

- (4) the Engineering Laboratory (EL);
- (5) Fire Research (FR);
- (6) the Information Technology Laboratory (ITL);
- (7) the International and Academic Affairs Office (IAAO);
- (8) the Material Measurement Laboratory (MML);
- (9) the NIST Center for Neutron Research (NCNR);
- (10) the Physical Measurement Laboratory (PML);
- (11) the Special Programs Office (SPO); and
- (12) the Standards Coordination Office (SCO).

This funding opportunity will result in the award of grants or cooperative agreements. A grant or cooperative agreement is not the correct funding vehicle if the principal purpose is to provide products or services for the direct benefit or use of the federal government.

- **Anticipated Funding Amounts:** See Section II. in the Full Announcement Text of this NOFO.
- **Funding Instrument:** Grant or cooperative agreement, as appropriate.
- **Who is Eligible:** Eligibility for all programs listed in this NOFO is open to all non-Federal entities. Eligible applicants include institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, state and local governments, Indian tribes, hospitals, foreign public entities, and foreign governments. Please note that individuals and unincorporated sole proprietors are not considered “non-Federal entities” and are not eligible to apply under this NOFO.
- **Cost Sharing or Matching Requirements:** The MSE Research Grant Programs do not require cost sharing or matching.

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FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Program Description

This funding opportunity will result in the award of grants or cooperative agreements.

1. Associate Director for Innovation and Industry Services (ADIIS) Grant Program

The statutory authority for the ADIIS Grant Program is 15 U.S.C. § 272(b) and (c) and 15 U.S.C. § 278g-1(e)(1) and (e)(3).

Program Description: The ADIIS Grant Program supports activities that develop, expand, strengthen, or sustain NIST partnership programs within the ADIIS Directorate through measurements, standards, data, industry and technology studies, and technology research and development (R&D). Specifically, the ADIIS Grant Program seeks to support technology innovation and service to American industry in the following fields: bioscience, chemistry, dimensional metrology, electronics, engineering, infrastructure, information technology, manufacturing, manufacturing metrology, materials science and engineering, nanotechnology, neutron research, optics, and physics.

The ADIIS Directorate's current partnership programs include the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program¹, the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP)², programs within the NIST Office of Advanced Manufacturing³, and programs within the NIST Technology Partnerships Office⁴. Financial assistance may be provided to bolster measurements, standards, data and technology R&D within these partnership programs, or through new partnerships, to:

- advance early-stage research and development for industry;
- enhance opportunities in manufacturing through innovation;
- strengthen supplier programs for small and medium manufacturers;
- encourage the transfer and commercialization of research and technology from institutions of higher education, federal laboratories, other federally

¹ The Baldrige Program oversees the nation's only Presidential award for performance excellence while offering a wide array of award-winning products and services, including the world-renowned Baldrige Excellence Framework. See <https://www.nist.gov/baldrige> for more information.

² MEP is a public-private partnership with Centers in all 50 states and Puerto Rico dedicated to serving small and medium-sized manufacturers. See <https://www.nist.gov/mep> for more information.

³ The NIST Office of Advanced Manufacturing coordinates the network of Manufacturing USA institutes and leads the interagency Advanced Manufacturing National Program Office. See <https://www.nist.gov/oam> for more information.

⁴ Programs within the NIST Technology Partnership Office include the NIST Technology Transfer Program, the Lab to Market Initiative, and the Economic Analysis Program. See <https://www.nist.gov/tpo> for more information.

- c. Microsystems and Nanotechnology Division.** The primary objective is to collaborate with or conduct research consistent with the division's programs in the areas of measurement science and technology that advance the state-of-the-art of nanofabrication and nanomanufacturing by top-down, bottom-up, and hybrid approaches, and application of these novel capabilities to make innovative, integrated microsystems (Micro/Nano ElectroMechanical Systems [NEMS/MEMS]) comprising mechanical, fluidic, photonic, phononic, plasmonic, and electronic micro- and nanostructures for critical applications, including measurements for nanoscience and nanomanufacturing; microsystems for quantum engineering, information science, and metrology; and microsystems for biological applications, including cytometry, body-on-a-chip, nanoparticle, single-molecule, and bioelectronic measurements. The contact for this division is J. Alexander Liddle and he may be reached at (301) 975-6050, or via e-mail at james.liddle@nist.gov.
- d. Radiation Physics Division.** The primary objective is to collaborate with or conduct research consistent with the division's programs in the areas of ionizing radiation including x-ray and gamma-ray measurements and dosimetry, neutron physics, radioactivity measurements supporting the protection of radiation workers and the general public, therapy and diagnosis of disease, nuclear medicine and medical imaging, radiography, industrial processing, nuclear and alternative energies, national defense and security, space science, and environmental protection. The contact person for this division is James Adams and he may be reached at (301) 975-4202 or by e-mail at james.adams@nist.gov.
- e. Nanoscale Device Characterization Division.** The primary objective is to collaborate with or conduct research consistent with the division's programs to develop and advance the measurement and knowledge infrastructure essential to characterizing nano- and atom-scale engineered materials and solid-state devices for innovation in information processing, sensing, and future quantum technologies. The contact person for this division is David Gundlach and he may be reached at (301) 975-2048 or by e-mail at david.gundlach@nist.gov.
- f. Quantum Measurement Division.** The primary objective is to collaborate with or conduct research consistent with division basic and applied research programs, including precision measurements; mass, force, and electrical metrology; electronic instrumentation; measurements of basic atomic properties including new metrology techniques in atomic spectroscopy; measuring fundamental quantum processes in ultra-cold atomic systems including Bose-Einstein condensates and Fermi degenerate gases, nanophotonic systems, quantum dots, single photon devices, and quantum materials relevant to these systems; and advancing quantum information

science and laser cooling and their broad applications to measurement science and measurement beyond the standard quantum limit. The contact person for this division is Gerald Fitzpatrick and he may be reached at (301) 975-8922 or by e-mail at gerald.fitzpatrick@nist.gov.

- g. Sensor Science Division.** The primary objective is to collaborate with or conduct research consistent with the division's measurement and standards programs in temperature, humidity, pressure, vacuum, flow, length and dimension, surface topography, optical surfaces, photonic sensors, interferometry, firearm and tool mark forensics, optical properties of materials, synchrotron radiation, and optical radiation and their application to addressing national needs. The contact person for this division is Gerald Fraser and he may be reached at (301) 975-3797 or by e-mail at gerald.fraser@nist.gov.
- h. Applied Physics Division.** The primary objective is to collaborate with or conduct research consistent with the division's programs in areas including laser metrology, superconducting sensor array fabrication and application, quantum information and computing, single photonics, medical imaging, fiber and free-space communication, radio-frequency and microwave technology, greenhouse gas measurements, terahertz imaging and metrology, laser applications, compound semiconductor nanophotonics, and molecular and bio-photonics. The contact person for this division is Kristan Corwin and she may be reached at (303) 497-4411 or by e-mail at kristan.corwin@nist.gov.
- i. Quantum Electromagnetics Division.** The primary objective is to collaborate with or conduct research consistent with the division's programs in areas including: superconducting detector arrays and systems for x-ray line metrology and advanced materials research, gamma-ray detection for nuclear forensics and medicine, and sub-millimeter-wave space science; superconductive electronics circuit design, fabrication, and quantum-based voltage standards (dc to radio-frequency); superconducting quantum computing and information processing; neuromorphic computing circuitry and architectures for artificial intelligence; spin electronics; nanoscale magnetodynamics; and compact cryogenics science and engineering. The Division manages a state-of-the-art device and circuit nano- and microfabrication facility for use in the research of multiple NIST Boulder divisions. The contact person for this division is Robert Hickernell and he may be reached at (303) 497-3455 or by e-mail at robert.hickernell@nist.gov.
- j. Time and Frequency Division.** The primary objective is to collaborate with or conduct research consistent with the division's basic and applied research programs in the areas of time and frequency standards, phase noise measurements, network synchronization, ion storage, quantum information, optical atomic standards and frequency measurements in support of future

standards, optical frequency combs, chip-scale atomic clocks, magnetometers and related devices, time and frequency dissemination services, and time and frequency applications such as navigational systems and telecommunications. The contact person for this division is Elizabeth Donley and she may be reached at (303) 497-5173 or by e-mail at elizabeth.donley@nist.gov.

- k. **Quantum Physics Division.** The primary objective is to collaborate with or conduct research consistent with the division's basic and applied research programs in the areas of quantum information science and technology, quantum-based precision measurements, quantum degenerate gases of atoms and molecules, chemical physics, and biophysics. The contact person for this division is Andrew Wilson and he may be reached at (303) 492-6807 or by e-mail at andrew.wilson@nist.gov.

11. Special Programs Office (SPO) Grant Program

The statutory authority for the SPO Grant Program is 15 U.S.C. § 272(b) and (c), 15 U.S.C. § 278g-1(e)(1) and (e)(3).

Program Description: The SPO Grant Program provides financial assistance to support the conduct of research or a recipient's portion of collaborative research consistent with the SPO mission for special programs in broad areas of critical national need and in response to federal mandates that cut across NIST's scientific and technical mission focused laboratory programs such as forensic science research, foundation studies, and standards; greenhouse gas measurements research and standards; and open data programs. Additional information about the SPO and SPO Programs may be obtained at <https://www.nist.gov/special-programs-office-spo>.

