NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)
National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education (NICE)
K12 Cybersecurity Education Outreach Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Federal Agency Name:** National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), United States Department of Commerce (DoC)

- **Funding Opportunity Title:** National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education (NICE) K12 Cybersecurity Education Outreach Program

- **Announcement Type:** Initial

- **Funding Opportunity Number**: 2020-NIST-NICE-01

- **Assistance Listing (CFDA Number):** 11.620, Science, Technology, Business and/or Education Outreach

- **Dates:** Applications must be received at Grants.gov no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday, June 1, 2020. Applications received after this deadline will not be reviewed or considered. Paper applications will not be accepted.

  Applicants should be aware, and factor in their application submission planning, that the Grants.gov system is expected to be closed for routine maintenance at the following times. Applications cannot be submitted when Grants.gov is closed:

From 12:01 A.M. Eastern Time	To 6:00 A.M. Eastern Time
April 18, 2020	April 20, 2020
May 16, 2020	May 18, 2020

  NIST expects to complete its review, selection of successful applicants, and award processing by July 2020. NIST expects the earliest start date for awards under this NOFO to be August 2020.

  Applicants are strongly urged to read Section IV.2.b. Attachment of Required Application Documents of this NOFO with great attention. Applicants should carefully follow the instructions and recommendations regarding attachments and use the Download Submitted Forms and Applications feature on www.grants.gov to check that all required attachments were contained in their submission.

Applications submitted without the required documents will not pass the Initial Administrative Review, described in Section V.3.a. of this NOFO.

When developing the submission timeline, please keep in mind that: (1) all applicants are required to have current registrations in the electronic System for Award Management (SAM.gov) and Grants.gov; (2) the free annual registration process in SAM.gov (*see* Section IV.3. and Section IV.7.a.(1).(b) of this NOFO) generally takes between three and five business days but can take more than two weeks; and (3) applicants will receive e-mail notifications over a period of up to two business days as the application moves through intermediate systems before the applicant learns via a validation or rejection notification whether NIST has received the application. (See Grants.gov for full information on application and notification through Grants.gov). Please note that a federal assistance award cannot be issued if the designated recipient's registration in SAM.gov is not current at the time of the award.

- **Application Submission Address:** Applications must be submitted using Grants.gov.

- **Funding Opportunity Description:** NIST is seeking to provide financial assistance to support the National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education (NICE), including outreach efforts to the broader cybersecurity education community at the primary and secondary school levels; this program will include planning and managing the annual NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference in the continental United States for up to the next five years.

- **Anticipated Amounts:** In Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20), NIST anticipates funding one award for approximately $150,000 per year for up to five (5) years with the possibility of converting this award to an institutional award at the conclusion of the award period. The award will be fully funded in the first year.

- **Funding Instrument:** Cooperative Agreement

- **Eligibility:** Eligibility for the program listed in this NOFO is open to all non-Federal entities. Eligible applicants include accredited institutions of higher education; non-profit organizations; for-profit organizations incorporated in the United States; state, local, territorial, and Indian tribal governments; foreign public entities; and foreign organizations. Please note that individuals and unincorporated sole proprietors are not considered "non-Federal entities" and are not eligible to apply under this NOFO. Although Federal entities are not eligible to receive funding under this NOFO, they may participate as unfunded collaborators.

- **Cost Sharing Requirements:** Non-federal cost share IS NOT required for awards issued pursuant to this NOFO.

1. Public Website and Meetings

NIST NICE Program Office has a public website, https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice, that provides information pertaining to this Funding Opportunity[1]. Any amendments to this NOFO will be announced through Grants.gov.

NIST will host an applicants' webinar to share details and answer questions about this funding opportunity. Proprietary technical discussions about specific project ideas with NIST staff are not permitted at any time before submitting an application to NIST. Therefore, applicants should not raise proprietary issues at the applicants' webinar. Also, NIST staff will not critique or provide feedback on specific project ideas while they are being developed by an applicant. However, questions about NICE, evaluation and award criteria, selection process, and the general characteristics of a competitive application can be address at the applicants' webinar and by email to nice.nist@nist.gov. Attendance at the applicants' webinar is not required and will not be considered in the review and selection process. Information on the applicants' conference is available at https://www.nist.gov/nice/webinars.

Applicants may submit all questions pertaining to this funding opportunity in writing to nice.nist@nist.gov with 2020-NIST-NICE-01 in the subject line.

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[1] Refer to Section VII. of this NOFO, Federal Awarding Agency Contacts, Programmatic and Technical Questions, if more information is needed.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Program Description

The statutory authority for the NIST National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education (NICE) K12 Cybersecurity Education Outreach Program is 15 U.S.C. §§ 272(b)(4) and 7451.

1) Background Information

In our connected society, almost every organization in the United States uses the Internet for commerce, communication, or service provision. Cybersecurity has therefore emerged as one of our nation's top priorities for both national and economic security. Increasing our cybersecurity defenses necessarily requires a skilled workforce to protect businesses, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, and governments at all levels. Efforts to build the cybersecurity workforce require awareness and encouragement of our youth to pursue the education and training to develop the knowledge and skills identified in the NICE Cybersecurity Workforce Framework.

