proposal submission due date.

4. Executive Order 12372 (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs)

Proposals under this Program are not subject to Executive Order 12372.

5. Funding Restrictions

Profit or fee is not an allowable cost. Food and beverages are also not allowable costs.

6. Other Submission Requirements

a. Proposals may be submitted by paper or electronically.

(1) Paper proposals must be submitted in triplicate (an original and two copies) and sent to:

Dr. Barbara Cuthill
National Institute of Standards and Technology
NSTIC Steering Group Secretariat Cooperative Agreement
100 Bureau Drive, Mail Stop 2000
Gaithersburg, MD 20899-2000

Phone: 301-975-3273

(2) Electronic proposals must be submitted via Grants.gov at www.grants.gov.

Submitters of electronic proposals through Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) should carefully follow specific Grants.gov instructions to ensure the attachments will be accepted by the Grants.gov system. A receipt from Grants.gov indicating a proposal is received does not provide information about whether attachments have been received. For further information or questions regarding applying electronically for the 2012-NIST-NSTIC-02 announcement, contact Christopher Hunton by phone at 301-975-5718 or by e-mail at christopher.hunton@nist.gov.

Proposers are strongly encouraged to start early and not wait until the approaching due date before logging on and reviewing the instructions for submitting a proposal through Grants.gov. The Grants.gov registration process must be completed before a new registrant can apply electronically. If all goes well, the registration process takes three (3) to five (5) business days. If problems are encountered, the registration process can take up to two (2) weeks or more. Proposers must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and must be registered with the Federal Central Contractor Registry and with a Credential Provider, as explained on the Grants.gov Web site. After registering, it may take several days or longer from the initial log-on before a new Grants.gov system user can submit a proposal. Only authorized individual(s) will be able to submit the proposal, and the system may need time to process a submitted proposal. Proposers should save and print the proof of submission they receive from Grants.gov. If problems occur while using Grants.gov, the proposer is advised to (a) print any error message received and (b) call Grants.gov directly for immediate assistance. If calling from within the United States or from a U.S. territory, please call 800-518-4726. If calling from a place other than the United States or a U.S. territory, please call 606-545-5035. Assistance from the Grants.gov Help Desk will be available around the clock every day, with the exception of Federal holidays. Help Desk service will resume at 7:00 a.m. Eastern Time the day after Federal holidays. For assistance using Grants.gov, you may also contact support@grants.gov.

Information essential to successful submission of proposals on the Grants.gov system is detailed in the For Applicants section found in red on the left side of the www.grants.gov home page, and all potential proposers should pay close attention to the information contained therein. The *All About Grants*, *Applicant FAQs*, and *Submit Application FAQs* sections found under the Applicant Resources option are particularly important.

Refer to important information in Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times, to help ensure your proposal is received on time.

- b. Any amendments to this FFO will be announced through Grants.gov. Proposers can sign up for Grants.gov FFO amendments or alternatively may call Dr. Barbara Cuthill at 301-975-3273, to request copies.

V. Application/Proposal Review Information

1. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating proposals are as follows:

- a. Quality and Relevance of the Work Plan (0 to 40 points).** Coherence of the proposer's approach and the extent to which the proposal effectively addresses the need for administrative and logistical support for the Steering Group. The proposer's approach to providing this support must demonstrate an understanding of the NSTIC, NIST's recently released Governance Recommendations, and an ability to execute on these Recommendations.

A competitive proposal will include a description of how the proposer will:

- (1) Serve as the Secretariat for the Steering Group and provide ongoing administrative and logistical support for the Steering Group, including administering human and financial resources;
- (2) Convene the initial Steering Group meetings and support the schedule decisions of the Steering Group;
- (3) Provide and maintain infrastructure to support transparency, openness, and alignment with the Guiding Principles in all Steering Group Operations;
- (4) Encourage representation in the Steering Group by a diverse set of stakeholders that represent the breadth of stakeholder groups in the Identity Ecosystem;
- (5) Enable all Steering Group plenary, Standing Committee, and Working Group meetings to be conducted virtually;
- (6) Provide administrative and logistical support in preparation and facilitation of Steering Group meetings and communications;
- (7) Appoint an individual to act as the Identity Ecosystem Ombudsman; and
- (8) Assist the Steering Group in transitioning to a self-sustaining organization.