All applications submitted to the SPO Grant Program must be in accordance with the program objectives listed below. The appropriate SPO Program Manager for each SPO field of research described in this section may be contacted for clarification of the program objectives. The contact person for the SPO Grant Program is Darlene Hamilton and she may be reached at (301) 975-2227 or by e-mail at darlene.hamilton@nist.gov.

- a. **Special Programs Office.** Financial support may be provided to attend education and outreach programs, conferences, workshops, or other technical research meetings that are relevant to the mission of the SPO. Financial support may be provided for conferences, workshops, or other technical research meetings that are relevant to the mission of SPO. However, NIST cannot be an official sponsor or co-sponsor for any event funded through this program. The contact person for this office is Darlene

Hamilton and she may be reached at (301) 975-2227 or by e-mail at darlene.hamilton@nist.gov.

b. Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Measurements Research and Standards

Program. The primary objective of this program is to support measurement science research to develop or extend internationally-recognized greenhouse gas measurement standards, methodologies, and technologies. Advanced capabilities improve accuracy of science-based GHG emissions data to advance both GHG emissions quantification and Earth system radiometric observing capability. Specific areas of interest include advances to increase accuracy and confidence in GHG emissions flux quantification for both GHG sources and sinks. Areas of interest include: 1) stationary GHG emission sources, 2) measurement tools to better characterize GHG emissions and uptake fluxes in metropolitan and urban areas, 3) remote sensing of Earth systems and GHG concentrations, 4) combination of GHG emissions modelling methods with advanced atmospheric observing and emission process-oriented methodologies at local and regional scales, and 5) measurement capabilities that further understanding of GHG transport in the lower atmosphere. Additional information about the SPO GHG Research and Standards Program may be obtained at <http://www.nist.gov/greenhouse-gas/index.cfm>. The contact person for this program is James Whetstone and he may be reached at (301) 975-2738 or by e-mail at james.whetstone@nist.gov.

c. Forensic Science Research and Foundational Studies Program. The primary objective of this program is to conduct and coordinate forensic science research and foundational studies and to provide technical services to address the needs of the forensic science community. The program focuses on creating new materials standards; verifying methodology; and evaluating new technologies for forensic science disciplines including the following: digital evidence, forensic genetics, biometrics, firearms and toolmarks, drugs and toxins, statistics, and trace analysis. The program also facilitates knowledge exchange and identifies best practices for the forensic science community. Additional information about the SPO Forensic Science Research and Foundational Studies Program is available at <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science>. The contact person for this program is Robert Ramotowski and he may be reached at (301) 975-4772 or by e-mail at robert.ramotowski@nist.gov.

d. Forensic Science Standards Program. The primary objective of this program is to strengthen the nation's use of forensic science by facilitating the development and use of technically sound standards and guidelines and promoting their adoption and use throughout the forensic science community, especially by forensic science practitioners and other forensic science service

providers. NIST leverages the voluntary consensus process to generate technical standards for the forensic science community through the Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science. OSAC achieves this by coordinating the development of technically sound forensic science standards through the U.S. standards system and by enabling participation from state, local and federal government, academic institutions and private sector organizations.

This program supports interlaboratory comparisons, forensic science discipline-specific process maps, forensic science standards-related training materials, work products that enable more rapid implementation of standards listed on the OSAC Registry, and workshops to address specific forensic science standards gaps. Additional information about the SPO Forensic Science Standards Program is available at <https://www.nist.gov/topics/organization-scientific-area-committees-forensic-science>. The contact person for this program is John Paul Jones II and he may be reached at (301) 975-2782 or by e-mail at john.jones@nist.gov.

- e. **Open Data Program.** The primary objective of this program is to facilitate the development and integration of advanced data science and engineering methods across the data lifecycle in areas including data management, data sharing, data interoperability, and data analytics. Additional information about the Open Data Program is available at <https://www.nist.gov/open>. The contact person for this program is Katherine Sharpless, and she may be reached at (301) 975-3121 or by e-mail at katherine.sharpless@nist.gov.

12. Standards Coordination Office (SCO) Grant Program

The statutory authority for the SCO Grant Program is 15 U.S.C. § 272(b) and (c) and 15 U.S.C. § 278g-1(e)(1) and (e)(3).

Program Description: The SCO conducts standards-related programs and provides knowledge and services that strengthen the U.S. economy and improve the quality of life. The SCO goals include enhancing coordination of the U.S. standards system with government and private sector organizations and supporting U.S. industry with the standards-related tools and information necessary to effectively compete in the global marketplace. The SCO manages NIST's responsibilities assigned under the National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act (NTTAA) to coordinate federal, state, and local technical standards and conformity assessment activities, as well as coordinating with those in the private sector.

The SCO Grant Program provides financial assistance to support the conduct of research or a recipient's portion of collaborative research consistent with the

NIST mission in the broad areas of standards-related activities, coordination activities with the private sector and with other federal agencies on standards activities and programs, and standards development and conformity assessment activities tailored to equip U.S. industry with the standards-related tools and information necessary to effectively compete in the global marketplace. Financial support may be provided for the development of standards-related training materials, publications, policy analysis, and research and information services. Financial support may be provided for students to attend education and outreach programs, conferences, workshops, or other standards-related meetings that are relevant to the mission of the SCO. Financial support may also be provided to organizations sponsoring conferences, workshops, education and outreach programs, or other technical events that are relevant to the mission of the SCO. However, NIST cannot be an official sponsor or co-sponsor for any event funded through this program. Additional information about the SCO and SCO Programs may be obtained at <http://nist.gov/director/sco/index.cfm>.

All applications submitted to the SCO Grant Program must be in accordance with the program objectives listed above. The contact person for the SCO Grant Program, who may be contacted for clarification of the program objectives, is Kerry Miles and she may be reached at (301) 975-5571 or by e-mail at kerry.miles@nist.gov.

II. Federal Award Information

- 1. Funding Instrument.** The funding instruments used in these programs will be grants or cooperative agreements, as appropriate. Where cooperative agreements are used, the nature of NIST's "substantial involvement" will generally include collaboration with the recipient in executing the approved scope of work, in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.1.
- 2. Multi-Year Funding Policy.** When an application for a multi-year award is approved, funding will usually be provided for only the first year of the project. If a project is selected for funding, NIST has no obligation to provide any additional funding in connection with that award. Continuation of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the sole discretion of NIST. Continued funding will be contingent upon satisfactory performance, continued relevance to the mission and priorities of the individual MSE research grant programs, and the availability of funds.
- 3. Funding Availability.** The availability of funds depends upon actual authorization of funds, programmatic needs, and other costs expected to be incurred by individual divisions within each laboratory, center, or office. If funds are identified as available for financial assistance, those funds may be awarded to highly ranked applications as determined by the applicable

program's review and selection process (see Section V.2. of this NOFO).

- a. **Associate Director for Innovation and Industry Services (ADIIS) Grant Program.** In 2021, the ADIIS anticipates funding individual projects in the \$5,000 - \$500,000 per year range and with project performance periods of up to 5 years, consistent with the multi-year funding policy (see Section II.2. of the NOFO).
- b. **Associate Director for Laboratory Programs (ADLP) Grant Program.** In FY 2021, the ADLP anticipates funding individual projects in the \$5,000 - \$5,000,000 per year range and with project performance periods of up to five (5) years, consistent with the multi-year funding policy (see Section II.2. of this NOFO).
- c. **Communications Technology Laboratory (CTL) Grant Program.** In FY 2021, the CTL anticipates funding individual projects in the \$3,000 - \$2,500,000 per year range and with project performance periods for up to five (5) years, consistent with the multi-year funding policy (see Section II.2. of this NOFO).
- d. **Engineering Laboratory (EL) Grant Program.** In FY 2021, the EL anticipates funding individual projects in the \$5,000 - \$500,000 per year range and with project performance periods of up to five (5) years, consistent with the multi-year funding policy (see Section II.2. of this NOFO).
- e. **Fire Research (FR) Grant Program.** In FY 2021, the FR Grant Program anticipates funding individual projects in the \$100,000 per year range and with project performance periods of up to three (3) years, consistent with the multi-year funding policies (see Section II.2. of this NOFO).
- f. **Information Technology Laboratory (ITL) Grant Program.** In FY 2021, the ITL anticipates funding individual projects in the \$10,000 - \$500,000 per year range and with project performance periods of up to five (5) years, consistent with the multi-year funding policy (see Section II.2. of this NOFO).
- g. **International and Academic Affairs Office (IAAO) Grant Program.** In FY 2021, the IAAO anticipates funding individual projects in the \$50,000 - \$200,000 per year range and with project performance periods of up to five (5) years, consistent with the multi-year funding policy (see Section II.2. of this NOFO).
- h. **Material Measurement Laboratory (MML) Grant Program.** In FY 2021,

the MML anticipates funding individual projects in the \$5,000 - \$12,000,000 per year range and with project performance periods of up to five (5) years, consistent with the multi-year funding policy (see Section II.2. of this NOFO).

- i. **NIST Center for Neutron Research (NCNR) Grant Program.** In FY 2021, the NCNR anticipates funding new, individual projects in the \$10,000 - \$100,000 per year range and with project performance periods of up to five (5) years, consistent with the multi-year funding policy (see Section II.2. of this NOFO).
- j. **Physical Measurement Laboratory (PML) Grant Program.** In FY 2021, the PML anticipates funding individual projects in the \$5,000 – \$250,000 per year range and with project performance periods of up to five (5) years, consistent with the multi-year funding policy (see Section II.2. of this NOFO).
- k. **Special Programs Office (SPO) Grant Program.** In FY 2021, the SPO anticipates funding individual projects in the \$5,000 - \$2,000,000 per year range with project performance periods of up to five (5) years, consistent with the multi-year funding policy (see Section II.2. of this NOFO).
- l. **Standards Coordination Office (SCO) Grant Program.** In FY 2021, the SCO anticipates funding individual projects in the \$5,000 - \$100,000 per year range and with project performance periods of up to three (3) years, consistent with the multi-year funding policy consistent with the multi-year funding policy (see Section II.2. of the NOFO).