NICE, led by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in the U.S. Department of Commerce, is a partnership between government, academia, and the private sector focused on cybersecurity education, training, and workforce development. The mission of NICE is to energize and promote a robust network and an ecosystem of cybersecurity education, training, and workforce development. NICE fulfills this mission by coordinating with government, academic, and industry partners to build on existing successful programs, facilitate change and innovation, and bring leadership and vision to increase the number of skilled cybersecurity practitioners helping to keep our Nation secure.

NICE's Strategic Plan (available here) has the following goals:

1. Accelerate learning and skills development - Inspire a sense of urgency in both the public and private sectors to address the shortage of skilled cybersecurity workers.
2. Nurture a diverse learning community - Strengthen education and training across the ecosystem to emphasize learning, measure outcomes, and diversify the cybersecurity workforce.
3. Guide career development and workforce planning - Support employers to address market demands and enhance recruitment, hiring, development, and retention of cybersecurity talent.

The NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference brings together K12 educators and others interested in K12 cybersecurity education for today's youth. This annual, two-day event helps attendees learn about increasing cybersecurity career awareness, integrating cybersecurity into educational portfolios, exploring innovative educational approaches, and designing academic and career pathways that are aligned to the NICE Cybersecurity Workforce Framework. (See https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice/events/nice-k12-cybersecurity-education-conference for more information about the 2019 and past conferences.)

2) Overview

A strategic objective of NICE is to inspire cybersecurity career awareness with students in elementary school, stimulate cybersecurity career exploration in middle school, and enable cybersecurity career preparedness in high school. NICE seeks to provide financial assistance to an organization engaged with stakeholders involved in helping youth pursue cybersecurity education and workforce opportunities through a year-round communication and engagement strategy that culminates in the annual NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference.

Applicants should emphasize how they will reach a range of different stakeholders including specific details of the stakeholder communities they would intend to include. In addition, applicants should discuss how the outreach strategy will work across different geographic regions and how they will attract underrepresented populations such as women and minorities. The process should include tactics for bringing diverse stakeholders within regional and local communities together in a national K12 cybersecurity education community.

The stakeholder engagement strategy must reflect the need to reach out to and build consensus among diverse stakeholders including but not limited to:

- K12 educators and curriculum specialists
- District and school administrators
- Career and Technical Education program educators and student organizations
- School counselors
- Students
- Cybersecurity competition organizers
- Instructional technology coaches
- Education technology vendors
- Non-profit organizations.

Note that this is a list of examples and is not meant to be comprehensive. NICE encourages applicants to provide details on how they will reach stakeholders with

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different interests within these broad categories.

It is critical that the outreach strategy and conference participation demonstrate a commitment to inclusion, including the participation of underrepresented populations and different geographic regions. The outreach strategy should outline how the applicant will seek out and engage with stakeholders on cybersecurity K12 education on a continuing basis. The applicant should describe activities and platforms, outside of the annual conference, that will be used to engage with the public on cybersecurity K12 education.

Responsibilities under the cooperative agreement will include leading the NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference planning and execution efforts. This includes the full range of pre-conference activities from determining breakout tracks, program content, speaker selection, and arranging the venue to managing the conference logistics to post conference wrap up activities. NICE expects the conference to be kept affordable to a wide range of participants.

The approach for planning and managing the annual conference must include the full range of activities:

- Identifying conference location,
- Managing the budget,
- Working with stakeholders to determine content and agenda,
- Managing conference logistics,
- Developing an outreach strategy for the conference,
- Conducting the conference, and
- Evaluating the conference for improvements from year to year.

Conference locations must change from year to year within the continental United States. Applicants should plan for annual conferences of 200 to 500 attendees with venues that keep costs affordable and have reasonable transportation options for the attendees.

Applicants should emphasize how their proposed planning efforts keep the conference accessible, affordable, and nationally representative of the intended audience.

In adhering to 2 C.F.R. § 200.432, *Conferences,* and applicable government policies, the recipient must ensure the following conditions are met:

- The recipient will host all necessary webpages associate with the conference/meeting, including pages for marketing, registration, and other information-sharing aspects of meeting planning. The website(s) utilized by the recipient must not have a ".gov" website address.

- The recipient will not display the NIST or Department of Commerce logos on any conference/meeting related materials, signs, webpages, or other documents.
- The recipient will take all necessary steps to ensure that the conference does not appear to be sponsored or hosted by NIST or the Department of Commerce.

NICE anticipates that this will be up to a five-year award for long-term community building and includes the possibility of converting this award to an institutional award at the conclusion of the five-year award period on a non-competitive basis.

II. Federal 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 include collaboration with the recipient organization in developing and implementing the approved scope of work.

2. Funding Availability
In FY20, NIST anticipates funding one award for approximately $150,000 per year for up to five (5) years with the possibility of converting this award to an institutional award at the conclusion of the award period. The award will be fully funded in the first year.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants
Eligibility for the program listed in this NOFO is open to any U.S.-located non-Federal entities. Eligible applicants include institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, state and local governments, Indian tribes, hospitals, and foreign organizations. Please note that individuals and unincorporated sole proprietors are not considered "non-Federal entities" and are not eligible to apply under this NOFO. Although Federal entities are not eligible to receive funding under this NOFO, they may participate as unfunded collaborators.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching
Matching funds are not required.

3. Program Income
For the purposes of this program, applicants should not budget program income as non-federal cost share. Rather, the recipient must expend all program income (as defined in 2 C.F.R. § 200.307) generated pursuant to this project by using the "additive method" under 2 C.F.R. § 200.307(e)(2), with

any excess program income to be disposed of pursuant to the "deductive method" under 2 C.F.R. § 200.307(e)(1).

