

Notice of Intent No. DE-FOA0001253

**Notice of Intent to Issue
Funding Opportunity Announcement No. DE-FOA-0001222**

The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) intends to issue, on behalf of the Weatherization and Intergovernmental Programs Office, a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) entitled "State Energy Program 2015 Competitive Awards"

DOE seeks to fund projects in two areas of interest: State Energy Planning and Opportunities for Innovative Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Practices. It is anticipated that DOE will award up to \$5.0 million in total funding in the FOA, subject to FY2015 Congressional appropriations.

It is anticipated that the FOA may include the following Areas of Interest:

Area of Interest 1 - State Energy Planning

Through this funding, DOE hopes to bolster State/regional energy planning by funding efforts to facilitate stakeholder and interagency discussions and related activities concerning (1) the future direction of the energy sector in the region/State, with emphasis on the electric power sector and natural gas supply and transport, and (2) how energy efficiency and renewable energy fit into the vision for the future. These discussions will help States explore and enhance economic development opportunities associated with promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy as part of an all-of-the above approach, identify measures for enhancing the resiliency and reliability of energy supplies and the electric grid (energy assurance-related activities), strengthen or implement new state energy efficiency and renewable energy policies, undertake relevant analytical efforts, and plan strategically for current and future environmental regulations, as well as other economic pressures that will have an impact on the energy sector, and conduct related activities.

Ideal proposals would contain the following elements:

- Identification of the extent to which the State already uses energy efficiency and renewable energy as part of their energy resource mix and future plans;
- Establishment of a dialogue among the different State agencies with purview over the energy sector to develop a coordinated vision for energy planning that can help meet state policy goals, support electric reliability and comply with environmental standards. This would include a discussion of the disparate mandates of the State agencies; a discussion of current, near term and future challenges they see in the energy sector, including regulatory challenges, market challenges, reliability challenges, resiliency challenges, economic development opportunities, and any other challenges; and a discussion of solutions (more below);

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- Establishment of a stakeholder engagement process, including with utilities, to obtain their input on electric power sector planning;
- Outline of a process to map out and assess a set of solutions over several scenarios that:
 - Meets projected electricity demand;
 - Addresses reliability and resiliency concerns (energy assurance);
 - Promotes economic development;
 - Mitigates to the extent possible any increase in customer bills;
 - Identifies any energy resource constraints, including infrastructure (supply, transport, transmission, delivery)
 - Discusses how State Energy Offices, Public Utility Commissions and Departments of Environmental Protection will work together to accurately and rigorously measure, track, and report energy savings and emissions reductions;
 - Complies with existing and forthcoming environmental regulations (making assumptions about future regulations);
 - Considers a range of potential solutions, including market-based approaches
 - Demonstrates how energy efficiency can help meet these goals; and
 - Includes renewable energy options; and
- Development of a roadmap for implementing a preferred set of solutions related to the electric power sector and natural gas supply and transport, with milestones set for 2020 and 2025.

Regional planning, coordination, and approaches by States would be strongly encouraged, although excellent proposals from individual States would be considered as well. States submitting a regional proposal would need to designate one State as the prime applicant.

Area of Interest 2 - Opportunities for Innovative Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Practices.

In the State Energy Program's (SEP's) Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs) for the Fiscal Years (FY) 2013 and 2014 Competitive Awards, State applicants completed a State Policy Information Section regarding State energy policies. As noted in that FOA, "a foundational understanding between the SEP and applicants for these competitive awards is a valuable mechanism for identifying and promoting innovative clean energy practices across the entire nation." Twenty-nine States provided policy specific information in 2013 and 29 States provided policy-specific information in 2014.¹

In this year's FOA, State applicants will once again provide this level of information about State energy policies. In addition to providing an understanding about the "state of play" in the State energy space, this year's assessment (in a modified form, as explained below) will also form the basis for States' applications for financial assistance under the State Energy Program 2015 Competitive Awards FOA.

¹ Note: the 29 states that responded in 2014 are not the same 29 states that responded in 2013.

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DOE intends to allow States to present proposals, based on many (but not all) questions in the the FY15 State Energy Assessment, that identify in which areas they could progress and develop and implement a plan to advance specific energy efficiency and renewable energy policies. This could be in the form of changing a “No” answer to a “Yes” for one or more of the questions and/or by expanding the scope of an existing regulation or policy addressed in the assessment.

Areas of emphasis will include:

- Statewide energy efficiency and renewable energy targets/goals (including Renewable Portfolio Standards, Energy Efficiency Resource Standards, energy efficiency targets as part of an integrated resource plan, part of an RPS, or portfolio of programs that will provide defined savings).
- Policies and programs for distributed resources.
- Utility or third-party administered energy efficiency programs.
- Frameworks for evaluation, measurement and verification of energy and emission reductions.
- Designing or developing programs for financing retrofits for public facilities.
- Supporting partnerships with local governments to incentivize and/or remove barriers to energy efficiency and renewable energy investments.
- Designing or developing programs that provide financing options or incentives for clean energy investments.
- Building energy performance information for decision-making, including benchmarking and disclosure, aggregation of whole building usage data and data access.

DOE believes this approach will provide flexibility to States. States will decide which areas of energy policy and programming they would like to focus on (based on the FY15 State Energy Assessment) and where they believe they can most advance energy efficiency and renewable energy in their States. DOE hopes this will promote innovative ideas from States tailored to their resources and energy profiles.

EERE envisions awarding multiple financial assistance awards in the form of cooperative agreements. The estimated period of performance for each award will be approximately 2 years.

This Notice is issued so that interested parties are aware of the EERE’s intention to issue this FOA in the near term and so that interested parties can begin the process of securing partners for potential projects. Please note that DOE will require applicants to include letters of support from partners with their applications.

All of the information contained in this Notice is subject to change. EERE will not respond to questions concerning this Notice. Once the FOA has been released, EERE will provide an avenue for potential Applicants to submit questions.

EERE plans to issue the FOA on or about January 15, 2015 via the EERE Exchange website (<https://eere-exchange.energy.gov/>). If Applicants wish to receive official notifications and information from EERE regarding this FOA, they should register in EERE Exchange. When the FOA is released, applications will be accepted only through EERE Exchange.

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In anticipation of the FOA being released, Applicants are advised to complete the following steps, which are **required** for application submission:

- Register and create an account in EERE Exchange at <https://eere-exchange.energy.gov/>. This account will allow the user to register for any open EERE FOAs that are currently in EERE Exchange. It is recommended that each organization or business unit, whether acting as a team or a single entity, use only one account as the contact point for each submission.

Questions related to the registration process and use of the EERE Exchange website should be submitted to: EERE-ExchangeSupport@hq.doe.gov

- Obtain a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number (including the plus 4 extension, if applicable) at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>
- Register with the System for Award Management (SAM) at <https://www.sam.gov>. Designating an Electronic Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) and obtaining a special password called an MPIN are important steps in SAM registration. Please update your SAM registration annually.
- Register in FedConnect at <https://www.fedconnect.net/>. To create an organization account, your organization's SAM MPIN is required. For more information about the SAM MPIN or other registration requirements, review the FedConnect Ready, Set, Go! Guide at https://www.fedconnect.net/FedConnect/PublicPages/FedConnect_ready_Set_Go.pdf
- Register in Grants.gov to receive automatic updates when Amendments to a FOA are posted. However, please note that applications will not be accepted through Grants.gov. <http://www.grants.gov/>. All applications must be submitted through EERE Exchange.