III. Eligibility Information

- 1. **Eligible Applicants.** Eligibility for all programs listed in this NOFO is open to all non-Federal entities. Eligible applicants include institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, state and local governments, Indian tribes, hospitals, foreign public entities, and foreign governments. Please note that individuals and unincorporated sole proprietors are not considered “non-Federal entities” and are not eligible to apply under this NOFO.
- 2. **Cost Sharing or Matching.** The MSE research grant programs do not require cost sharing.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package.

The application package is available at www.grants.gov under Funding Opportunity Number 2021-NIST-MSE-01.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission for all programs listed in this NOFO.

a. Required Forms and Documents

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

For SF-424 (R&R), Items 5, 14, and 19, use the Zip Code + 4 format (#####-####) when addresses are called for.

For SF-424 (R&R), Item 17, the list of certifications and assurances is contained in the SF-424B (item 3 below).

SF-424 (R&R), Item 18. If the SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form (item (6) below) is applicable, attach it to field 18.

Instructions for filling in the SF-424 (R&R) can be found on Grants.gov, as well as in the NIST Grants Management Division [SF-424 Research & Related \(R&R\) Application Package Guidance](#).

(2) Research & Related Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed). The budget should reflect anticipated expenses for the full term of the project, considering all potential cost increases, including cost of living adjustments.

The budget should be detailed in these categories:

- A. Senior/Key Person;
- B. Other Personnel;
- C. Equipment Description;
- D. Travel;
- E. Participant/Trainee Support Costs;
- F. Other Direct Costs;
- G. Direct Costs (automatically generated);
- H. Indirect Costs;
- I. Total Direct and Indirect Costs (automatically generated);
- J. Fee (not relevant to this competition);
- K. Total Costs and Fee (automatically generated);

L. Budget Narrative and Justification document (item (9) below) should be attached to field L.

A separate detailed R&R Budget must be completed for each budget period during the proposed award (e.g. annual basis). To add additional budget periods (e.g. year 2), click “Add Period” embedded at the end of the form. Instructions for completing the Research & Related Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) form can be found on Grants.gov, as well as in the NIST Grants Management Division [SF-424 Research & Related \(R&R\) Application Package Guidance](#).

- (3) SF-424B, Assurances – Non-Construction Programs.** 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. 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.
- (4) CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying.** Enter “2021-NIST-MSE-01” in the Award Number field. Enter the title of the application, or an abbreviation of that title, in the Project Name field.
- (5) Research and Related Other Project Information.** Answer the highlighted questions and use this form to attach the Project Narrative (item (7) below), Resume(s) or CV(s) (item (8) below) the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (item (10) below), the Data Management Plan (item (11) below), and the Current and Pending Support Form (item (13) below). Instructions for completing the Research and Related Other Project Information can be found in [the Grants.gov R&R Forms Repository](#) by scrolling down to Research And Related Other Project Information and clicking the Instructions link, as well as in the NIST Grants Management Division [SF-424 Research & Related \(R&R\) Application Package Guidance](#).

Please note that the Project Summary/Abstract is not relevant to this competition. However, Grants.gov requires an attachment to field 7 of the Research and Related Other Project Information form to successfully pass through Grants.gov. Please attach a document to field 7 stating, “A Project Summary/Abstract is not relevant to this competition”.

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

(7) Project Narrative. The Project Narrative is a word-processed document responsive to the applicable program description(s) (see Section I. of this NOFO) and the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1. of this NOFO).

This document is **limited to twenty-five (25) pages** and must consist of two parts: the **Cover Page** and the **Project Narrative** itself. The page limit includes: Cover Page; Table of Contents (if included); Project Narrative with all required information, including figures, graphs, tables, images, and pictures.

A. The Cover Page must consist of three (3) elements:

- I) The name and address of the applicant institution, and the name, address, and contact information for the application's Principal Investigator;
- II) The specific component MSE research grant program to which the application is being submitted, using the following choices:
 - a. the Associate Director for Innovation and Industry Services (ADIIS);
 - b. the Associate Director for Laboratory Programs (ADLP);
 - c. the Communications Technology Laboratory (CTL);
 - d. the Engineering Laboratory (EL);
 - e. Fire Research (FR);
 - f. the Information Technology Laboratory (ITL);
 - g. the International and Academic Affairs Office (IAAO);
 - h. the Material Measurement Laboratory (MML);
 - i. the NIST Center for Neutron Research (NCNR);
 - j. the Physical Measurement Laboratory (PML);
 - k. the Special Programs Office (SPO); and
 - l. the Standards Coordination Office (SCO).

Any applicant that does not wish its application to be considered by other NIST programs should indicate on its application that it would like consideration of the project to be limited to the program specified on the application.

III) Statement of Relevance and Benefit to the General Public

Using no more than two or three sentences, describe the relevance and benefit of the research proposed in this application to the public. This statement should be succinct and use plain language that can be understood by a general, lay audience.

B. The Project Narrative

The **Project Narrative** should describe in depth the scope of the proposal, its goals, the methods and equipment to be used, its schedule, the personnel working on the project and their qualifications, and the institutional capabilities of the applicant.

(8) Resume(s) or CV(s). Resumes are required for all key personnel, including the principal investigator. Resumes are limited to two (2) pages per individual.

(9) Budget Narrative and Justification. There is no set format for the Budget Narrative and Justification; however, the written justification should include the necessity and the basis for the cost, as described below. 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://www.gpo.gov/SBYh) (<http://go.usa.gov/SBYh>), which apply to awards in this program.

Information needed for each budget category is as follows (categories not listed are automatically generated by the form or are not relevant to this competition):

A. Senior/Key Person – At a minimum, the budget justification should include the following: name, 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 direct charges on the proposed project, description of the role of the individual on the proposed project and the work to be performed.

Fringe benefits 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.

B. Other Personnel - Data is requested at the project role level, and not at the individual level for Other Personnel. The budget justification 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 direct charges on the proposed project, description of the role of the position on the proposed project and the work to be performed.

Fringe benefits 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. Equipment Description – Equipment is defined as an item of property that has an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more (unless the organization has established lower levels) and an expected service life of more than one year. The budget justification should list each piece of 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. Any items that do not meet the threshold for equipment can be included under the Materials and Supplies line item in Section F, Other Direct Costs.

D. Travel - For all travel costs, required by the recipient to complete the project, including attendance at any relevant conferences, 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.

E. Participant/Trainee Support Costs - Participant support costs are stipends, subsistence allowances, travel, and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees, who are not employees of your organization, for conferences or training projects. The budget justification should indicate the names or number of participants or trainees, a description and calculation of costs per person, a description and date of the event, and a description of why the cost is necessary for the successful completion of the proposed project.

F. 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.

Each subaward or contractual cost or should be treated as a separate item in the Other Direct Costs category. 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 goods and services. Subawardees perform part of the project scope of work. For each subaward, applicants must provide budget detail justifying the cost of the work performed on the project.

H. Indirect Costs - Commonly referred to as Facilities & Administrative Costs, Indirect Costs are defined as costs incurred by the applicant organization that cannot otherwise be directly assigned or attributed to a specific project. For more details, see Section IV.2.a.(10) of this NOFO.

(10) 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 the [Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions](#), dated November 12, 2020.

Alternatively, in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f), applicants that do not have a current negotiated (including provisional) indirect cost rate except for those non-Federal entities described in [appendix VII, paragraph D.1.b.](#) of 2 CFR 200 may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (MTDC). 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. Please be aware that Foreign applicants will be limited to use of the de minimis rate and will not have the opportunity to negotiate an indirect cost rate with NIST.

(11) Data Management Plan. Consistent with NIST Policy 5700.00⁵, *Managing Public Access to Results of Federally Funded Research*, and NIST Order 5701.00⁶, *Managing Public Access to Results of Federally Funded*

⁵ https://www.nist.gov/system/files/documents/2018/06/19/final_p_5700.pdf

⁶ https://www.nist.gov/system/files/documents/2019/11/08/final_o_5701_ver_2.pdf

Research, applicants proposing projects that include the conduct of research must include a Data Management Plan (DMP).

All applications for activities that will generate scientific data using NIST funding are required to adhere to a DMP or explain why data sharing and/or preservation are not within the scope of the project. For the purposes of the DMP, NIST adopted the definition of “research data” at 2 C.F.R. § 200.315(e)(3).

The DMP must include, at a minimum, a summary of proposed activities that are expected to generate data; a summary of the types of data expected to be generated by the identified activities; a plan for storage and maintenance of the data expected to be generated by the identified activities, including after the end of the award’s period of performance; and a plan describing whether and how data generated by the identified activities will be reviewed and made available to the public

A template for the DMP, an example DMP, and the rubric against which the DMP will be evaluated for sufficiency is available at <https://www.nist.gov/open/information-awardees>. An applicant is not required to use the template as long as the DMP contains the required information.