The applicant must clearly identify in its proposal whether the applicant anticipates generating program income pursuant to the proposed project (*e.g.,* registration fees, etc.). If program income is anticipated under the project, the applicant must identify the anticipated amount of program income in the Form SF-424A and properly report all program income generated pursuant to the project in the Form SF-425.

IV. <u>Application and Submission Information</u>

1. Address to Request Application Package

The application package is available at <u>Grants.gov</u> under Funding Opportunity Number 2020-NIST-NICE-01.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

a. Required Forms and Documents. The Application must contain the following:

(1) SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance. The SF-424 must be signed by an authorized representative of the applicant organization.

For SF-424, Item 8.d. Zip/Postal Code field, should reflect the Zip code + 4 (#####-####) format.

For SF-424, Item 12, should list the NOFO number 2020-NIST-NICE-01.

SF-424, Item 18, should list the total budget information for the duration of the project.

The list of certifications and assurances referenced in Item 21 of the SF-424 is contained in the SF-424B.

Instructions for filling in the SF-424 can be found in the 2020-NIST-NICE-01 Application Instructions document found on Grants.gov, as well as at <u>https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html.</u>

(2) SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs. The budget should reflect anticipated expenses for the entire project, considering all potential cost increases, including cost of living adjustments.

a) The applicant should reflect each year of the project, up to the first four (4) years, on the SF-424A form that appears as part of the mandatory forms in the Grants.gov application package. The second SF-424A form should be submitted to cover year five (5) of the project, and its submission details are found in in Section IV.2.a.(10). of this NOFO.

b) In Section A, the Grant Program Function or Activity on Line 1 under Column (a) should be entered as "Science, Technology, Business and/or Education Outreach", or an abbreviation thereof. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number in on Line 1 under Column (b) should be entered as "11.620". The total budget amount for the term of the award should be listed in Section A, Line 1, Column (e).

c) Section B, Column (1) of the SF-424A should reflect funds for the first year of the award. Section B, Column (2) of the SF-424A should reflect funds for the second year of the award. Section B, Column (3) of the SF-424A should reflect funds for the third year of the award. Section B, Column (4) of the SF-424A should reflect funds for the fourth year of the award.

d) Section D requires a breakdown of the first year's budget by quarter. The budget estimate for the second year of the award should be entered in Section E, Line 16, Column (b). The budget estimate for the third year of the award should be entered in Section E, Line 17, Column (b). The budget estimate for the fourth year of the award should be entered in Section E, Line 16, Column (d).

(3) CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying. Enter "2020-NIST-NICE-01" in the Award Number field. Enter the title of the application, or an abbreviation of that title, in the Project Name field.

(4) SF-424B, Assurances – Non-Construction Programs. (if applicable) The SF-424B is required for all applicants that have not updated their System for Award Management (SAM.gov) entity registration since February 2, 2019 to include the Federal financial assistance certifications and representations (certs and reps). If an applicant has updated their SAM.gov entity registration since February 2, 2019 to include the certifications and representations, then the SF-424B is not required.

(5) SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable).

(6) Project Narrative. The Project Narrative is a word-processed document of no more than twelve (12) pages (double-spaced between lines), which is responsive to the program description (*see* Section I. of this NOFO) and the evaluation criteria (*see* Section V.1. of this NOFO). The executive summary may not exceed two (2) pages, and counts toward the 12 (twelve) page limit of the project narrative.

The projective narrative should contain the following information:

a) **Executive Summary.** An executive summary of the proposed project, consistent with the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1. of this NOFO). The executive summary should include listing the proposed project participants, the scope of the proposed work, and an overview of the proposed approach to engaging with the K12 cybersecurity education, training, and workforce development community. The executive summary may not exceed two (2) pages.

b) **Outreach Strategy.** A description of the approach for reaching diverse stakeholders in the K12 cybersecurity education, training, and workforce development community. Applicants should emphasize how they will reach a range of different stakeholders including the specifics of the stakeholder communities to contact. In addition, applicants should discuss how the outreach strategy will work across regions and to attract underrepresented populations. This section should address the Outreach Strategy evaluation criterion (see Section V.1.a. of this NOFO).

c) **Conference Planning.** A complete approach covering all aspects of the outreach strategy, including a schedule of measurable events and milestones. The approach for planning and managing the annual conference should also be included and be comprehensive for the full range of activities involved:

   i. Identifying conference location,
   ii. Controlling the budget,
   iii. Working with stakeholders to determine content and agenda,
   iv. Managing conference logistics,
   v. Developing an outreach strategy for the conference,
   vi. Conducting the conference, and
   vii. Evaluating the conference for improvements from year to year.

   Applicants should emphasize how their proposed planning efforts keep the conference accessible, affordable, and nationally

representative of the intended audience. This section should address the Conference Planning evaluation criterion (see Section V.1.b. of this NOFO).

d) **Resources.** A description of the tools, technology, and human capital that will be utilized for the full scope of the outreach program. For organizations, this includes existing infrastructure (e.g., websites, conference registration systems, channels for promotion), qualifications, and proposed roles, of the participating organization(s) including proposed subawardees and contractors. For key personnel, this includes a description of the qualifications of the key personnel and the time commitments and proposed role(s) of the key personnel. For both organizations and key personnel, include information on relevant past efforts with similar projects and experiences collaborating, if appropriate. This section should address the Qualifications and Experience of Key Personnel and Resource Availability evaluation criterion (see Section V.1.c. of this NOFO).

e) **Resumes of Key Personnel** must be included. Resumes are not included in the page count of the Project Narrative. Resumes included as part of the application must be a maximum of two pages each. Additional pages beyond the two pages per resume will not be considered during the evaluation of the application.

