

August 2, 2013

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (FFO)
State Technology Extension Assistance Project for the State of Alaska**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Federal Agency Name:** National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), United States Department of Commerce (DoC)
- **Funding Opportunity Title:** State Technology Extension Assistance Project for State of Alaska
- **Announcement Type:** Initial
- **Funding Opportunity Number:** 2013-NIST-MEP-STEP-AK-01
- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:** 11.611
- **Dates:** Electronic applications must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, Tuesday, October 1, 2013. Paper applications must be received by NIST by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Tuesday, October 1, 2013. Applications received after the respective deadline will not be reviewed or considered. The approximate start date for an award under this FFO is expected to be approximately February 2014.
- **Application Submission Address:** See Section IV in the Full Announcement Text of this FFO.
- **Funding Opportunity Description:** NIST provides technical assistance to State technology extension programs throughout the United States. The purpose of this FFO is to provide NIST financial support, technical assistance and advice in understanding the technical needs of small and mid-sized manufacturers in Alaska as the state seeks to diversify their manufacturing base. This may lead to the future creation of a Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Center in the State of Alaska. This award will continue to promote increased coordination and communication within the state. NIST invites applications from eligible applicants for a project to help the state engage the manufacturing community and potential partner and service provider communities in organizing a more effective and efficient system for supporting the global competitiveness of small and mid-sized manufacturers in the state through technical assistance services and the application of science and technology.
- **Total Amount to be Awarded:** Up to \$150,000 will be available for approximately one new award.
- **Anticipated Amounts:** NIST anticipates funding approximately one (1) application at the level of up to \$150,000 for a project in the State of Alaska. The project awarded under this FFO will have a budget and performance period of up to six (6) months.
- **Funding Instrument:** Cooperative Agreement
- **Who Is Eligible:** Institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, state and local governments, and commercial organizations in the United States and its territories. An eligible organization may work individually or include proposed subawards or contracts with others in a project proposal, effectively forming a team or consortium.
- **Cost Sharing Requirements:** Cost sharing is not required for awards under this program.
- **Webinar Information Session:** NIST MEP will hold an information session for organizations considering applying to this opportunity. An information session in the form of a webinar will be held

approximately 14 business days after publication of this FFO. The exact date and time of the webinar will be posted on the MEP website at www.nist.gov/mep. Organizations wishing to participate in the webinar must sign up by contacting Diane Henderson at diane.henderson@nist.gov.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

NIST provides technical assistance to State technology extension programs throughout the United States. The purpose of this FFO is to support the region of Alaska by funding an analysis of their manufacturing base that may lead to the creation of an MEP Center under a separate competitive process.

The State of Alaska is seeking to diversify their economy by growing their manufacturing base including the development of both new and existing manufacturers in order to provide jobs, a strong tax base and future economic strength. NIST assistance is to help the state engage the manufacturing community and potential partner and service provider communities in organizing a more effective and efficient system for supporting the global competitiveness of small and mid-sized manufacturers through technical assistance services. NIST MEP collaborative assistance is necessary to examine critical manufacturing industries, industry barriers and needs, federal state and local resources available to small and mid-sized manufacturers as well as the gaps in those services that if addressed would lead to a stronger manufacturing base. The collaborative assistance would enable Alaska to consider unique approaches, designs and critical elements of success for a Manufacturing Extension Partnership Center in the region.