If an application stands a reasonable chance of being funded and the DMP is determined during the review process to be insufficient, the program office may reach out to the applicant to resolve deficiencies in the DMP. If an award is issued prior to the deficiencies being fully rectified, the award will include a Specific Award Condition (SAC) stating that no research activities shall be initiated or costs incurred for those activities under the award until the NIST Grants Officer amends the award to indicate the SAC has been satisfied.

Reasonable costs for data preservation and access may be included in the application.

- (12) Subaward Budget Form.** The Research & Related Subaward Budget Attachment Form is required if sub-recipients and contractors are included in the application budget. Instructions for completing subaward budget forms are found at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/r-r-family.html>.
- (13) 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 and reference the guidance provided as it contains information to assist with accurately completing the form.

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.

Item IV.2.a.(6), the SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form, is an optional application form which is part of the standard application package in Grants.gov. If item IV.2.a.(6), the SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form is applicable to this proposal, attach it to field 18 of the SF-424 (R&R), Application for Federal Assistance.

Item IV.2.a.(7), the Project Narrative, should be attached to field 8 (Project Narrative) of the Research and Related Other Project Information form by clicking on “Add Attachment”.

Item IV.2.a.(8), Resume(s) or CV(s), should be attached by clicking on “Add Attachments” found in item 12 (Other Attachments) of the Research and Related Other Project Information form.

Item IV.2.a.(9), the Budget Narrative and Justification, should be attached to field L (Budget Justification) of the Research and Related Budget (Total Fed + Total Non-Fed) form by clicking on “Add Attachment”.

Items IV.2.a.(10), the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement; IV.2.a.(11), the Data Management Plan; and IV.2.a.(13), the Current and Pending Support Form,

must be completed and attached by clicking on “Add Attachments” found in item 12 (Other Attachments) of the Research and Related Other Project Information form.

Item IV.2.a.(12), the Subaward Budget Form(s), if applicable to the submission, should be attached to the Research & Related Subaward Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) Attachment(s) Form in the application package.

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 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 using Grants.gov 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 to check that their application’s required attachments were contained in their submission.

After submitting the application, follow the directions found in the [Grants.gov Online Help](#). 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.

Applicants utilizing System 2 System (S2S) interfaces to submit their application to Grants.gov should contact the S2S vendor or Grants.gov Help Desk if they encounter submission challenges. If the information found at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/s2s/applicant/troubleshooting.html> is 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](#). 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) E-mail 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 landscape orientation.
- (3) Font.** Easy to read font (10-point minimum). Smaller type may be used in figures, margins, and tables but must be clearly legible.
- (4) Page Limit.** The Project Narrative for Applications is limited to twenty-five (25) pages:

Page limit includes: Cover Page, Table of contents (if included), Project Narrative with all required information, including figures, graphs, tables, images, and pictures.

Page limit excludes: SF-424 (R&R) Application for Federal Assistance; SF-424B Assurances – Non-Construction Programs; SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities; CD-511 Certification Regarding Lobbying; Resume(s) or CV(s); Budget Narrative; Indirect Cost Rate Agreement; Data Management Plan; and Current and Pending Support Form.

- (5) Page layout.** The Project Narrative must be in portrait orientation.
- (6) Page size.** 21.6 centimeters by 27.9 centimeters (8 ½ inches by 11 inches).
- (7) Page numbering.** Number pages sequentially.
- (8) Application Language.** 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.

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.

NIST is not accepting pre-applications or white papers 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).

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. When developing your submission timeline, please keep in mind that (1) all applicants are required to have current registrations in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) and Grants.gov; (2) the free annual registration process in the electronic System for Award Management (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 three weeks; and (3) applicants will receive email 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 <http://www.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.

Applicants will find instructions on registering with SAM.gov as part of the Grants.gov process at: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>.

All NIST MSE Research Grant Programs. Applications will be considered on a continuing/rolling basis as they are received.

To ensure consideration in the Fiscal Year 2021, applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on May 31, 2021. Applications received after this deadline may be processed and considered for funding in Fiscal Year 2021 or in the next fiscal year, subject to the availability of funds.

All applications submitted to the 2021-NIST-MSE-01 Research Grant Programs NOFO, must be received prior to the posting of the next NIST MSE Research Grant Programs NOFO on Grants.gov in order to be processed under this NOFO.

5. **Intergovernmental Review.** Applications under all programs in this NOFO are not subject to Executive Order 12372.
6. **Funding Restrictions.** Applications for product development and/or commercialization are not considered responsive to this NOFO.
7. **Other Submission Requirements for all programs listed in this NOFO.**
 - a. **Applications must be submitted electronically.**
 - (1) Applications must be submitted at www.grants.gov, under announcement 2021-NIST-MSE-01.
 - (a) Applicants 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 an application is received does not provide information about whether attachments have been received. For further information or questions regarding applying electronically for the 2021-NIST-MSE-01 announcement, contact Misty Roosa by phone at 301-975-3007 or by e-mail at grants@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. The registration process takes three (3) to five (5)

business days. If there are issues, the registration process can take up to two (2) weeks or more. Applicants must have a 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. See also 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 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, 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, you may also contact support@grants.gov.

- (c) To find instructions on submitting an application on Grants.gov, Applicants should refer to the "Applicants" tab in the banner just below the top of the www.grants.gov home page. Clicking on the "Applicants" tab produces two exceptionally useful sources of information, Grant Applications 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. Closely following the detailed information in these subcategories will increase the likelihood of acceptance of the application by the Federal agency's electronic system.

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

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 know whether the application was rejected with errors and the reasons why, 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 your 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 your application is received on time.

- b. **Amendments.** Any amendments to this NOFO will be announced through Grants.gov. Applicants may sign up for Grants.gov NOFO amendments or may request copies from the programmatic and technical questions contact for the appropriate program (see Section VII. of this NOFO).

V. Application Review Information

1. Evaluation Criteria

- a. **Associate Director for Innovation and Industry Services (ADIIS) Grant Program.** The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating applications considered by the ADIIS Grant Program and assigned weights are as follows:
 - (1) **Rationality.** The rationality, innovation and creativity of the application and the fit of the proposed work to the objectives of the ADIIS Grant Program (see Section I.1. of this NOFO). **(0 - 30 points)**
 - (2) **Technical Merit of Contribution.** The potential effectiveness of the proposed activity, and the likelihood and potential impact of the applicant's approach to strengthen and enhance the mission of the ADIIS Grant Program. **(0 - 30 points)**
 - (3) **Staff and Institution Capability to Perform the Work.** The quality of the facilities and experience of the staff to assess the likelihood of achieving the objective of the application. **(0 – 25 points)**
 - (4) **Match of Budget to Proposed Work.** Assessment of the budget against the proposed work to ascertain the reasonableness of the request. **(0 – 15 points)**

b. Associate Director for Laboratory Programs (ADLP) Grant Program. The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating applications considered by the ADLP Grant Program and assigned weights are as follows:

(1) Rationality. The rationality, innovation and creativity of the application and the fit of the proposed work to the objectives of the ADLP Grant Program (see Section I.2. of this NOFO). **(0 – 35 points)**

(2) Technical Merit of Contribution. The potential effectiveness of the proposed activity, and the likelihood and potential impact of the applicant's approach to strengthen and enhance the mission of the ADLP Grant Program. **(0 – 25 points)**

(3) Staff and Institutional Capability to Perform the Work. The quality of facilities and experience of the staff to assess the likelihood of achieving the objective of the proposed work. **(0 – 20 points)**

(4) Match of Budget to Proposed Work. Assessment of the budget compared to the proposed work to ascertain the reasonableness of the request. **(0 – 20 points)**

c. Communications Technology Laboratory (CTL) Grant Program. The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating applications considered by the CTL Grant Program and assigned weights are as follows:

(1) Rationality. The coherence of the applicant's approach and the extent to which the application effectively addresses scientific and technical issues that are relevant to CTL programs. (see Section I.3. of this NOFO). **(0 - 25 points)**

(2) Technical Merit of Contribution. The potential technical effectiveness of the proposed work and the value it would contribute to the field of measurement science and engineering, especially as it pertains to reference methods, reference materials and reference data in communications technology. **(0 – 25 points)**

(3) Qualifications of Technical Personnel. The professional accomplishments, skills, and training of the proposed personnel to perform the work proposed in the application. **(0 – 25 points)**

(4) Resources. The extent to which the applicant has access to the necessary facilities and overall support to accomplish project objectives, and assessment of the budget against the proposed work to ascertain the reasonableness of the request. **(0 – 25 points)**

d. Engineering Laboratory (EL) Grant Program. The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating applications considered by the EL Grant Program and assigned weights are as follows:

(1) Technical Quality of the Research. The clarity, rationality, organization, innovation and imagination of the application. **(0 – 35 points)**

(2) Potential Impact of the Results. The potential impact and the likelihood of achieving technical application of the results, and the degree of alignment with NIST's EL programs (see Section I.4. of this NOFO). **(0 – 35 points)**

(3) Staff and Institution Capability to Perform the Work. The quality of the facilities and experience of the staff to assess and overcome barriers to successfully achieve the objective of the application. **(0 – 15 points)**

(4) Match of Budget to Proposed Work. Assessment of the budget compared to the proposed work to ascertain the reasonableness of the request. **(0 – 15 points)**

e. Fire Research (FR) Grant Program. The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating applications considered by the FR Grant Program and assigned weights are as follows:

(1) Technical Quality of the Research. The clarity, rationality, organization, innovation, and imagination of the proposed work. **(0 - 35 points)**