(7) Budget Narrative and Justification. There is no set format for the Budget Narrative and Justification; however, further explanation must be provided for the specific cost categories and line items identified in the SF-424A form as well as any other information you deem necessary for NIST's consideration.

The written justification should include the necessity and the basis for the cost. Proposed funding levels must be consistent with the project scope, and only allowable costs should be included in the budget. Information on cost allowability is available in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200 (http://go.usa.gov/SBYh), which apply to awards in this program.

The Budget Narrative does not count against the twelve (12) page limit of the Project Narrative.

This section will be evaluated in accordance with the Budget Narrative evaluation criteria (see Section V.1.d. of this NOFO). It will also be reviewed to determine if all costs are reasonable, allocable, and allowable under 2 C.F.R. Part 200 Subpart E, Cost Principles.

Information needed for each category is as follows:

a) **Personnel** - At a minimum, the budget justification for all personnel should include the following: job title, commitment of effort on the proposed project in terms of average number of hours per week or percentage of time, salary rate, total personnel charges for each identified position on the proposed project, description of the role of the individual on the proposed project and the work to be performed.

b) **Fringe Benefits** – Fringe benefits for each position should be identified separately from salaries and wages and based on rates determined by organizational policy. The items included in the fringe benefit rate (e.g., health insurance, parking, etc.) should not be charged under another cost category.

c) **Travel** - For all travel costs, the budget justification for travel should include the following: destination; names or number of people traveling; dates and/or duration; mode of transportation, lodging and subsistence rates; and description of how the travel is directly related to the proposed project. For travel that is yet to be determined, please provide best estimates based on prior experience. If a destination is not known, an approximate amount may be used with the assumptions given for the location of the meeting.

d) **Equipment** - equipment, the cost, and a description of how it will be used and why it is necessary to the successful completion of the proposed project. Please note that any general use equipment (computers, etc.) charged directly to the award should be allocated to the award according to expected usage on the project. Applicants should provide at least two (2) quotes, if available, for equipment costing $25,000 or more. If two (2) quotes are not available, please provide a statement as to why two (2) quotes are not available.

e) **Supplies** – Supplies are defined as All tangible personal property other than that described as equipment. Provide a list of each supply, and the breakdown of the total costs by quantity or unit of cost. Include the necessity of the cost for the completion of the proposed project.

f) **Contractual (i.e. Contracts or Subawards)** – Each contract or subaward should be treated as a separate item. Identify the cost

and describe the services to be provided and the necessity of the subaward or contract to the successful performance of the proposed project. Contracts are for obtaining normal goods and services. Subawardees perform part of the project scope of work.

g) **Construction** – Not an allowable cost under this NOFO.

h) **Other Direct Costs** – For costs that do not easily fit into the other cost categories, please list the cost, and the breakdown of the total costs by quantity or unit of cost. Include the necessity of the cost for the completion of the proposed project. Only allowable costs can be charged to the award.

(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 applicant includes indirect costs in the budget and has not established an indirect cost rate with a cognizant Federal audit agency, the applicant will be required to obtain such a rate in accordance with Section B.06 of the [Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions,](link) dated April 30, 2019.

Alternatively, in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f), applicants that have never received a negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to charge indirect costs to an award pursuant to a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (MTDC), in which case a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement is not required. Applicants proposing a 10 percent de minimis rate pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f) should note this election as part of the budget portion of the application.

(9) Current and Pending Support Form. Any application that includes investigators, researchers, and key personnel must identify all sources of current and potential funding, including this proposal. Any current project support (e.g., Federal, state, local, public or private foundations, etc.) must be listed on this form. The proposed project and all other projects or activities requiring a portion of time of the Principal Investigator (PI), co-PI, and key personnel must be included, even if no salary support is received. The total award amount for the entire award period covered, including indirect costs, must be shown as well as the number of person-months per year to be devoted to the project, regardless of the source of support. Similar information must be provided for all proposals already submitted or that are being submitted concurrently to other potential funders.

Applicants must complete the Current and Pending Support Form, using multiple forms as necessary to account for all activity for each individual identified in the PI, co-PI and key personnel roles. A separate form should be used for each identified individual.

Applicants must download the Current and Pending Support Form from the NIST website at https://www.nist.gov/oaam/grants-management-division/current-and-pending-support and reference the guidance provided as it contains information to assist with accurately completing the form.

(10) SF-424A, Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs
Applications are for five-year projects. The SF-424A form that appears as part of the mandatory forms in the Grants.gov application package covers the first four (4) years of the project. The second SF-424A form should be submitted to cover year five (5) of the project. A fillable SF-424A form can be found at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html near the top of the screen and labeled "Budget Information – Non-Construction Program SF-424A". Applicants should download the fillable SF-424A form, complete the information for year five (5) of the project and submit the completed form as an attachment, using the procedure described in Section IV.2.b., Attachment of Required Application Documents.

b. Attachment of Required Documents

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.(10) should be attached to field 15 of the SF-424 form by clicking on "Add Attachment".

Following these directions will create zip files which permit transmittal of the documents electronically via Grants.gov.