Key issues to be explored in the region through this project include:

- **Market Understanding:** What are the current needs limiting the growth of small and mid-sized manufacturers, and what types of products or services might assist manufacturers in the region? How should a potential new center continue to understand and respond to the future needs of manufacturers in the region over time?
- **Business Model:** How could a center be structured and organized to provide services in the region utilizing a mix of staff, consultants and federal, state or local assistance services? How should manufacturers be involved in the overall direction and management of the center?
- **Partnerships:** What key partners might a center initially engage to foster meeting the needs of manufacturers in the region to ensure effective and efficient coordination and cooperation with other private and public services assisting manufacturers? Should there be formal and/or informal partnerships in place, and what kind of process should be used to maintain, develop or renew partnerships?
- **Financial Sustainability:** What is a possible six year financial structure of a center, and does it have the potential for long-term sustainability, including the mix and balance of federal funding, state funding, client fees and other appropriate funding streams?
- **Metrics and Measures:** How would a new center become high performing based on metrics and measures which can be used to demonstrate a return on stakeholder investment and company impact, specifically looking at metrics and measures beyond the NIST MEP measurement system in place <http://www.nist.gov/mep/reports.cfm>?

The proposed approach should also demonstrate a means of learning from others during the analysis to ensure any future activity incorporates best practices, model programs and common tools currently being used in serving manufacturers and manufacturing.

For the purposes of this FFO, the following definition applies:

The term “State-wide, coordinated technology extension program” refers to programs supporting the growth of manufacturing in a state that link the capabilities of state technology development and business assistance programs to assure the availability of a wide range of business and technical specialists; support training as a critical component of technology deployment; emphasize client-directed problem solving including assistance in identifying and adapting appropriate technology and know-how to individual clients' needs and markets; recognize manufacturers' needs for a variety of services; and emphasize the value of on-site personal field service in assisting firms.

It is not the intent of this program that awardees will perform research.

Information regarding the NIST MEP Program (MEPP) is available at www.nist.gov/mep.

The statutory authority for this program is 15 U.S.C. 272a(1), 278I and 272(b)(4).

II. Award Information

- 1. Funding Instrument.** The funding instrument that will be used for the award is a cooperative agreement. The nature of NIST’s “substantial involvement” will generally be collaboration between NIST MEPP and the recipient organizations. This includes MEPP collaboration with a recipient on its progress and approving changes in the statement of work. Additional forms of substantial involvement that may arise are described in the Department of Commerce (DoC) Grants and Cooperative Agreements Manual, which is available at http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/doc_grants_manual/default.htm
- 2. Funding Availability.** NIST anticipates funding approximately one (1) application at the level of up to \$150,000 for an award to undertake the project. The project awarded under this FFO will have a budget and performance period of up to six (6) months.

III. Eligibility Information

- 1. Eligible Applicants.** Institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, state and local governments, and commercial organizations in the United States and its territories. An eligible organization may work individually or include proposed subawards or contracts with others in a project proposal, effectively forming a team or consortium.
- 2. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement.** Cost sharing is not required for awards under this program.
- 3. Other**

Pre-Applications. NIST is not accepting pre-applications or white papers under this funding opportunity.

IV. Application 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. For applicants without Internet access, the standard application package may be requested by contacting the NIST personnel listed below.

Diane Henderson, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Manufacturing Extension Partnership, 100 Bureau Drive, Mail Stop 4800, Gaithersburg, MD 20899-4800 (Phone: 301-975-5105, email: diane.henderson@nist.gov).

- 2. Content and Form of Application/Submission.**

Complete applications must, at a minimum, include the following forms and documents:

a. Required Forms and Documents

- (1) **SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance.** The SF-424 must be signed by an authorized representative of the applicant organization. The FFO number 2013-NIST-MEP-STEP-AK-01 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 no more than six (6) months, 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 not exceeding 20 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.** The executive summary should briefly describe the proposed project, consistent with the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1 of this FFO).
 - b) **Project Narrative.** A description of the proposed project including statement of work that should discuss the specific tasks to be carried out, including a schedule of measureable events and milestones, sufficient to permit evaluation of the application, in accordance with the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1 of this FFO). In addition to the description of the proposed project and statement of work, the project narrative should include a statement describing linkages to industry, government, non-profit organizations, and educational organizations that provide research, technical assistance, service delivery, and other services within its service region.
 - c) **Qualifications.** A description of the qualifications and proposed operational or management activities of key personnel who will be assigned to work on the proposed project. In addition to this description, a one (1) page resume for each key person identified should be provided (see Section IV.2.a.9 of this FFO)
- (7) **Budget Narrative.** There is no required 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. A suggested format can be found on the MEP website, www.nist.gov/mep
- (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. The successful applicant will be required to obtain such a rate.
- (9) **Resumes of Key Personnel** (these do not contribute to the total number of pages). Provide a one (1) page resume for each key person identified in the proposal. Information on any pages beyond the first page of each resume will not be considered.