(2) Potential Impact of the Results. The potential impact and the likelihood of the technical application of the results and the degree of alignment with NIST EL's Fire Research Program (see Section I.5. of this NOFO). **(0 - 35 points)**

(3) Staff and Institution Capability to Perform the Work. The quality of the facilities and experience of the staff to assess and overcome barriers to successfully achieve the objective of the application. **(0 - 15 points)**

(4) Match of Budget to Proposed Work. Assessment of the budget compared to the proposed work to ascertain the reasonableness of the request. **(0 - 15 points)**

f. **Information Technology Laboratory (ITL) Grant Program.** The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating applications considered by the ITL Grant Program and assigned weights are as follows, for a total maximum of 30 points:

(1) Technical Quality and Intellectual Merit. The extent to which the proposed activities are innovative, original, or potentially transformative; whether the research plan is well-reasoned, well-organized and based on a sound rationale; and whether the plan incorporates a reasonable mechanism to assess success. **(0 - 10 points)**

(2) Potential Impact of the Results. The probability of achieving technical application of the results and the likelihood for the project to exert a sustained, powerful influence on the research field(s) involved. The extent to which the applicants approach aligns with ITL's programs and mission (See Section I.6. of this NOFO). **(0 - 10 points)**

(3) Capability to Perform the Work. The extent to which the applicant organization, any proposed partner organizations, and key personnel, have the qualifications (e.g., training, experience, accomplishments) and resources (e.g., facilities, equipment) needed to support the proposed project and successfully achieve the stated objectives. **(0 - 5 points)**

(4) Match of Budget to Proposed Work. Assessment of the budget compared to the proposed work to ascertain the reasonableness of the request. **(0 - 5 points)**

g. **International and Academic Affairs Office (IAAO) Grant Program.** The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating applications considered by the IAAO Grant Program are as follows:

(1) Rationality. The rationality, innovation and creativity of the application and the fit of the proposed work to the objectives of the IAAO Grant Program (see Section I.7. of this NOFO).

(2) Technical Merit of Contribution. The potential effectiveness of the proposed activity, its value to global metrology and quality infrastructure, and the likelihood and potential impact of the applicant's technical application of the proposed activity.

(3) Staff and Institutional Capability. The quality of facilities and experience of the staff to assess the likelihood of achieving the objective of the proposed work.

- (4) Match of Budget to Proposed Work.** Assessment of the budget compared to the proposed work to ascertain the reasonableness of the request.

Each of these factors will be given equal weight in the evaluation process.

- h. Material Measurement Laboratory (MML) Grant Program.** The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating applications considered by the MML Grant Program are as follows:

- (1) Rationality.** The coherence of the applicant's approach and the extent to which the application effectively addresses scientific and technical issues that are relevant to MML programs (see Section I.8. of this NOFO). **(0 – 25 points)**

- (2) Qualifications of Technical Personnel.** The professional accomplishments, skills, and training of the proposed personnel to perform the work proposed in the application. **(0 – 25 points)**

- (3) Resources.** The extent to which the applicant has access to the necessary facilities and overall support to accomplish project objectives, and assessment of the budget against the proposed work to ascertain the reasonableness of the request. **(0 – 25 points)**

- (4) Technical Merit of Contribution.** The potential technical effectiveness of the proposed work and the value it would contribute to the field of measurement science and engineering, especially as it pertains to reference methods, reference materials and reference data in Material Measurements. **(0 – 25 points)**

- i. NIST Center for Neutron Research (NCNR) Grant Program.** The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating applications considered by the NCNR Grant Program and assigned weights are as follows:

- (1) Rationality.** The innovation, rationality, and coherence of the applicant's approach and the extent to which the application effectively addresses important scientific and technical issues using neutron methods and/or the development of innovative devices for neutron research (see Section I.9 of this NOFO). **(0 - 35 points)**

- (2) Technical Merit of Contribution.** The potential technical effectiveness of the proposed work and the value it would contribute to neutron research. **(0 - 25 points)**

(3) Staff and Institutional Capability to Perform the Work. The extent to which the applicant organization and key personnel have the skills, qualifications (e.g., training, experience, professional accomplishments) and resources (e.g., facilities, equipment) needed to support the proposed project, perform the work proposed in the application and accomplish the stated project objectives. **(0 - 25 points)**

(4) Match of Budget to Proposed Work. Assessment of the budget against the proposed work to ascertain the reasonableness of the request. **(0 - 15 points)**

j. Physical Measurement Laboratory (PML) Grant Program.

(1) The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating applications considered by the PML Grant Program, except for applications to the Office of Weights and Measures (see Section V.1.j.(2) of this NOFO) are as follows:

(a) Rationality. The coherence of the applicant's approach and the extent to which the application effectively addresses scientific and technical issues that are relevant to PML programs (see Sections I.10.a. and I.10.c. through I.10.k. of this NOFO).

(b) Qualifications of Technical Personnel. The professional accomplishments, skills, and training of the proposed personnel to perform the work proposed in the application.

(c) Resources. The extent to which the applicant has access to the necessary facilities and overall support to accomplish project objectives, and assessment of the budget against the proposed work to ascertain the reasonableness of the request.

(d) Technical Merit of Contribution. The potential technical effectiveness of the proposed work and the value it would contribute to the field of measurement science. Applications must be relevant to current PML research programs and have a relation to the objectives of ongoing PML programs and activities.

Each of these factors will be given equal weight in the evaluation process.

(2) The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating applications considered by the **Office of Weights and Measures** and assigned

weights are as follows:

- (a) Technical Quality of the Research.** The rationality, innovation and imagination of the application and the alignment with NIST's documentary standards and legal metrology programs (see Section I.10.b. of this NOFO). **(0 – 35 points)**
 - (b) Potential Impact of the Results.** The potential impact and the technical application of the results to documentary standards and legal metrology communities. **(0 – 25 points)**
 - (c) Staff and Institution Capability to Perform the Work.** The quality of the facilities and experience of the staff to assess the likelihood of achieving the objective of the application. **(0 – 20 points)**
 - (d) Match of Budget to Proposed Work.** Assessment of the budget against the proposed work to ascertain the reasonableness of the request. **(0 – 20 points)**
- k. Special Programs Office (SPO) Grant Program.** The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating applications considered by the SPO Grant Program are as follows:
- (1) Rationality.** The logic and soundness of the applicant's approach and the extent to which the successful completion of the proposed work addresses scientific and technical issues relevant to SPO programs (see Section I.11. of this NOFO).
 - (2) Technical Merit of Contribution.** The potential technical effectiveness of the proposed work and the value it would contribute to the fields of science relevant to the SPO.
 - (3) Qualifications of Technical Personnel.** The professional accomplishments, skills, and training of the proposed personnel to perform the work proposed in the application.
 - (4) Resources.** The extent to which the applicant has access to the necessary equipment and facilities and overall support to accomplish project objectives, and assessment of the budget against the proposed work to ascertain the reasonableness of the request.

Each of these factors will be given equal weight in the evaluation process.

- I. Standards Coordination Office (SCO) Grant Program.** The evaluation

criteria that will be used in evaluating applications considered by the SCO Grant Program and assigned weights are as follows:

- (1) Rationality.** The coherence of the applicant's approach and the extent to which the application effectively addresses scientific and technical issues relevant to the SCO mission (see Section I.12. of this NOFO). **(0 – 30 points)**
- (2) Technical Merit of Contribution.** The potential technical effectiveness of the proposed work and the value it would contribute to the field of standardization. **(0 – 30 points)**
- (3) Qualifications of Technical Personnel.** The professional accomplishments, skills, and training of the proposed personnel to perform the proposed work. **(0 – 20 points)**
- (4) Use of Funds and Cost-effectiveness.** An assessment of the budget against the proposed activities will be conducted to determine the reasonableness of the request. **(0 – 20 points)**

2. 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, Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel who have entered into confidentiality and conflict of interest agreements covering such information, when applicable.

a. Initial Screening of all NIST MSE Research Grant Program Applications.

All applications received in response to this NOFO will be assigned to the program designated on the cover page of the Project Narrative and reviewed as received on a rolling basis to determine whether they are eligible, complete, and responsive to this NOFO and aligned with the respective program objectives and research grant areas as described in the Program Description (see Section I. of this NOFO).

Applications determined to be ineligible, incomplete, and/or non-responsive based on the initial screening will 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 that can easily be rectified or cured during the review process.

b. Full Review of Eligible, Complete, and Responsive Applications for all NIST MSE Research Grant Applications. All applications that are

determined to be eligible, complete, and responsive will proceed for full reviews in accordance with the review and selection processes set forth below for each of the respective programs.

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. For international applications, NIST will follow applicable U.S. laws and policies. 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 particular application. In some cases, NIST may ask applicants to consider combining projects. 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.

(1) Associate Director for Innovation and Industry Services (ADIIS) Grant Program

At least three (3) objective individuals knowledgeable about the particular scientific area described in the application will review the merits of each application, based on the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1.a. of this NOFO). The reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus.

The Selecting Official, who is the Associate Director for Innovation and Industry Services, or designee, will make final application selections, taking into consideration the results of the reviewers' evaluations, relevance to the objectives described in the ADIIS Grant Program Description (see Section I.1. of this NOFO), and the availability of funds.

(2) Associate Director for Laboratory Programs (ADLP) Grant Program

At least three (3) objective individuals knowledgeable about the particular scientific area described in the application will review the merits of each application, based on the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1.b. of this NOFO). The reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus.