Applicants 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 indicates only that an application was transferred to a system. It does not provide details concerning whether all attachments (or how many attachments) transferred successfully. Applicants will receive a series of e-mail messages over a period of up to two business days before learning whether a Federal agency's electronic system has received its application. Applicants are strongly advised to use Grants.gov's "Download Submitted Forms and Applications" option, found at https://www.grants.gov/help/html/help/Applicants/CheckApplicationStatus/

DownloadSubmittedFormsAndApplications.htm to check that their application's required attachments were contained in their submission.

After submitting the application, check the status of your application here: CHECK APPLICATION STATUS . If any, or all, of the required attachments are absent from the submission, follow the attachment directions found above, resubmit the application, and check again for the presence of the required attachments.

If the directions found at https://www.grants.gov/help/html/help/index.htm#t=GetStarted%2FGetStarted.htm are not effective, please contact the Grants.gov Help Desk immediately. If calling from within the United States or from a U.S. territory, please call 800-518-4726. If calling from a place outside the United States or a U.S. territory, please call 606-545-5035. E-mails should be addressed to support@grants.gov. 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.

*Applicants can track their submission in the Grants.gov system by following the procedures at the Grants.gov site (*http://go.usa.gov/cjamz*). It can take up to two business days for an application to fully move through the Grants.gov system to NIST.*

NIST uses the Tracking Numbers assigned by Grants.gov and does not issue Agency Tracking Numbers.

c. **Application Format**

(1) Paper, Email, and Facsimile (fax) Submissions. Will not be accepted.

(2) Figures, Graphs, Images, and Pictures. Should be of a size that is easily readable or viewable and may be displayed in landscape orientation. Any figures, graphs, images, or pictures will count toward the page limits for the Project Narrative.

(3) Font. Easy to read font (10-point minimum). Smaller type may be used in figures and tables but must be clearly legible.

(4) Page Limit. The Project Narrative is limited to twelve (12) pages double spaced, noting the limit of two (2) pages for the Executive Summary. Resumes are not included in the page count of the Project Narrative. However, if resumes are included, resumes must be a maximum of two (2) pages each.

(5) Page Limit Exclusions:

> SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance;
> SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs
> SF-424B, Assurances – Non-Construction Programs;
> CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying;
> SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities;
> Budget Narrative and Justification;
> Indirect Cost Rate Agreement;
> Current and Pending Support Form;
> SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs for fifth year budget.

(6) Page Layout. The Proposal must be in portrait orientation.

(7) Page size. 21.6 centimeters by 27.9 centimeters (8 ½ inches by 11 inches).

(8) Page numbering. Number pages sequentially.

(9) Application language. English. All documents must be in English, including but not limited to the initial application, any additional documents submitted in response to a NIST request, all reports, and any correspondence with NIST.

(10) Typed document. All applications, including forms, must be typed; handwritten forms will not be accepted.

  d. Application Replacement Pages. Applicants may not submit replacement pages and/or missing documents once an application has been submitted. Any revisions must be made by submission of a new application that must be received by NIST by the submission deadline.

  e. Pre-Applications. Pre-applications will not be accepted under this NOFO.

  f. Certifications Regarding Federal Felony and Federal Criminal Tax Convictions, Unpaid Federal Tax Assessments and Delinquent Federal Tax Returns. In accordance with Federal appropriations law, an authorized representative of the selected applicant(s) may be required to provide certain pre-award certifications regarding federal felony and federal criminal tax convictions, unpaid federal tax assessments, and delinquent federal tax returns.

3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM).

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Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. part 25, applicants and recipients are required to: (i) be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency, unless otherwise excepted from these requirements pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 25.110. NIST will not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time that NIST is ready to make a Federal award pursuant to this NOFO, NIST may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

4. **Submission Dates and Times**
Applications must be received at Grants.gov no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday, June 1, 2020. NIST will consider the date and time recorded by Grants.gov as the official submission time. Applications received after this deadline will not be reviewed or considered. Paper applications will not be accepted.

Applicants should be aware, and factor in their application submission planning, that the Grants.gov system is expected to be closed for routine maintenance at the following times. Applications cannot be submitted when Grants.gov is closed:

From 12:01 A.M. Eastern Time Saturday	To 6:00 A.M. Eastern Time Monday
April 18, 2020	April 20, 2020
May 16, 2020	May 18, 2020

When developing the submission timeline, please keep in mind that: (1) all applicants are required to have current registrations in the electronic System for Award Management (SAM.gov) and Grants.gov; (2) the free annual registration process in the SAM.gov (*see* Sections IV.3. and IV.7.a.(1).(b). of this NOFO) generally takes between three and five business days but can take more than two weeks; and applicants will receive e-mail notifications over a period of up to two business days as the application moves through intermediate systems before the applicant learns via a validation or rejection notification whether NIST has received the application. (See Grants.gov for full information on application and notification through Grants.gov.) Please note that a Federal assistance award cannot be issued if the designated recipient's registration in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) is not current at the time of the award.

5. **Intergovernmental Review**
   Applications under this Program ARE NOT subject to Executive Order 12372.

6. **Funding Restrictions**
   Profit or fee is not an allowable cost.

7. **Other Submission Requirements**

   a. **Applications must be submitted electronically.**

   (1) Applications must be submitted at Grants.gov.