If submitting the application 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.(9) 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. 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 indicating an application is received does not provide information about whether attachments have been received.

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

b. Application 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 (11-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 application 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 figures, graphs, and pictures (see Section IV.2.b.(4))).
- (10) **Page Limit.** The Technical Proposals are limited to twenty (20) pages. Information on pages beyond the page limit will not be considered.

Page limit includes: Table of contents (if included), Technical Proposal with all required sections, 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; Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, and Resumes.
- (11) **Page numbering.** Number pages sequentially.
- (12) **Paper size.** 21.6 by 27.9 centimeters (8 ½ by 11 inches).
- (13) **Application language.** English.
- (14) **Staple paper submission.** For paper submissions, staple the original signed application and each of the two (2) copies securely with one (1) staple in the upper left-hand corner.
- (15) **Typed document.** All applications, including forms, must be typed.

- 3. Submission Dates and Times.** Electronic applications must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, Tuesday, October 1, 2013. Paper applications must be received by NIST by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, on Tuesday, October 1, 2013.

Applications not received by the specified due date and time will not be considered and will be returned without review. NIST determines whether applications 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 applicants do not wait until the last minute to submit an application. 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, applicants are highly encouraged to start their Grants.gov registration process at least four (4) weeks prior to the application due date.

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

- 4. Intergovernmental Review.** Applications under this Program are not subject to Executive Order 12372.

5. Other Submission Requirements

- a. Applications may be submitted by paper or electronically.

- (1) Paper applications must be submitted in triplicate (an original and two copies) and sent to the NIST personnel listed below.

Diane Henderson, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Manufacturing Extension Partnership, 100 Bureau Drive, Mail Stop 4800, Gaithersburg, MD 20899-4800 (Phone: 301-975-5105)

- (2) Electronic applications must be submitted via Grants.gov at www.grants.gov under announcement 2013-NIST-MEP-STEP-AK-01.

- a) Submitters of electronic applications 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 application is received does not provide information about whether attachments have been received. For further information or questions regarding applying electronically for the 2013-NIST-MEP-STEP-AK-01 announcement, contact Christopher Hunton by phone at 301-975-5718 or by e-mail at christopher.hunton@nist.gov.
- 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. 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. Applicants must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number (see Section VI.2.b of this FFO) 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. 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 authorized individual(s) 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, 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.

- c) Information essential to successful submission of applications 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 applicants 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.

Important: *All applicants, both electronic and paper submitters, should be aware that adequate time must be factored into applicants' schedules for delivery of their application. Submitters of electronic applications are advised that volume on Grants.gov may be extremely heavy on the deadline date, and if Grants.gov is unable to accept applications electronically in a timely fashion, applicants are encouraged to exercise their option to submit applications in paper format. Submitters of paper applications should allow adequate time to ensure a paper application 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.*

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

- b. **Amendments.** Any amendments to this FFO will be announced through Grants.gov. Applicants may sign up on Grants.gov to receive amendments by email, or may request copies from Diane Henderson by telephone at 301-975-5105 or by email to diane.henderson@nist.gov.

V. Application/Review Information

The evaluation criteria, selection factors, and review and selection process provided in this section will be used for this competition.

- 1. **Evaluation Criteria.** The applications will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria described below.

