



# Frequently Asked Questions

**2024-NIST-MEP-01**

**NIST MEP Center State  
Competition for Florida**



MEP  
National  
Network™

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# I. Application & Submission Information

1. We note that the instructions for the length of the document say “double-spaced”. Is this correct?
  - a. **Response:** Per Section IV.5(c) of the NOFO, the project narrative must be no more than twenty-five (25) pages (double-spaced between lines).
2. OMB issued updated guidance for Federal Financial Assistance on 4/22/2024. The effective date for the final guidance is October 1, 2024. One of the changes that affects our operation is the increase in the De Minimis Indirect Cost rate. As a Center that does not have a federally negotiated indirect cost rate, we use the De Minimis rate. The current rate is 10% of Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) and effective October 1, 2024, it will be 15% of MTDC. The question is: What rate do we use to write the proposed budget? This award’s period starts January 1, 2025, at which point the new guidance would have been in effect.
  - a. **Response:** In this case they can use 15% in their budget proposal since the period of performance begins after the implementation date of the updated uniform guidance.
3. Can you further define “key personnel”?
  - a. **Response:** Key Personnel is defined as the Center Director and whomever else the Center has identified as Key Personnel (i.e., CFO, COO, etc)
4. Should we only include letters of commitment, or can we also include letters of support?
  - a. **Response:** Per Section IV.10 & 11 of the NOFO, for non-profit entities a resolution from the fiduciary board authorizing submission of the MEP Center application to NIST supporting the activities described therein is required. A letter of commitment is required from an authorized representative of the applicant, stating the total amount of cost share to be contributed by the applicant towards the proposed MEP Center project.

With the exception of a commitment letter from the applicant, letters of commitment for all other third-party sources of non-federal cost share are not required but are strongly encouraged.

Any application that includes investigators, researchers, and key personnel must identify all sources of current and potential funding, including this proposal. Applicants must complete the Current and Pending Support form located here, <https://www.nist.gov/oaam/grants-management-division/current-and-pending-support>

***PLEASE REFER TO PAGES 20-21 FOR MORE INFORMATION RELATED TO LETTERS OF COMMITMENT AND LETTERS OF SUPPORT.***

## II. IMPACT Metrics & Project/Client Data

1. What happens to our rolling four-quarter numbers with the new award? Do they continue to “roll” or will they be zeroed out?
  - a. **Response:** Clients, projects, impacts and NIST MEP Federal \$ Quarterly allocation amounts continue to be calculated based on a rolling four quarters for most reports. The CPPR and CAR Summary include various charts that only show 3 data points. This decision was made so that would continue to have trend data for  
  
historical purposes and analysis.
2. What happens to projects reported now for the survey? Will they remain in the pipeline and be surveyed next year with the new award?
  - a. **Response:** Both incumbent and new recipient clients, projects and surveys in the pipeline continue through the process. New recipients are educated on the value of this, how to use these clients and projects for analysis and how to use as a “get in the door again” with the new team.

## III. Program Requirements

1. What can we tell them in their naming/branding?
  - a. **Response:** The Florida MEP NOFO provides as follows:
    - e. Naming of Centers  
  
The MEP Center and all satellite locations receiving federal funding pursuant to this NOFO are required to adopt the following business naming convention, which shall also be used as the MEP Center’s domain name (if available): STATE MEP Center (i.e., Florida MEP Center).  
  
Based on the NOFO language, the naming convention for Florida would be the “Florida MEP Center.” If MEP is not happy with this requirement, then it should amend the NOFO to remove the naming convention altogether or to revise it as desired. The naming convention is not dictated by statute or by grant requirements; rather, it was a requirement that MEP specifically added to the Florida MEP NOFO (and that probably should have also been added to the updated GT&Cs.)
2. The requirement isn’t for the Center Director to be FT but to be employed by the recipient of the award.
  - a. **Response:** The Florida MEP NOFO provides as follows: *For purposes of a NIST MEP Cooperative Agreement, the Director of a MEP Center must be a full-time employee of the recipient organization. Section B.9 of the MEP GT&Cs contain the same requirement.*

From a legal standpoint, this means that the Center Director must be an FT employee of the recipient organization but that his/her time need not necessarily be allocated 100% to the MEP Center. From a programmatic standpoint, however, I would think that you would want the

Center Director's time to be allocated at least 75% (if not 90-100%) to the MEP Center project. We can negotiate time allocations with an applicant as part of the pre-award negotiations.