   (a) Applicants should carefully follow specific Grants.gov instructions to ensure that all attachments will be accepted by the Grants.gov system. A receipt from Grants.gov indicating an application is received does not provide information about whether attachments have been received. For further information or questions regarding applying electronically for the 2020-NIST-NICE-01 announcement, contact the Grants.gov Help Desk at 800-518-4726.

   (b) Applicants are strongly encouraged to start early and not wait until the approaching due date before logging on and reviewing the instructions for submitting an application through Grants.gov. The Grants.gov registration process must be completed before a new registrant can apply electronically. The typical registration process takes three to five business days. If problems are encountered, the registration process can take two weeks or more. Applicants must have a valid unique entity identifier number and must maintain a current registration in the Federal government's primary registrant database, the System for Award Management (https://www.sam.gov/), as explained on the Grants.gov Web site (also *see* Section IV.3. of this NOFO). After registering, it may take several days or longer from the initial log-on before a new Grants.gov system user can submit an application. Only individuals authorized as organization representatives will be able to submit the application, and the system may need time to process a submitted application. Applicants should save and print the proof of submission they receive from Grants.gov. If problems occur while using Grants.gov, the applicant 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, except for Federal holidays. Help Desk service

will resume at 7:00 a.m. Eastern Time the day after Federal holidays. For assistance using Grants.gov, the applicant may also contact support@grants.gov.

(c) To find instructions for submitting an application on Grants.gov, applicants should refer to the "Applicants" tab in the banner just below the top of the Grants.gov home page. Clicking on the "Applicants" tab produces two exceptionally useful sources of information, Applicant Actions and Applicant Resources, which applicants are advised to review.

Applicants will receive a series of e-mail messages over a period of up to two business days before learning whether a Federal agency's electronic system has received its application.

Applicants should pay close attention to the guidance under Grants.gov's "Applicant FAQs", as it contains information important to successful submission, including essential details on the naming conventions for attachments to applications.

All applicants should be aware that adequate time must be factored into applicants' schedules for delivery of their application. Applicants are advised that volume on Grants.gov may be extremely heavy leading up to the deadline.

The application must be both received and validated by Grants.gov. The application is "received" when Grants.gov provides the applicant a confirmation of receipt and an application tracking number. If an applicant does not see this confirmation and tracking number, the application has not been received. After the application has been received, it must still be validated. During this process, it may be "validated" or "rejected with errors". To ascertain whether the application was rejected with errors and the reasons for the rejection, the applicant must log in to Grants.gov, select "Applicants" from the top navigation, and select "Track my application" from the drop-down list. If the status is "rejected with errors," the applicant may still seek to correct the errors and resubmit the application before the deadline. If the applicant does not correct the errors, the application will not be forwarded to NIST by Grants.gov.

Refer to important information in Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times, to help ensure the application is received on time.

b. Amendments. Any amendments to this NOFO will be announced through Grants.gov. Applicants may sign up on Grants.gov to receive amendments by e-mail.

V. <u>Application Review Information</u>

1. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating applications and their assigned weights are as follows:

a. **Outreach Strategy (0 – 30 points sub-criteria below receive equal weight).**

   (1) Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant's proposed approach clearly addresses the program goals (see Section I. of this NOFO).

   (2) Reviewers will evaluate the likelihood that the applicant's proposed process for bringing diverse stakeholders within the community together will be effective. This includes evaluating the comprehensiveness and potential effectiveness of the plan to recruit key leading organizations to host and sponsor conferences. and the extent to which the approach is likely to reach the full range of diverse stakeholders in the cybersecurity education, training, and workforce development community. Diversity will be considered demographically and regionally and in the range of participants within the cybersecurity education and workforce development community.

b. **Conference Planning (0 to 30 points, sub-criteria below receive equal weight).**

   (1) Reviewers will evaluate the comprehensiveness and likelihood of success of the applicant's proposed plan for managing and conducting the full range of activities needed for the annual conference, including the plans to manage the project tasks, timeline, and work of all project staff, to ensure realization of project goals and objectives.

   (2) Reviewers will consider how the proposed plan keeps the conference affordable, nationally representative, and accessible.

c. **Qualifications and Experience of Key Personnel and Resources Availability. (0-20 points)** Reviewers will evaluate the appropriateness and extent of the qualifications and experience of the key personnel and proposed staff to assess the likelihood of achieving the objectives of the project. The extent to which the applicant organization and any proposed partner organizations have experience reaching geographically diverse

groups and past experience in similar collaborations will also be considered.

d. **Budget Narrative. (0-20 points)**. Reviewers will assess the budgeted costs against the proposed activities to determine the practicality of the proposed budget with respect to developing and implementing the proposed project.

2. Selection Factors

a. The Selection Factors for this competition are:
   (1) Results of the merit reviewers' evaluations.
   (2) The availability of funding.
   (3) Whether the project duplicates other projects funded by NIST or other Federal agencies.
   (4) Alignment with the NOFO objectives.
   (5) Regional diversity of conference locations over the period of the award.