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

- a. **Coordination with Existing Resources in the Region** (25 points): The proposed method, breadth and depth for engaging all manufacturing sectors, major manufacturers, potential partners, as well as federal, state, regional and local entities in the analysis in order to understand current services, gaps in services and future opportunities for a coordinated effort in serving manufacturers will be evaluated.
- b. **Funding and Financial Management** (10 points): The relevancy and cost effectiveness of the applicant's financial plan for meeting the objective of this FFO will be evaluated. Does the proposed budget focus seem reasonable or cost effective for the work plan proposed?

- c. **Needs Identification Methodology** (25 points): The proposed method, breadth and depth of gathering the information necessary for understanding the types of new and existing manufacturers in the region and their barriers to global competitiveness and growth which might be assisted through extension service for manufacturers will be evaluated. This includes gathering information on key manufacturing industry needs and relevant industry initiatives, within the context of local and global challenges.
 - d. **Resource Identification Methodology** (20 points): The applicant's methodology for collecting information about the number, size, type, skills and abilities of potential key partners in the region and relevance of existing industrial assistance and other support services that could be part of the coordination effort will be evaluated.
 - e. **Qualifications of the Proposed Personnel** (20 points): How well resumes, experience, previous work and current skills demonstrate the applicant's ability to effectively carry out the proposed project will be assessed.
2. **Selection Factors.** The Selecting Official, who is the Director of the NIST MEPP, shall select applications for award based upon the rank order of the applications, and may select an application out of rank based on one or more of the following selection factors:
- a. The availability of Federal funds.
 - b. Whether the project duplicates other projects funded by DoC or by other Federal agencies.

3. **Review and Selection Process.**

- a. **Initial Administrative Review of Applications.** An initial review of timely received applications will be conducted to determine eligibility, completeness, and responsiveness to this FFO and the scope of the stated program objectives. Applications determined to be ineligible, incomplete, and/or non-responsive may be eliminated from further review.
- 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 processes below:
 - (1) **Evaluation and Review.** Each eligible, complete and responsive application will be reviewed by three (3) independent, objective individuals with appropriate professional and technical expertise relating to the topics covered in this FFO based on the evaluation criteria. If more than one non-Federal employee reviewer is used, the reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus. Reviewers will assign each application a score, based on the application's responsiveness to the evaluation criteria above, with a maximum score of 100. Applications with an average score of 70 or higher out of 100 will be deemed finalists.

The reviewers may ask written questions of some or all finalists in order for the reviewers to gain a better understanding of the applicant's proposal. Additionally, if deemed necessary, the reviewers may conduct a teleconference and/or site visit with each finalist, which may result in the reviewers revising their scores of the applications.

- (2) **Ranking and Selection.** Based on the reviewers' final numeric scores, a rank order will be prepared and provided to the Selecting Official for further consideration. The Selecting Official, who is the Director of the NIST MEP, will then select funding recipients based upon the rank order and the selection factors (see Section V.2 of this FFO).

NIST reserves the right to negotiate the budget costs with the applicants that have been selected to receive awards, which may include requesting that the applicant remove certain costs. Additionally, NIST may request that the applicant 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 part, some, all, or none of the applications. The final approval of selected applications 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 Date. Review, selection, and award processing is expected to be completed in December 2013. The earliest anticipated start date for awards made under this FFO is expected to be approximately February 2014.

5. Additional Information

a. 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.

b. Notification to Unsuccessful Applicants. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing.

c. Retention of Unsuccessful Applications. One (1) copy of each non-selected application 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 applicants 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/dev01_002513.pdf and the DoC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions (January 2013), which may be updated by the time of award, are available at http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/DOC_Standard_Terms_and_Conditions_01_10_2013.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 December 17, 2012 (77 FR 74634), are applicable to this FFO and are available at http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/Department%20of%20Commerce%20Financial%20Assistance%20Pre%20Award%20Notice%20-%2077%20FR%2074634.pdf

b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN), Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS), and System for Award Management (SAM). All applicants for Federal financial assistance are required to obtain a universal identifier in the form of DUNS number and maintain a current registration in the Federal government's primary registrant database, SAM. On the form SF-424 items 8.b. and 8.c., the applicant's 9-digit EIN/TIN and 9-digit DUNS number must be consistent with the information in SAM (<https://www.sam.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 application is selected for funding. Confirm that the EIN/TIN and DUNS number are consistent with the information on the SAM and ASAP.