In general, the proposer's approach will be rated based on its ability to deliver support consistent with that described in the previous paragraph. Factors that may be considered include:

- (1) the quality of the detailed work plan;
- (2) clear and measurable performance objectives;
- (3) key interim and final outputs reflecting the performance objectives;
- (4) milestones, key deliverables, and timelines provided;
- (5) the likelihood that the approach would be successful in facilitating creation of a sustainable Steering Group that follows the Governance Recommendations; and
- (6) the likelihood that the approach would be successful in facilitating creation of a sustainable Steering Group that implements the NSTIC vision.

- b. Methodology for Administering the Steering Group (0 to 30 points).** Potential effectiveness of the proposal and the value it would contribute to successful operation of the Steering Group. Factors that may be considered include:

- (1) The proposed methodology for ensuring representation from all key stakeholder communities;
- (2) The proposed methodology for facilitating multiple diverse stakeholders with different points of view and achieving consensus;
- (3) The proposed methodology for ensuring Steering Group operations are open and transparent and responsive to changes in the Identity Ecosystem;

- (4) The proposed methodology for enabling virtual participation in all Steering Group plenary, Standing Committee, and Working Group meetings; and
- (5) The proposed methodology for communications and outreach.

c. Qualifications of the Proposer (0 to 20 points). Professional accomplishments, skills and training of the proposed personnel to perform the work described in the project. Factors that may be considered include:

- (1) The qualifications of key and supporting personnel;
- (2) Demonstrated knowledge of:
 - The current state of online identity management;
 - The identity management industry;
 - The NSTIC Strategy;
 - The NSTIC Guiding Principles; and
 - The Governance Recommendations.
- (3) Any collaborations with other Identity Ecosystem stakeholders;
- (4) Past experience of the proposer with bringing together diverse stakeholders and qualifications in stakeholder outreach and coordination; and
- (5) Past experience of the proposer with facilitation of many dynamic stakeholders over a multitude of critical issues and substantive differences of approach and perspective.

d. Resource Availability and Future Planning (0 to 10 points). Extent to which the proposer has access to the necessary facilities and overall support to accomplish the project objectives. Factors that may be considered include:

- (1) The degree to which requested resources are appropriate for the proposed project's scope;
- (2) The quality of organizational resources proposed to be used on the project;
- (3) The rationality of acquisition plans; and
- (4) The plan to obtain and/or leverage additional or external resources or support as needed to complete the project and to transition the Steering Group to a self-sustaining organization post-project.

2. Selection Factors

The Selecting Official shall select proposals for award based upon the rank order of the proposals, and may select a proposal out of rank based on one or more of the following selection factors:

- a. The availability of Federal funds.
- b. Proposer's performance under current or previous Federal financial assistance awards.
- c. Proposer's past actions in technical areas likely to be addressed by the Steering Group that raise concerns about the perceived neutrality of the proposer toward the outcome of the Steering Group process.

3. Review and Selection Process

- a. Initial Administrative Review of Proposals.** An initial review of timely received proposals will be conducted to determine eligibility, completeness, and responsiveness to this FFO and the scope of the stated program objectives. Proposals determined to be ineligible, incomplete, and/or non-responsive may be eliminated from further review.
- b. Full Review of Proposals.** Proposals determined to be eligible, complete, and responsive will proceed for full reviews in accordance with the review and selection process below:
 - (1) Each proposal will be reviewed by at least three (3) independent, objective reviewers, who are Federal employees, knowledgeable in the subject matter of this FFO and its objectives and who are able to conduct a review based on the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1. of this FFO). Based on the average of the reviewers' scores, a preliminary rank order will be prepared.
 - (2) An Evaluation Board, a committee comprised of Federal employees, will consider the proposals in the preliminary rank order along with the reviewers written evaluations based on the evaluation criteria. The Evaluation Board will prepare a final numerical ranking of proposals for the Selecting Official for further consideration.
 - (3) In making a final selection, the Selecting Official, who is the NSTIC NPO Program Manager, will select a funding recipient based upon the Evaluation Board's rank order of the proposals and the selection factors. The selection of a funding recipient by the Selecting Official is final.

NIST reserves the right to negotiate the budget costs with the proposer selected to receive an award, which may include requesting that the proposer remove certain costs. Additionally, NIST may request that the proposer modify objectives or work plans and provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to award. NIST also reserves the right to reject a proposal where information is uncovered that raises a reasonable doubt as to the responsibility of the proposer. NIST may select part, some, all, or none of the proposals. The final approval of selected proposals and issuance of awards will be by the NIST Grants Officer. The award decisions of the NIST Grants Officer are final.

4. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Review, selection, and award processing is expected to be completed by May 2012. The earliest anticipated start date for awards made under this FFO is expected to be July 1, 2012.

5. Additional Information

- a. Proposal Replacement Pages.** Proposers may not submit replacement pages and/or missing documents once a proposal has been submitted. Any revisions must be made by submission of a new proposal that must be received by NIST by the submission deadline for proposals.
- b. Notification to Unsuccessful Proposers.** Unsuccessful proposers will be notified in writing.
- c. Retention of Unsuccessful Proposals.** One (1) of each non-selected proposal will be retained for three (3) years for record keeping purposes and the other two (2) copies will be

destroyed. After three (3) years the remaining copy will be destroyed.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. **Award Notices.** Successful proposers will receive an award from the NIST Grants Officer. The award cover page, i.e., CD-450, Financial Assistance Award, is available at <http://ocio.os.doc.gov/s/groups/public/@doc/@os/@ocio/@oitpp/documents/content/dev01002513.pdf> and the DoC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions (March 2008), which may be updated by the time of award, are available at <http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/archive/docs/GRANTS/DOC%20STCsMAR08Rev.pdf>.
2. **Administrative and National Policy Requirements**
 - a. **DoC Pre-Award Notification Requirements.** The DoC Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements, which are contained in the *Federal Register* notice of February 11, 2008 (73 FR 7696), are applicable to this FFO and are available at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2008-02-11/pdf/E8-2482.pdf>.
 - b. **Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN), Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS), and Central Contractor Registration (CCR).** All proposers for Federal financial assistance are required to obtain a universal identifier in the form of DUNS number and maintain a current registration in the CCR database. On the form SF-424 items 8.b. and 8.c., the proposer's 9-digit EIN/TIN and 9-digit DUNS number must be consistent with the information on the CCR (www.ccr.gov) and Automated Standard Application for Payment System (ASAP). For complex organizations with multiple EIN/TIN and DUNS numbers, the EIN/TIN and DUNS numbers MUST be the numbers for the applying organization. Organizations that provide incorrect/inconsistent EIN/TIN and DUNS numbers may experience significant delays in receiving funds if their proposal is selected for funding. Confirm that the EIN/TIN and DUNS numbers are consistent with the information on the CCR and ASAP.

Per the requirements of 2 C.F.R. Part 25, each proposer must:

- (1) Be registered in the CCR before submitting a proposal;
- (2) Maintain an active CCR registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or a proposal under consideration by an agency; and
- (3) Provide its DUNS number in each application or proposal it submits to the agency.

See also the *Federal Register* notice published on September 14, 2010, at 75 FR 55671.

- c. **Agreement to Not Become a Steering Group Member.** NIST will require as a term of the award that the recipient or any parent organization of the recipient agree to not become a member of the Steering Group and to not have a vote in any matters considered by the Steering Group.
- d. **Collaborations with NIST Employees.** All proposals should include a description of any work proposed to be performed by an entity other than the proposer, and the cost of such work should ordinarily be included in the budget.

If a proposer proposes collaboration with NIST, the statement of work should include a statement of this intention, a description of the collaboration, and prominently identify the

NIST employee(s) involved, if known. Any collaboration by a NIST employee must be approved by appropriate NIST management and is at the sole discretion of NIST. Prior to beginning the merit review process, NIST will verify the approval of the proposed collaboration. Any unapproved collaboration will be stricken from the proposal prior to the merit review.

- e. **Use of NIST Intellectual Property.** If the proposer anticipates using any NIST-owned intellectual property to carry out the work proposed, the proposer should identify such intellectual property. This information will be used to ensure that no NIST employee involved in the development of the intellectual property will participate in the review process for that competition. In addition, if the proposer intends to use NIST-owned intellectual property, the proposer must comply with all statutes and regulations governing the licensing of Federal government patents and inventions, described in 35 U.S.C. §§ 200-212, 37 C.F.R. Part 401, 15 C.F.R. § 14.36, and in Section B.21 of the DoC Pre-Award Notification Requirements, 73 FR 7696 (February 11, 2008). Questions about these requirements may be directed to the Chief Counsel for NIST, (301) 975-2803.

Any use of NIST-owned intellectual property by a proposer is at the sole discretion of NIST and will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis if a project is deemed meritorious. The proposer should indicate within the statement of work whether it already has a license to use such intellectual property or whether it intends to seek one.