The Selecting Official, who is the Associate Director for Laboratory Programs, or designee, will make final application selections, taking into consideration the results of the reviewers' evaluations, relevance to the objectives described in the ADLP Grant Program Description (see Section

I.2. of this NOFO), and the availability of funds.

(3) Communications Technology Laboratory (CTL) Grant Program

At least three (3) objective individuals knowledgeable about the particular scientific area described in the application will review the merits of each application, based on the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1.c. of this NOFO). The reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus.

The Selecting Official, who is the CTL Executive Officer, or designee, will make final application selections taking into consideration the results of the reviewers' evaluations, consultations with the appropriate CTL Division Chief, relevance to the objectives described in the CTL Grant Program Description (see Section I.3. of this NOFO), and the availability of funds.

(4) Engineering Laboratory (EL) Grant Program

At least three (3) objective individuals knowledgeable about the particular scientific area described in the application will review the merits of each application, based on the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1.d. of this NOFO). The reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus.

The Selecting Official, who is the EL Director, or designee, will make final application selections, taking into consideration the results of the reviewers' evaluations, relevance to the objectives described in the EL Grant Program Description (see Section I.4. of this NOFO), program balance, and the availability of funds.

(5) Fire Research (FR) Grant Program

Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact the group leaders listed in the FR Grant Program Description (see Section I.5. of this NOFO) to determine the responsiveness of the application and compliance with program objectives prior to preparation of an application to the FR Grant Program.

At least three (3) objective individuals knowledgeable about the particular scientific area described in the application will review the merits of each application, based on the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1.e. of this NOFO). The reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus.

The Selecting Official, who is the EL Director, or designee, will make final application selections, taking into consideration the results of the reviewers' evaluations, relevance to the objectives described in the EL Fire Research Program Description (see Section I.5. of this NOFO), program balance, and the availability of funds.

(6) Information Technology Laboratory (ITL) Grant Program

At least three (3) objective individuals knowledgeable about the particular scientific area described in the application will review the merits of each application, based on the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1.f. of this NOFO). The reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus.

The Selecting Official, who is the ITL Director, appropriate ITL Division Chief, or designee, will make final application selections, taking into consideration the results of the reviewers' evaluations, consultations with the ITL Director, or designee, relevance to the objectives described in the ITL Grant Program Description (see Section I.6. of this NOFO), and the availability of funds.

(7) International and Academic Affairs Office (IAAO) Grant Program

At least three (3) objective individuals knowledgeable about the particular area described in the application will review the merits of each application, based on the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1.g. of this NOFO). The reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus.

The Selecting Official, who is the IAAO Director, or designee, will make final application selections, taking into consideration the results of the reviewers' evaluations, relevance to the objectives described in the IAAO Grant Program Description (see Section I.7. of this NOFO), and the availability of funds.

(8) Material Measurement Laboratory (MML) Grant Program

At least three (3) objective individuals knowledgeable about the particular scientific area described in the application will review the merits of each application, based on the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1.h. of this NOFO). The reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus.

The Selecting Official, who is the MML Executive Officer, or designee, will

make final application selections taking into consideration the results of the reviewers' evaluations, consultations with the appropriate MML Division Chief, relevance to the objectives described in the MML Grant Program Description (see Section I.8. of this NOFO), and the availability of funds.

(9) NIST Center for Neutron Research (NCNR) Grant Program

At least three (3) objective individuals knowledgeable about the particular scientific area described in the application will review the merits of each application, based on the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1.i. of this NOFO). The reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus.

The Selecting Official, who is the NCNR Director, or designee, will make final application selections, taking into consideration the results of the reviewers' evaluations, relevance to the objectives described in the NCNR Grant Program Description (see Section I.9. of this NOFO), and the availability of funds.

(10) Physical Measurement Laboratory (PML) Grant Program

At least three (3) objective individuals knowledgeable about the particular scientific area described in the application will review the merits of each application, based on the appropriate evaluation criteria (see Sections V.1.j.(1) and Section V.1.j.(2) of this NOFO). The reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus.

The Selecting Official, who is the PML Director, or designee, will make final application selections, taking into consideration the results of the reviewers' evaluations, relevance to the objectives described in the PML Grant Program Description (see Section I.10. of this NOFO), and the availability of funds.

(11) Special Programs Office (SPO) Grant Program

Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact the appropriate point of contact listed in the SPO Grant Program Description (see Section I.11. of this NOFO) to determine the responsiveness of the application and compliance with program objectives prior to preparation of an application to the SPO Grant Program.

At least three (3) objective individuals knowledgeable about the particular

scientific area described in the application will review the merits of each application, based on the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1.k. of this NOFO). The reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus.

The Selecting Official, who is the SPO Director, or designee, will make final application selections, taking into consideration the results of the reviewers' evaluations, relevance to the objectives described in the SPO Grant Program Description (see Section I.11. of this NOFO), and the availability of funds.

(12) Standards Coordination Office (SCO) Grant Program

At least three (3) objective individuals knowledgeable about the particular scientific area described in the application will review the merits of each application, based on the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1.l. of this NOFO). The reviewers may discuss the applications with each other, but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus.

The Selecting Official, who is the SCO Director, or designee, will make final application selections, taking into consideration the results of the reviewers' evaluations, relevance to the objectives described in the SCO Grant Program Description (see Section I.12. of this NOFO), and the availability of funds.

- 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. § 200.206, 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 conditions that correspond to the degree of risk posed by the applicant should be applied to an award.

3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates. For all NIST MSE Research Grant Programs, awards will be made approximately 90 business days after the end of the review process (see Section V.2. of this NOFO). See information in Section IV.4. of this NOFO regarding awards made in a subsequent fiscal year.

4. 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. Copies of each unsuccessful application 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 the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which apply to awards made pursuant to this NOFO. Refer to <http://go.gov/SBYh> and <http://go.usa.gov/SBg4>.

- b. Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions.** The Department of Commerce will apply the Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions in effect on the date of award to any award made under this NOFO. The [current version](#) is dated November 12, 2020. 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 in effect on the date of award to any award made under this NOFO. The current version, dated December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390), is accessible at <http://go.usa.gov/hKkR>. Refer to Section VII. of this NOFO, Federal Awarding Agency Contacts, Grant Rules and Regulations, if you need 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.** 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. 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 Standard Terms and Conditions](#) (November 12, 2020). Questions about these requirements may be directed to the Chief Counsel for NIST, (301) 975-2803, nistcounsel@nist.gov.

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 the 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.

g. Additional Consideration of Applications. NIST programs are often cross-cutting and multi-disciplinary. If a NIST program official believes an application that is not selected for funding under a specific MSE research grant program may be of interest to another NIST MSE research grant program(s), the official may forward the application to any other NIST MSE research grant program(s) that the program official believes may have an interest in the project, for potential consideration under the other NIST MSE research grant program(s) procedures. If, upon initial screening, the other NIST MSE research grant program(s) finds the application may be of programmatic interest, the application will proceed through the review and selection process (see Section V.2 of this NOFO) for the specific MSE research grant program(s). If not, the application will be returned to the original program for final processing. **Any applicant that does not wish for its application to be considered by other NIST programs should indicate on its application that it would like consideration of the project to be limited to the program to which it originally submitted the application.** Applicants will be notified if their applications have been forwarded to another NIST program(s) for potential consideration.

h. Research Activities Involving Human Subjects, Human Tissue, Data or Recordings Involving Human Subjects Including Software Testing. Any application that includes research activities involving human subjects, human tissue/cells, or data or recordings from or about human subjects, must satisfy the requirements of the Common Rule for the Protection of Human Subjects (“Common Rule”), codified for the Department of Commerce at 15 C.F.R. Part 27. Research activities involving human subjects that fall within one or more of the classes of vulnerable subjects found in 45 C.F.R. Part 46, Subparts B, C and D must satisfy the requirements of the applicable subpart(s). In addition, any such application that includes research activities on these subjects must be in compliance with all applicable statutory requirements imposed upon the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and other Federal agencies, all regulations, policies and guidance adopted by DHHS, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and other Federal agencies on these topics, and all Executive Orders and Presidential statements of policy on applicable topics. (Regulatory Resources: <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/index.html> which includes links to FDA regulations, but may not include all applicable regulations and policies).

NIST uses the following Common Rule definitions for research and human subjects research:

Research: A systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities which meet this definition constitute research for purposes of this policy, whether or not they are conducted or supported under a program which is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities.

Human Subject: A living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research: (i) Obtains information or biospecimens through intervention or interaction with the individual, and uses, studies, or analyzes the information or biospecimens; or (ii) Obtains, uses, studies, analyzes, or generates identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens.

(1) *Intervention* includes both physical procedures by which information or biospecimens are gathered and manipulations of the subject or the subject's environment that are performed for research purposes.

(2) *Interaction* includes communication or interpersonal contact between investigator and subject.

(3) *Private information* includes information about behavior that occurs in a context in which an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or recording is taking place, and information which has been provided for specific purposes by an individual and that the individual can reasonably expect will not be made public (for example, a medical record). Private information must be individually identifiable (i.e., the identity of the subject is or may readily be ascertained by the investigator associated with the information) in order for obtaining the information to constitute research involving human subjects.

(4) *Identifiable biospecimen* includes a biospecimen for which the identity of the subject is or may readily be ascertained by the investigator or associated with the biospecimen.

See 15 C.F.R. § 27.102 (Definitions).

