

Rapid Assistance (for) Coronavirus Economic Response (RACER)

Frequently Asked Questions

Proposals:

If I'm not a member of an institute, then would it still be possible to team with an institute? Would it be the decision of the institute if membership is required for teaming? Or is there a pre-requisite for membership in an institute for validity of the proposal?

Teaming decisions are at the discretion of each institute. You are encouraged to reach out to the [advanced manufacturing institutes](#) that overlap with or complement your technical focus area to discuss their requirements.

Can the institutes make a discretionary decision to include or exclude proposals that the institute receives?

When receiving proposals from institute members or non-members, the institutes have full discretion on whether to partner or not with that team.

A workforce training proposal needs to be tied to pandemic response training, correct?

Yes, the proposal must be “to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus” to be considered responsive to the NOFO.

Would proposals that expand on or enhance projects funded by the NEAP program be considered under this NOFO?

Yes.

Deadlines:

When are proposals due?

July 26th, 11:59 pm (ET).

I understand there is a fixed deadline for proposal submission. Does the order of submission before the deadline have any impact on the review decision process?

No. The order that proposals are received will NOT have any impact on the review process.

Funding & Budget:

If an Institute submits a proposal on behalf of a member that gets funded, can the institute charge program management to cover its administrative costs to initiate and manage the contract?

Yes, the institute can and should include program management costs in its budget in any proposal submitted to NIST.

What are the total funds available for this program?

Approximately \$54 million will be available for project funding.

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What is the maximum amount of funds for a single proposal?

A proposal from a single institute may request up to \$5 million with a period of performance of up to 24 months. A proposal that involves multiple institutes may request up to \$15 million with a period of performance of up to 36 months.

Is there a certain amount of funding earmarked specifically for education proposals, research proposals, testbed proposals, etc.?

No.

Regarding budget breakdown, can an institute, together with members fund an element of program?

Cost share is not required for awards in this program and any voluntary cost share listed in the award application and budget will become a legally binding part of the award.

What is the total number of awards?

The number of awards funded will depend on the nature and quality of the proposals received.

I understand awards will be a cooperative agreement funding instrument. Will the financial fund disbursements be via a reimbursement model or will the selected teams get the money upfront?

NIST uses the Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) system and disburses funds in accordance with 2 CFR 200.305. ASAP is a completely electronic system, to quickly and securely transfer money to recipient organizations.

What is a recommended program management cost as a percentage of the funding?

NIST does not have a recommendation.

May a single institute receive multiple awards for projects that each total \$5M? For example, if [Institute] submits three proposals, each for \$5M, is it possible for [Institute] to be awarded a total of \$15M (\$5M for each project), should each project be selected?

Yes. All proposals will be evaluated independently on their own merits.

Teaming

If there are unknown partners, e.g. partners to be identified using a project call issued by the Institute, can such a proposal be submitted?

Yes. If specific partners have not been identified at the time of submission, the proposal should identify as much information as possible about the role, qualifications, activities, etc. that must still be filled.

If an institute partners with NIIMBL on a proposed RACER project, are they allowed to ask for more than \$5M?

If someone is asking for additional money on the basis of NIIMBL being the only other institute involved, they would not be eligible for more than \$5 million. The intent was to provide funding to multiple institutes, not allow a single institute to take more money

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just because they're involving NIIMBL, who is not eligible to receive funds in this program. Even if it's arguably within the wording of the NOFO [Notice of funding opportunity], we shouldn't create a "NIIMBL loophole" to allow institutes to take more funding.