

AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: "Study and Analysis of Strategies for the Technology Innovation in the Transportation Sector"

ACTION: Request for Application (RFA) or Request for Initial Proposals (RFIP)

RFA NO: EPA-OAR-DOD-05-19

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO: 66.034

SUMMARY: Formal Agency responses to questions/comments regarding the subject solicitation.

DATE: December 6, 2005

Question 1: The RFIP states that:

"The total estimated funding under this announcement is approximately \$1 million. Project will be funded in one year increments of approximately \$350,000 over a three year period. Maximum annual funding is \$500,000."

Would it be acceptable to submit an application for a two-year project, with a two-year budget totaling up to \$1 million, or, alternatively, *must* the application be for a three-year project?

Response: While it is possible that an application for a two-year project might be acceptable, it is not certain at this time that the maximum funding of \$1 million would be available within just two year funding period. Therefore, it would be preferable that if the applicant wished to specify only a two year project period of performance, the application specify a recommended hierarchy of projects and deliverables that would be provide should funding of less than \$500,000 per year be available.

Question 2: Under III.A of the RFA, it states that "laboratories" are eligible. Please advise whether national laboratory such as those operated for the US Department of Energy are eligible. Also, if indeed eligible to respond to this RFA, would the award mechanism be an interagency agreement rather than a cooperative agreement?

Response: National laboratories associated with the federal government such as those operated under contract to the Department of Energy may be ineligible. These laboratories are typically operated by contractors, who would be ineligible to receive a grant. EPA does not anticipate using an interagency agreement under this program.

Question 3: Is this RFA based upon prior contract or grant work? Is it part of a series of work projects about which there is publicly available information?

Response: This RFA is not connected to a previous contract or grant or otherwise part of a series or sequence of work projects. It is a new, stand alone project.

Question 4: Do we anticipate making only one award for this grant or are multiple awards anticipated or at least a possibility?

Response: At this time we anticipate having only enough funding to allow funding for only one application. Should additional funding become available, it is possible that more than one grant will be awarded to applicants under this RFA if the strength of the applications also warrant such additional grants.

Question 5: Under Scope of Work in the RFA it says:

"As such, EPA anticipates a multi-disciplinary approach would provide a most complete evaluation, drawing on the varied analytical disciplines including (but not limited to) economics, engineering, public policy, natural resources and modeling as well as legal considerations."

Under Content and Form of Application Submission it says:

"f. Key Personnel. The applicant should submit an appendix with the resumes of up to three (3) key personnel who will be significantly involved in the project."

I count six disciplines in the statement from the scope of work, and the scope is explicitly not limited to these six. Why the limit to three resumes? The strength of the team ("...(iv) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge...") is a stated Evaluation Criteria. Can that be fairly assessed without resumes? Or could three be the anticipated limit to the size of the team?

Response: The strength of the proposal will be determined on the basis of all the information supplied. The resumes of key personal will be part of that assessment. The applicant can chose to include resumes of up to three persons who will constructively contribute to the projects. The applicant may chose to submit resumes from those persons which it believes best supports the strength of its application.

Question 6: We are confused about language contained in Section II, D. In the first paragraph, the implication is that for profit consultants are eligible subgrant recipients under this announcement. The second paragraph states that they are not. We would appreciate clarification.

Response: Section II, D refers to 40CFR Parts 30 and 31 for additional information on the procedures the grant recipient must follow for procurement and subaward or subgrant used by the grant recipient to fulfill its obligations under the grant. These Parts set the limitations on the use of for-profit consultants or other entities.

Question 7: How can we seek advice before the submission deadline from the EPA Project Officer?

Response: As directed in the Request for Application, Section VII – Agency Contact, questions submitted in writing will be answered in writing and posted on the web site containing the request for application.

Question 8: My institution has had several cooperative agreements with EPA over the past decade. When writing the proposals we have included multiple project ideas that are responsive to the RFP knowing that actual projects funded under the agreement may differ from those in the proposal.

Am I correct in assuming that your current RFP asks for a proposal describing a single project or set of projects and, if funded, those would be the projects that would go forward?

Response: In general, the projects funded would be the projects as described in the proposal or a subset from them. As part of the process in funding the grant, additional detail regarding the specific project or projects may be developed after selection of the successful proposal.

Question 9: I note that there will only be one award. Given this limitation, I am wondering if you feel that my institution would have a chance of receiving funding given that we have never, to my knowledge, applied for or received funding from your agency. We have extensive experience with the FAA, DOT, and NASA in areas of transportation (primarily aviation/aerospace/space-related), modeling, materials, etc. We also have a list of scholars interested in other modes of transportation as well as intermodal transportation solutions.

Response: Prior grant work with the Environmental Protection Agency is not a pre-requisite for successful award. Awarding of the grant will be based upon the strength and completeness of the proposal according to the criteria list in the request for applications.

Question 10: Are you solely interested in single mode changes in technology/fuel (and approaches/channels to encourage adoption) or would your interest extend to the encouragement of 'most efficient' intermodal options in combination with new technologies/fuel?

Response: The transportation sector includes highway and non-highway options for the movement of people and goods. Intermodal (e.g., including both highway and non-highway) options for the transport of people and goods can be considered.

Question 11: I don't expect to get this done by Dec 14, 2005, but thought I could work on this for next year. Is this grant issued every year?

Response: This grant is not issued every year. Currently, we do not anticipate funding a similar follow on grant. Anyone interested in being considered for this grant needs to have their submission in by the specified deadline of December 14, 2005.

Question 12: A question was received from an inventor. A long description of a patented electric vehicle design was provided. The question asked if the grant funding could be used as start-up capital to develop this project, including development of a demonstration vehicle, testing and data analysis.

Response: While vehicle technology concepts and moving these technologies to market could appropriately be considered under this grant, the question seems to suggest funding for a potential profit making venture. This grant is only available to non-profit organizations. Organizations such as for profit companies or venture capital enterprises intended to develop profit making enterprises are not eligible.

Question 13: The RFP summary talks about only a single \$1 million dollar research grant. We would like to do a much smaller bit of research on an engine design for the small car transportation market. If this is a reasonable research topic, please let me know. If it is not appropriate – perhaps due to the quantized funding level, please let us know.

Response: As stated in the RFA, the anticipated funding level for the grant is up to \$1 million over up to three years. There is no minimum funding level for eligible grants. However, it is anticipated that since only one grant will be awarded, the most complete and comprehensive eligible grant will likely be awarded.

Question 14: The RFIP in Section III A states that: “In addition, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to parts of the application, pages in excess of the page limit will not be reviewed.” We do not see any page limits expressed in Section IV. Are there any pages limits to be considered for this proposal at all?

Response: No page limits exist. There is no restriction on the length of the proposal.

Question 15: The RFA Section IV B.e. states: “Key personnel: The applicant should submit an appendix with the resumes of up to three (3) key personnel who will be significantly involved in the project.” Is a description of roles of the applicant and

partners mentioned under Section IV B.c.6. the only necessary documentation to include for anyone other than the 3 identified Key Personnel?

Response: Yes

Question 16: Is there any change in the current submission date of 12/14/2005 at 5:00 PM EDT?

Response: No.

Question 17: In other grant applications we have been required to submit forms 424A and 424B. Please confirm whether these forms are required.

Response: Forms 424A and 424B are not required at this time. Only the applicants selected for award will be required to submit a full application package, which includes forms 424A, 424B, and other associated certifications.