1) Requirement for Federalwide Assurance. If the application is accepted for [or awarded] funding, organizations that have an Institutional Review Board (IRB) are required to follow the procedures of their organization for approval of exempt and non-exempt research activities that involve human subjects. Both domestic and foreign organizations performing exempt research requiring limited IRB review or non-exempt research activities involving human subjects will be required to have protocols approved by a cognizant, active IRB currently registered with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) within the DHHS that is linked to the engaged organizations. All engaged organizations must possess a currently valid Federalwide Assurance (FWA) on file from OHRP. Information regarding how to apply for an FWA and register an IRB with OHRP can be found at <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/index.html>. See 15 C.F.R. § 27.103. NIST relies only on OHRP-issued FWAs and IRB Registrations for both domestic and foreign organizations for NIST supported research involving human subjects. NIST will not issue its own FWAs or IRB Registrations for domestic or foreign organizations.

2) Administrative Review. The NIST Research Protections Office (RPO) reserves the right to conduct an administrative review⁷ of all applications that

⁷ Conducting an “administrative review” means that the NIST RPO will review and verify the performing institution’s determination for research not involving human subjects or exempt human subjects research. In addition, for exempt research requiring limited IRB review and non-exempt human subjects

potentially include research involving human subjects and were approved by an authorized non-NIST institutional entity (an IRB or entity analogous to the NIST RPO) under 15 C.F.R. § 27.112 (Review by Institution). If the NIST RPO determines that an application includes research activities that potentially involve human subjects, the applicant will be required to provide additional information to NIST for review and approval. The documents required for funded proposals are listed in each section below. Most documents will need to be produced during the proposal review process; however, the Grants Officer may allow final versions of certain required documents to be produced at an appropriate designated time post-award. Research involving human subjects may not start until the NIST Grants Officer issues an award explicitly authorizing such research. In addition, all amendments, modifications, or changes to approved research and requests for continuing review and closure will be reviewed by the NIST RPO. Please note that the NIST IRB is unable to serve as the IRB for financial assistance recipients.

3) Required documents for proposal review. All applications involving human subjects research must clearly indicate, by separable task, all research activities believed to be exempt or non-exempt research involving human subjects, the expected institution(s) where the research activities involving human subjects may be conducted, and the institution(s) expected to be engaged in the research activities.

a. Not research determination. If an activity/task involves human subjects as defined in the Common Rule, but the applicant participant(s) indicates to NIST that the activity/task is not research as defined in the Common Rule, the following information may be requested for that activity/task:

(1) Justification, including the rationale for the determination and such additional documentation as may be deemed necessary by NIST to review and/or support a determination that the activity/task in the application is not research as defined in the Common Rule.

(2) If the applicant participant(s) used a cognizant IRB that provided a determination that the activity/task is not research, a copy of that

research, the NIST RPO will review and confirm that the research and performing institution(s) are in compliance with 15 C.F.R. Part 27, which means RPO will 1) confirm the engaged institution(s) possess, or are covered under a Federalwide Assurance, 2) review the research study documentation submitted to the IRB and verify the IRB's determination of level of risk and approval of the study for compliance with 15 C.F.R. Part 27, 3) review and verify IRB-approved substantive changes to an approved research study before the changes are implemented, and 4) review and verify that the IRB conducts a continuing review at least annually, as appropriate.

determination documentation must be provided to NIST. The applicant participant(s) is not required to establish a relationship with a cognizant IRB if they do not have one.

NIST will review the information submitted and may coordinate further with the applicant before determining whether the activity/task will be defined as research under the Common Rule in the applicable NIST financial assistance program or project.

- b. Research not involving human subjects.** If an activity/task is determined to be research and involves human subjects, but is determined to be *not human subjects research* (or *research not involving human subjects*) under the Common Rule, the following information may be requested for that activity/task:
- (1) Justification, including the rationale for the determination and such additional documentation as may be deemed necessary by NIST to review and/or support a determination that the activity/task in the application is not research as defined in the Common Rule.
 - (2) If the applicant participant(s) used a cognizant IRB that provided a determination that the activity/task is research not involving human subjects, a copy of that determination documentation must be provided to NIST. The applicant participant(s) is not required to establish a relationship with a cognizant IRB if they do not have one.
- c. Exempt research determination with no IRB.** If the application appears to NIST to include exempt research activities that do not meet the criteria for requiring a limited IRB review, and the performer of the activity or the supplier and/or the receiver of the information or biospecimens from human subjects **does not** have a cognizant IRB to provide an exemption determination, the following information may be requested during the review process so that NIST can evaluate whether an exemption under the Common Rule applies (see 15 C.F.R. § 27.104(b) and (d)):
- (1) The name(s) of the institution(s) where the exempt research will be conducted.
 - (2) The name(s) of the institution(s) providing the biospecimens or information from human subjects.
 - (3) A copy of the protocol for the research to be conducted; and/or the biospecimens or information from human subjects to be collected/provided, not pre-existing samples (*i.e.*, will proposed research collect only information without personal identifiable information, will biospecimens or information be de-identified and when and by whom was

the de-identification performed, how were the materials or data originally collected).

- (4) For pre-existing biospecimens or information from human subjects, provide copies of the consent forms used for collection and a description of how the biospecimens or information were originally collected and stripped of personal identifiers. If copies of consent forms are not available, explain.
- (5) Any additional clarifying documentation that NIST may deem necessary in order to make a determination whether the activity/task or use of biospecimens or information from human subjects is exempt under the Common Rule.

d. Research review with an IRB. If the application appears to NIST to include research activities (exempt or non-exempt) involving human subjects, the proposed performer of the activity must have a relationship with a cognizant IRB registered with OHRP, and linked to their Federal wide Assurance. The following information may be requested during the review process:

- (1) The name(s) of the institution(s) where the research will be conducted.
- (2) The name(s) and institution(s) of the cognizant IRB(s), and the IRB registration number(s).
- (3) The FWA number of the applicant linked to the cognizant IRB(s).
- (4) The FWAs associated with all organizations engaged in the planned research activity/task, linked to the cognizant IRB.
- (5) If the IRB review(s) is pending, the estimated start date for research involving human subjects.
- (6) The IRB approval date (if currently approved for exempt or non-exempt research).
- (7) If any of the engaged organizations has applied for or will apply for an FWA or IRB registration, those details should be clearly provided for each engaged organization.

If the application includes research activities involving human subjects to be performed in the first year of an award, additional documentation may be requested by NIST during pre-award review for those performers, and may include the following for those research activities:

- (1) A copy of each applicable final IRB-approved protocol.
- (2) A signed and dated approval letter from the cognizant IRB(s) that includes the name of the institution housing each applicable IRB, provides the start and end dates for the approval of the research activities, and any IRB-required interim reporting or continuing review requirements.

- (3) A copy of any IRB-required application information, such as documentation of approval of special clearances (*i.e.*, biohazard, HIPAA, etc.) conflict-of-interest letters, or special training requirements.
- (4) A brief description of which portions of the IRB submitted protocol are specifically included in the application submitted to NIST, if the protocol includes tasks not included in the application, or if the protocol is supported by multiple funding sources. For protocols with multiple funding sources, NIST will not approve the study without a non-duplication-of-funding letter indicating that no other federal funds will be used to support the tasks proposed under the proposed research or ongoing project.
- (5) If a new protocol will only be submitted to an IRB if an award from NIST is issued, a draft of the proposed protocol.
- (6) Any additional clarifying documentation that NIST may request during the review process to perform the NIST administrative review of research involving human subjects. (See 15 C.F.R. § 27.112 (Review by Institution)).

This clause reflects the existing NIST policy and requirements for Research Involving Human Subjects. Should the policy be revised prior to award, a clause reflecting the policy current at time of award may be incorporated into the award.

If the policy is revised after award, a clause reflecting the updated policy may be incorporated into the award.

For more information regarding research projects involving human subjects, contact Anne Andrews, Director, NIST Research Protections Office (e-mail: anne.andrews@nist.gov; phone: (301) 975-5445).

- i. Research Activities Involving Live Vertebrate Animals or Pre-Existing Cell Line/Tissues From Vertebrate Animals.** Any application that proposes research activities involving live vertebrate animals that are to be cared for, euthanized, or used by award recipients to accomplish research goals, teaching, or testing must meet the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) (7 U.S.C. § 2131 et seq.), and the AWA final rules (9 C.F.R. Parts 1, 2, and 3), and if appropriate, the Good Laboratory Practice for Nonclinical Laboratory Studies (21 C.F.R. Part 58). In addition, such research activities should be in compliance with the “*U.S. Government Principles for Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training*” (Principles). The Principles and guidance on these Principles are available in the National Research Council's “*Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*,” which can be obtained from National Academy Press, 500 5th Street, N.W., Department 285, Washington, DC 20055, or as a free PDF online at <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/12910/guide-for-the-care-and-use-of-laboratory-animals-eighth>.