Per 2 C.F.R. Part 25, each applicant must:

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

The applicant can obtain a DUNS number from Dun and Bradstreet. A DUNS number can be created within one business day. The CCR or SAM registration process may take five or more business days to complete. If you are currently registered with the CCR, you may not need to make any changes. However, please make certain that the TIN associated with your DUNS number is correct. Also note that you will need to update your CCR registration annually. This may take three or more business days to complete. Information about SAM is available at SAM.gov. See also 2 C.F.R. Part 25 and the *Federal Register* notice published on September 14, 2010, at 75 FR 55671.

- c. Collaborations with NIST Employees.** All applications should include a description of any work proposed to be performed by an entity other than the applicant, and the cost of such work should ordinarily be included in the budget.

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.

- d. Use of NIST Intellectual Property.** If the applicant anticipates using any NIST-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 NIST 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 NIST-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, 15 C.F.R. § 14.36, and in Section B.21 of the DoC Pre-Award Notification Requirements, 77 FR 74,634(December 17, 2012). Questions about these requirements may be directed to the Chief Counsel for NIST, (301) 975-2803.

Any use of NIST-owned intellectual property by an applicant is at the sole discretion of NIST 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 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.

- e. 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 application preparation costs if this program fails to receive funding or is cancelled because of agency priorities. Publication of this FFO does not oblige NIST or DoC to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.
- f. DoC Representation by Corporations Regarding an Unpaid Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Conviction Under Any Federal Law.** In accordance with the Federal appropriations law expected to be in effect at the time of project funding, NIST anticipates that the selected applicant will

be provided a form and asked to make a representation regarding any unpaid delinquent tax liability or felony conviction under any Federal law.

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 January 2013 (http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/DOC_Standard_Terms_and_Conditions_01_10_2013.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. A final financial report is due within 90 days after the end of the project period.

(2) Performance (Technical) Reports. Each award recipient will be required to submit a technical 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 technical progress report shall be submitted within 90 days after the expiration date of the award. Two (2) copies of the technical progress report shall be submitted to the Project Manager and the original report to the NIST Grants Officer. Technical progress reports shall contain information as prescribed in the NIST MEP Reporting Guidelines available at www.nist.gov/mep (OMB Control Number 0693-0032).

b. 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. Applicants 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. Applicants must ensure they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the reporting requirements should they receive funding.

VII. Agency Contact(s)

Questions should be directed to the following contact persons:

Subject Area	Point of Contact
Administrative, budget, cost-sharing, eligibility questions and other programmatic questions.	Diane Henderson Manufacturing Extension Partnership NIST Phone: 301-975-5105 Fax: 301-963-6556 E-mail: diane.henderson@nist.gov
Grants.gov - application submission	Christopher Hunton Grants & Agreements Management Division

	NIST Phone: 301-975-5718 Fax: 301-840-5976 E-mail: christopher.hunton@nist.gov
Grant rules and regulations	Calvin Mitchell Grants & Agreements Management Division NIST Phone: 301-975-4585 Fax: 301-840-5976 E-mail: calvin.mitchell@nist.gov

VIII. Other Information

Webinar Information Session. NIST MEP will hold an information session for organizations considering applying to this opportunity. An information session in the form of a webinar will be held approximately 14 business days after publication of this FFO. The exact date and time of the webinar will be posted on the MEP website at www.nist.gov/mep. Organizations wishing to participate in the webinar must sign up by contacting Diane Henderson at diane.henderson@nist.gov.