If any inventions made in whole or in part by a NIST employee arise in the course of an award made pursuant to this FFO, the United States government may retain its ownership rights in any such invention. Licensing or other disposition of NIST's rights in such inventions will be determined solely by NIST, and include the possibility of NIST putting the intellectual property into the public domain.

- f. **Funding Availability and Limitation of Liability.** Funding for the program listed in this FFO is contingent upon the availability of appropriations. In no event will NIST or DoC be responsible for proposal preparation costs if this program fails to receive funding or is cancelled because of agency priorities. Publication of this FFO does not obligate NIST or DoC to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.
- g. **Collaborations Making Use of Federal Facilities.** All proposals should include a description of any work proposed to be performed using Federal facilities.

In addition, if a proposer proposes use of NIST facilities, the statement of work should include a statement of this intention and a description of the facilities. Any use of NIST facilities must be approved by appropriate NIST management and is at the sole discretion of NIST. Prior to beginning the merit review process, NIST will verify the availability of the facilities and approval of the proposed usage. Any unapproved facility use will be stricken from the proposal prior to the merit review. Examples of some facilities that may be available for collaborations are listed on the NIST Technology Services Web site, <http://www.nist.gov/user-facilities.cfm>.

3. Reporting

- a. **Reporting requirements.** In lieu of the reporting requirements described in sections A.01 Financial Reports and B.01 Performance (Technical) Reports of the DoC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions dated March 2008

(<http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/archive/docs/GRANTS/DOC%20STCsMAR08Rev.pdf>), the following reporting requirements shall apply:

(1) Financial Reports. Each award recipient will be required to submit an SF-425, Federal Financial Report in triplicate (an original and two (2) copies), on a quarterly basis for the periods ending March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31 of each year. Reports will be due within 30 days after the end of the reporting period.

(2) Performance Reports. Each award recipient will be required to submit a progress report in triplicate (an original and two (2) copies), on a quarterly basis for the periods ending March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31 of each year. Reports will be due within 30 days after the end of the reporting period. A final progress report shall be submitted within 90 days after the expiration date of the award. Two (2) copies of the progress report shall be submitted to the Project Manager and the original report to the NIST Grants Officer. Progress reports shall contain information as prescribed in 15 C.F.R. § 14.51.

(3) Patent and Property Reports. From time to time, and in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, 15 C.F.R. Part 14 or 24, as applicable, the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, and other terms and conditions governing the award, the recipient may need to submit property and patent reports.

b. OMB Circular A-133 Audit Requirements. Single or program-specific audits shall be performed in accordance with the requirements contained in OMB Circular A-133, “*Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations*,” and the related *Compliance Supplement*. OMB Circular A-133 requires any non-Federal entity (*i.e.*, including non-profit institutions of higher education and other non-profit organizations) that expends Federal awards of \$500,000 or more in the recipient’s fiscal year to conduct a single or program-specific audit in accordance with the requirements set out in the Circular. Proposers are reminded that NIST, the DoC Office of Inspector General or another authorized Federal agency may conduct an audit of an award at any time.

c. Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. Part 170, all recipients of a Federal award made on or after October 1, 2010, are required to comply with reporting requirements under the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Pub. L. No. 109-282). In general, all recipients are responsible for reporting sub-awards of \$25,000 or more. In addition, recipients that meet certain criteria are responsible for reporting executive compensation. Proposers must ensure they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the reporting requirements should they receive funding. Also see the *Federal Register* notice published September 14, 2010, at 75 FR 55663.

VII. Agency Contact(s)

Subject Area	Point of Contact
Programmatic and technical questions	Dr. Barbara Cuthill Phone: 301-975-3273 Fax: 301-975-2183 E-mail: barbara.cuthill@nist.gov

Electronic proposal submission through Grants.gov	Christopher Hunton Phone: 301-975-5718 Fax: 301-840-5976 E-mail: christopher.hunton@nist.gov
Grant rules and regulations	Calvin Mitchell Phone: 301-975-4585 Fax: 301-840-5976 E-mail: calvin.mitchell@nist.gov

VIII. Other Information

Webinar Information Session. NIST will hold an information session for organizations considering applying to this opportunity. The information session will be in the form of a webinar to be held on Monday, March 19, 2012 from approximately 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Organizations wishing to participate in the webinar must register at the NIST public Web site <https://cc.readytalk.com/cc/s/showReg?udc=gstxhwgvhxl>.