- (1) **Administrative Review.** NIST reserves the right to conduct an administrative review⁷⁸ of all applications that potentially include research activities that involve live vertebrate animals, or custom samples from, or field studies with live vertebrate animals. If the application includes research activities, field studies, or custom samples involving live vertebrate animals, the applicant will be required to provide additional information for review and approval. In addition, NIST will verify the applicant's determination(s) of excluded samples from vertebrate animals. The documents required for funded proposals are listed in each section below. Some may be requested for a pre-review during the proposal review process; however, the Grants Officer may allow final versions of certain required documents to be produced at an appropriate designated time post-award. If an award is issued, no research activities involving live vertebrate animals shall be initiated or costs incurred for those activities under the award until the NIST Grants Officer issues written approval. In addition, all re-approvals, amendments, modifications, changes, annual reports and closure will be reviewed by NIST.
- (2) **Required documents for NIST proposal review.** *The applicant should clearly indicate in the application, by separable task, all research activities believed to include research involving live vertebrate animals and the institution(s) where the research activities involving live vertebrate animals may be conducted. In addition, the applicant should indicate any activity/task that involves an excluded or custom collection from vertebrate animals, or a field study with animals.*

- a) **Excluded Collections from Vertebrate Animals:** The requirements for review and approval by an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) do not apply to proposed research using preexisting images of animals or to research plans that do not include live animals. These regulations also do not apply to obtaining stock or pre-existing items from animal material suppliers (e.g., tissue banks), such as pre-existing cell lines and tissue samples, or from commercial food processors, where the

⁷ Conducting an "administrative review" means that the NIST RPO will review and verify the performing institution's IACUC's approval of research with live vertebrate animals, and confirm that the research and performing institution(s) have an appropriate assurance and are in compliance with applicable regulations. RPO will 1) confirm the engaged institution(s) possess, or are covered under an applicable assurance, 2) review the research study documentation submitted to the IACUC and verify the IACUC's determination of level of risk and approval of the study for compliance with applicable regulations, 3) review and verify IACUC-approved substantive changes to an approved research study before the changes are implemented, and 4) review and verify that the IACUC receives an annual report for the study and conducts an appropriate continuing review at least every three years.

vertebrate animal was euthanized for food purposes and not for the purpose of sample collection.

For pre-existing cell lines and tissue samples originating from vertebrate animals, NIST requires that the proposer provide documentation or the rationale for the determination that the cell line or tissue is pre-existing and not a custom collection from live vertebrate animals for an activity/task within the proposal. NIST may require additional documentation to review and/or support the determination that the cells and/or tissues from vertebrate animals are excluded from IACUC review.

- b) **Custom Collections Harvested from Live Vertebrate Animals:** NIST requires documentation for obtaining custom samples from live vertebrate animals from animal material suppliers and other organizations (*i.e.*, universities, companies, and government laboratories, etc.). Custom samples includes samples from animal material suppliers, such as when a catalog item indicates that the researcher is to specify the characteristics of the live vertebrate animal to be used, or how a sample is to be collected from the live vertebrate animal.
- c) **Field Studies of Animals:** Some field studies of animals may be exempt under the Animal Welfare Act from full review and approval by an animal care and use committee, as determined by each institution. Field study is defined as “... *a study conducted on free-living wild animals in their natural habitat...*”. 9 C.F.R. § 1.1. However, this term excludes any study that involves an invasive procedure or that harms or materially alters the behavior of an animal under study. Field studies, with or without invasive procedures, may also require obtaining appropriate federal or local government permits (marine mammals, endangered species, etc.). If the applicant’s institution requires review and approval by an animal care and use committee, NIST will require that documentation to be provided as described below.
- d) **For custom collections or studies with live vertebrate animals that require review and approval by an animal care and use committee the following documentation is required:**
 - (1) **Requirement for Assurance.** An applicable assurance for the care and use of the live vertebrate animal(s) to be used in the proposed research is required. NIST may request documentation to confirm an assurance, if adequate

confirmation is not available through an assuring organization's website. The cognizant IACUC where the research activity is located may hold one or more assurances applicable to the research activity that are acceptable to NIST. These four assurances are:

- i. Animal Welfare Assurance from the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) indicated by the OLAW assurance number, *i.e.*, A-1234;
- ii. USDA Animal Welfare Act certification indicated by the certification number, *i.e.*, 12-R-3456;
- iii. Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC) indicated by providing the organization name accredited by AAALAC as listed in the AAALAC Directory of Accredited Organizations; and
- iv. Letter of Assurance of compliance with the Animal Welfare Act, the U.S. Government Principles, and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) IACUC policy that is valid for five years and provided by a NMFS Regional IACUC for activities with marine mammals or sea turtles (NMFS Policy Directive 04-112).

e) Documentation of Research Review by an IACUC: If the applicant's application appears to include research activities, field studies, or custom sample collections involving live vertebrate animals the following information regarding review by an applicable IACUC may be requested during the application review process:

1. The name(s) of the institution(s) where the research involving live vertebrate animals will be conducted and/or custom samples collected.
2. The assurance type and number, as applicable, for the cognizant Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) where the research activity is located. [For example: Animal Welfare Assurance from the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) should be indicated by the OLAW assurance number, *i.e.* A-1234; an USDA Animal Welfare Act certification should be indicated by the certification number *i.e.* 12-R-3456; and an Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC) should be indicated by AAALAC.]
3. The IACUC approval date for the Animal Study Protocol (ASP) (if currently approved).
4. If the review by the cognizant IACUC is pending, the estimated start date for research involving vertebrate animals.

5. If any assurances or IACUCs need to be obtained or established, that should be clearly stated.
6. If any special permits are required for field studies, those details should be clearly provided for each instance, or indicated as pending.

If the application includes research activities involving vertebrate animals to be performed in the first year of an award, additional documentation may be requested by NIST during pre-award review for those performers, and may include the following for those research activities, which may also include field studies, custom sample collections involving live vertebrate animals:

1. A copy of the IACUC approved ASP.
2. Documentation of the IACUC approval indicating the approval and expiration dates of the ASP.
3. If applicable, a non-duplication-of-funding letter if the ASP is funded from several sources.
4. If a new ASP will only be submitted to an IACUC if an award from NIST is issued, a draft of the proposed ASP may be requested.
5. Any additional clarifying documentation that NIST may request during review of applications to perform the NIST administrative review of research involving live vertebrate animals.

This clause reflects the existing NIST policy for Research Involving Live Vertebrate Animals. Should the policy be revised prior to award, a clause reflecting the policy current at time of award may be incorporated into the award.

If the policy is revised after award, a clause reflecting the updated policy may be incorporated into the award.

For more information regarding research projects involving live vertebrate animals, contact Linda Beth Schilling, Senior Analyst (e-mail: linda.schilling@nist.gov; phone: 301-975-2887).

- j. Collaborations Making Use of Federal Facilities.** All applications should include a description of any work proposed to be performed using Federal facilities.

If an applicant proposes use of NIST facilities, the statement of work should include a statement of this intention and a description of the facilities. Any use of NIST facilities must be approved by appropriate NIST management and is at the sole discretion of NIST. Prior to beginning the merit review process, NIST will

verify the availability of the facilities and approval of the proposed usage. Any unapproved facility use will be stricken from the application prior to the merit review. Examples of some facilities that may be available for collaborations are listed on the following NIST Web site: <https://www.nist.gov/labs-major-programs/user-facilities>.

3. Reporting

a. **Reporting Requirements.** The following reporting requirements described in Section A.01 Reporting Requirements of the [Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions](#) 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. A final financial report is due within 120 days after the end of the project period.

(2) Research Performance Progress Report (RPPRs). Each award recipient will be required to submit a RPPR on a semi-annual basis for the periods ending March 31 and September 30 of each year. A final RPPR shall be submitted within 120 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.

If a recipient's Data Management Plan (DMP) has changed since their last submission of a RPPR, the recipient must include their revised DMP in the next RPPR following the revision to the DMP. The revised DMP must include all the requirements described in Section IV.2.a.(11) of this NOFO.

(3) Patent and Property Reports. In accordance with the Uniform Administrative Requirements 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](#), 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.b., 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](#).

VII. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts

Questions should be directed to the following contact persons:

Subject Area	Point of Contact
Programmatic and Technical Questions	<p>ADIIS: Michael Molnar Phone: 301-975-3673 E-mail: mike.molnar@nist.gov</p> <p>ADLP: Jason Boehm Phone: 301-975-8678 E-mail: jason.boehm@nist.gov</p>

Subject Area	Point of Contact
	<p>CTL: Lucy Tedesco Phone: 301-975-3833 E-mail: lucy.tedesco@nist.gov</p> <p>EL: Millie Glick Phone: 301-975-5962 E-mail: millie.glick@nist.gov</p> <p>FR: Jiann Yang Phone: 301-975-6662 E-mail: jiann.yang@nist.gov</p> <p>ITL: Melissa Banner Phone: 301-975-5245 E-mail: melissa.banner@nist.gov</p> <p>IAAO: Claire Saundry Phone: 301-975-2386 E-mail: claire.saundry@nist.gov</p> <p>MML: Bill Clark Phone: 303-497-3268 E-mail: william.clark@nist.gov</p> <p>NCNR: Dan Neumann Phone: 301-975-5252 E-mail: dan.neumann@nist.gov</p> <p>PML: Kum Ham Phone: 301-975-4203 E-mail: kum.ham@nist.gov</p> <p>SPO: Darlene Hamilton Phone: 301-975-2227 E-mail: darlene.hamilton@nist.gov</p> <p>SCO: Kerry Miles Phone: 301-975-5571 E-mail: kerry.miles@nist.gov</p>

Subject Area	Point of Contact
Technical Assistance with Grants.gov Submissions	Grants.gov Phone: 800-518-4726 E-mail: support@grants.gov
Grant Rules and Regulations	Gilberto Castillo (EL, FR, ITL, NCNR) Phone: 301-975-3726 E-mail: gilberto.castillo@nist.gov Dean Iwasaki (ADIIS, ADLP, CTL, IAAO, MML, PML, SPO, SCO) Phone: 301-975-8449 E-mail: dean.iwasaki@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. In the event that 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.