3. Review and Selection Process

Proposals, reports, documents, and other information related to applications submitted to NIST and/or relating to financial assistance awards issued by NIST will be reviewed and considered by Federal employees, or non-Federal personnel who have entered into conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements covering such information, when applicable.

a. Initial Administrative Review of Applications

Applications received by the deadline will be reviewed to determine eligibility, completeness, and responsiveness to this NOFO and to the scope of the stated program objectives (*see* Section I. of this NOFO). Applications determined to be ineligible, incomplete, and/or nonresponsive may be eliminated from further review. However, NIST, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for an application that is missing non-substantive information, the absence of which may easily be rectified during the review process.

b. Full Review of Eligible, Complete, and Responsive Applications.
Applications that are determined to be eligible, complete, and responsive will proceed for full reviews in accordance with the review and selection process below:

(1) Merit Review. At least three (3) objective reviewers, who may be Federal employees or non-Federal personnel, with appropriate professional and technical expertise relating to the topics covered in

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this NOFO, will evaluate and score each eligible, complete, and responsive application based on the evaluation criteria (*see* Section V.1. of this NOFO). While every application will have at least three (3) reviewers, applications may have more than three (3) reviewers if specialized expertise is needed to evaluate an application. During the review process, the reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis. Based on the numerical average of the reviewers' scores, a rank order will be prepared.

If more than 25 applications receive merit review and the top 5 applications in the rank order have an average numerical score within a 5-point range, NIST will convene an Evaluation Board, a committee comprised of Federal employees knowledgeable in the subject matter of this NOFO and its objectives. If these criteria are not met, then the rank order will be forwarded to the Selecting Official for further consideration.

The Evaluation Board, if convened, may determine a numeric score threshold and applications with an average numeric score above the threshold will be deemed finalists, while applications with an average numeric score below the threshold will not receive further review or consideration in the competition. Finalists may receive written follow-up questions from the Evaluation Board in order to clarify information in the applicant's proposal. If deemed necessary, all finalists may be invited to participate in web conferences with the Evaluation Board to provide additional clarifications about their proposal. As a result of any clarifying information received during this process, the Evaluation Board members may decide by consensus to revise the rank order of the finalists.

A final ranking will be provided to the Selecting Official for further consideration.

(2) Selection. The Selecting Official, the director of NICE, will make final award recommendations to the NIST Grants Officer. The Selecting Official shall generally select and recommend the most meritorious application for an award based upon the rank order of the applications. The Selecting Official retains the discretion to select and recommend an application out of rank order based on the Selection Factors (see Section V.2. of this NOFO).

NIST reserves the right to negotiate the budget costs with any applicant selected to receive an award, which may include requesting that the applicant removes certain costs. Additionally,

NIST may request that successful applicants modify objectives or work plans and provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to award. NIST also reserves the right to reject an application where information is uncovered that raises a reasonable doubt as to the responsibility of the applicant. NIST may select some, all, or none of the applications, or part(s) of any application. The final approval of a selected application - and issuance of an award - will be by the NIST Grants Officer. The award decisions of the NIST Grants Officer are final.

c. **Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants.** After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the NIST Grants Management Division (GMD) performs pre-award risk assessments in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.205, which may include a review of the financial stability of an applicant, the quality of the applicant's management systems, the history of performance, and/or the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities.

In addition, prior to making an award where the total Federal share is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently $250,000), NIST GMD will review and consider the publicly available information about that applicant in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS). An applicant may, at its discretion, review and comment on information about itself previously entered into FAPIIS by a Federal awarding agency. As part of its review of risk posed by applicants, NIST GMD will consider any comments made by the applicant in FAPIIS in making its determination about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards. Upon completion of the pre-award risk assessment, the Grants Officer will make a responsibility determination concerning whether the applicant is qualified to receive the subject award and, if so, whether appropriate specific award conditions that correspond to the degree of risk posed by the applicant should be applied to an award.

4. **Anticipated Announcement and Award Date**
Review of applications, selection of successful applicants, and award processing is expected to be completed by July 2020. The earliest start date for awards under this NOFO is expected to be August 2020.

5. **Additional Information**

a. **Safety**. Safety is a top priority at NIST. Employees and affiliates of award recipients who conduct project work at NIST will be expected to be safety-conscious, to attend NIST safety training, and to comply with all NIST

safety policies and procedures, and with all applicable terms of their guest research agreement.

b. **Notification to Unsuccessful Applicants.** Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by e-mail and will have the opportunity to receive a debriefing after the opportunity is officially closed. Applicants must request within 10 business days of the email notification to receive a debrief from the program office. The program office will then work with the unsuccessful applicant in arranging a date and time of the debrief.

c. **Retention of Unsuccessful Applications.** Unsuccessful applications will be retained in accordance with the General Record Schedule 1.2/021.

VI. Federal Award Administration Information

1. **Federal Award Notices.** Successful applicants will receive an award package from the NIST Grants Officer.

2. **Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

   a. **Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements.** Through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which apply to awards in this program. Refer to http://go.usa.gov/SBYh and http://go.usa.gov/SBg4.

   b. **Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions.** The Department of Commerce will apply to each award in this program, the Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions in effect on the date of award. The current version, dated April 30, 2019, is accessible here. Refer to Section VII. of this NOFO, Federal Awarding Agency Contacts, Grant Rules and Regulations, if you need more information.

   c. **Pre-Award Notification Requirements.** The Department of Commerce will apply the Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements dated December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390), accessible at http://go.usa.gov/hKkR. Refer to Section VII. of this NOFO, Federal Awarding Agency Contacts, Grant Rules and Regulations, for more information.

   d. **Funding Availability and Limitation of Liability.** Funding for the program listed in this NOFO is contingent upon the availability of appropriations. NIST or the Department of Commerce will not be responsible for application preparation costs, including but not limited to if

this program fails to receive funding or is cancelled because of agency priorities. Publication of this NOFO does not oblige NIST or the Department of Commerce to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

e. **Collaborations with NIST Employees.** If an applicant 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 application prior to the merit review. Any collaboration with an identified NIST employee that is approved by appropriate NIST management will not make an application more or less favorable in the competitive process.

f. **Use of Government-Owned Intellectual Property.** If the applicant anticipates using any Government-owned intellectual property to carry out the work proposed, the applicant should identify such intellectual property. This information will be used to ensure that no Federal employee involved in the development of the intellectual property will participate in the review process for that competition. In addition, if the applicant intends to use Government-owned intellectual property, the applicant 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, 2 C.F.R. §200.315, and in Section C.03 of the [Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Terms and Conditions](#) dated April 30, 2019.

Any use of government-owned intellectual property by a recipient of an award under this announcement is at the sole discretion of the Federal Government and will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis if a project is deemed meritorious. The applicant 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 Federal employee arise in the course of an award made pursuant to this NOFO, the United States Government may retain its ownership rights in any such invention. Licensing or other disposition of Federal Government's rights in such inventions will be determined solely by the Federal Government, and include the possibility of the Federal Government putting the intellectual property into the public domain.

3. **Reporting**

   a. **Reporting Requirements.** The following reporting requirements described in Sections A.01, Reporting Requirements, of the [Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions,](#) dated April 30, 2019, apply to awards in this program:

      (1) Financial Reports. Each award recipient will be required to submit an SF-425, Federal Financial Report on a semi-annual basis for the periods ending March 31 and September 30 of each year. Reports will be due within 30 days after the end of the reporting period to the NIST Federal Program Officer, Grants Officer and Grants Specialist named in the award documents. A final financial report is due within 90 days after the end of the project period.

      (2) Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR). Each award recipient will be required to submit a RPPR to the Federal Program Officer, NIST Grants Officer and Grants Specialist named in the award documents on a semi-annual basis for the periods ending March 31 and September 30 of each year. Reports will be due within 30 days after the end of the reporting period. The RPPR shall conform to the requirements in 2 C.F.R. § 200.328 (http://go.usa.gov/xkVgP) and [Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions](#), Section A.01.

      A final RPPR shall be submitted within 90 days after the expiration date of the award, and publication citation information as well as links to publicly available data shall be submitted as soon as they become available.

      (3) Patent and Property Reports. From time to time, and in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Requirements (*see* Section VI.2. of this NOFO) and other terms and conditions governing the award, the recipient may need to submit property and patent reports.

      (4) Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters. In accordance with section 872 of Public Law 110-417 (as amended; see 41 U.S.C. 2313), if the total value of a recipient's currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds $10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of an award made under this NOFO, then the recipient shall be subject to the requirements specified in Appendix XII to 2 C.F.R. Part 200, http://go.usa.gov/cTBwC, for maintaining the currency of information reported to SAM that is made available in FAPIIS about

certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings involving the recipient.

b. **Audit Requirements.** The Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, Section D.01, and 2 C.F.R. Part 200 Subpart F, adopted by the Department of Commerce through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, require any non-Federal entity (i.e., including non-profit institutions of higher education and non-profit organizations) that expends Federal awards of $750,000 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 Subpart. Additionally, unless otherwise specified in the terms and conditions of the award, entities that are not subject to Subpart F of 2 C.F.R. Part 200 (e.g., for-profit commercial entities) that expend $750,000 or more in DOC funds during their fiscal year must submit to the Grants Officer either: (i) a financial related audit of each DOC award or subaward in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards; or (ii) a project specific audit for each award or subaward in accordance with the requirements contained in 2 C.F.R. § 200.507. Applicants are reminded that NIST, the Department of Commerce 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 (Public Law 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. Applicants 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 available here http://go.usa.gov/hKnQ.

VII. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts

Questions should be directed to the following:

Subject Area	Point of Contact
Programmatic and Technical Questions	Danielle Santos Phone: 301-975-5048 E-mail: danielle.santos@nist.gov with '2020-NIST-NICE-01' in subject line
Technical Assistance with Grants.gov Submissions	grants.gov Phone: 800-518-4726 E-mail: support@grants.gov

Subject Area	Point of Contact
Grant Rules and Regulations	Gilberto Castillo Phone: 301-975-3726 Fax: 301-975-6368 E-mail: gilbert.castillo@nist.gov

VIII.   Other Information

1. Personal and Business Information

The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the Department of Commerce in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed and evaluated by Department of Commerce employees, other Federal employees, and also by Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner, and by cooperating with Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a Department of Commerce financial assistance award.

In addition, Department of Commerce regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. Sec. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this Federal Funding Opportunity may be subject to requests for release under the Act. If an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information that should be exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information. In accordance with 15 CFR § 4.9, the Department of Commerce will protect from disclosure confidential business information contained in financial assistance applications and other documentation provided by applicants to the extent permitted by law.

2. Public Website

The NICE Program Office at NIST has a public website, https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice, that provides information pertaining to this Funding Opportunity[2]. Any amendments to this NOFO will be announced through Grants.gov.

Applicants must submit all questions pertaining to this funding opportunity in writing to nice.nist@nist.gov with 2020-NIST-NICE-01 in the subject line.

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[2] Refer to Section VII. of this NOFO, Federal Awarding Agency Contacts, Programmatic and Technical Questions, if more information is needed.

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