

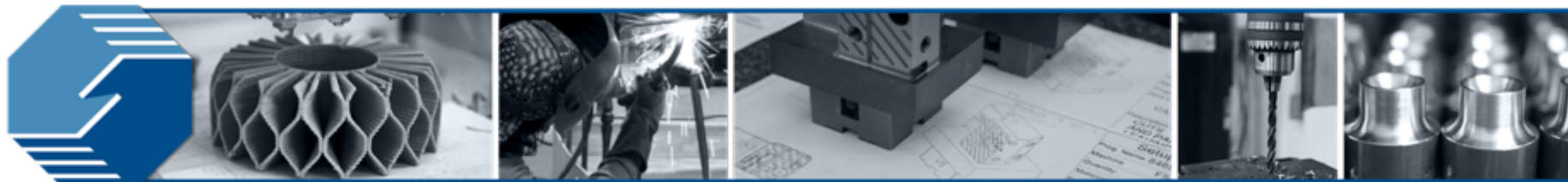
MAKING AN IMPACT ON U.S. MANUFACTURING

NIST
National Institute of
Standards and Technology
U.S. Department of Commerce

Information Webinar
Federal Funding Opportunity: 2016-NIST-MEP-PARTNERSHIP-01

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WELCOME

**Informational Webinar – January 14, 2016
12:00 p.m. (EST)**

Federal Funding Opportunity: 2016-NIST-MEP-PARTNERSHIP-01

**National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)
Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP)**

Diane Henderson, Manager, Competitions, NIST MEP

Kari Reidy, Director of Communications, NIST MEP

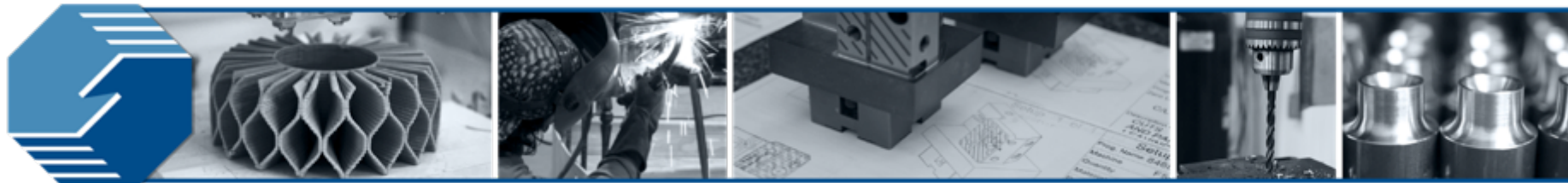
Mark Troppe, Director of Partnership & Program Development, NIST MEP

Information Webinar Agenda

- NIST MEP Program Overview
- Funding Opportunity Overview
- Evaluation Criteria
- Review and Selection Process
- Selection Factors
- Administrative Requirements for Applications
- Reporting Requirements
- MEP Resources
- Agency Contacts
- FAQs
- Staying in touch

Information Webinar and Communication Protocols

- Webinar serves as a communication vehicle to provide an overview of the funding opportunity.
- During the webinar, proprietary technical discussions about specific project ideas will not be permitted.
- NIST/MEP staff will not critique or provide feedback on any specific project ideas during the webinar or at any time before submission of a proposal to MEP.
 - We will consider questions of a clarifying nature that are not specific to an individual proposal.
 - If you want to submit questions following the webinar, please email them to MEP at mepffo@nist.gov.



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MEP PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A blue-tinted photograph of two hands holding several interlocking gears. The gears are dark blue against a lighter blue background. The hands are positioned as if they are carefully placing or adjusting the gears.

MISSION

“

To enhance the productivity and technological performance of U.S. Manufacturing.

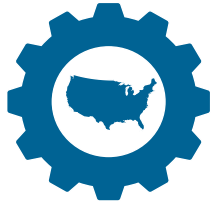
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ROLE

MEP's state and regional centers facilitate and accelerate the transfer of manufacturing technology in partnership with industry, universities and educational institutions, state governments, and NIST and other federal and research laboratories and agencies.

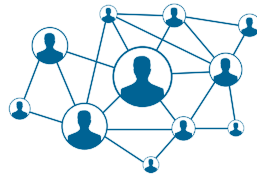


MEP Program in Short



Program Started in 1988

At least one center in all 50 states by 1996



National Network

58 Centers with over 550 Field Locations. System wide, Non-Federal Staff is over 1,200 and over 2,300 additional partners.



Partnership Model

Federal, State and Industry



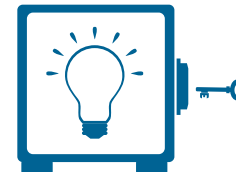
MEP System Budget

\$130 Million Federal Budget with Cost Share Requirements for Centers



Global Competitiveness

Program was created by the 1988 Omnibus Trade And Competitive Act



Evolving Role

Program continues to evolve in order to support manufacturers during changing economic situations.



MEP Strategic Plan

MISSION

To enhance the productivity and technological performance of U.S. manufacturing

ROLE

MEP's state and regional centers facilitate and accelerate the transfer of manufacturing technology in partnership with industry, universities and educational institutions, state governments, and NIST and other federal research laboratories and agencies.

PROGRAMMATIC STRENGTHS:

- National program with at least one center in every state and Puerto Rico.
- Federal/state, public-private partnership with local flexibility.
- Cost share policy that matches federal investment with state and private sector investment.
- Market driven program that responds to the needs of private sector manufacturers.
- Leverage partnering expertise as a strategic advantage.
- Local knowledge of, focus on, and access to manufacturers.

MEP Strategic Plan (2014-2017)

Strategic Goals

ENHANCE COMPETITIVENESS

Enhance the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturers, with particular focus on small and medium-sized companies.

CHAMPION MANUFACTURING

Serve as a voice to and a voice for manufacturing and manufacturers in engaging policy makers, stakeholders, and clients.

SUPPORT PARTNERSHIPS

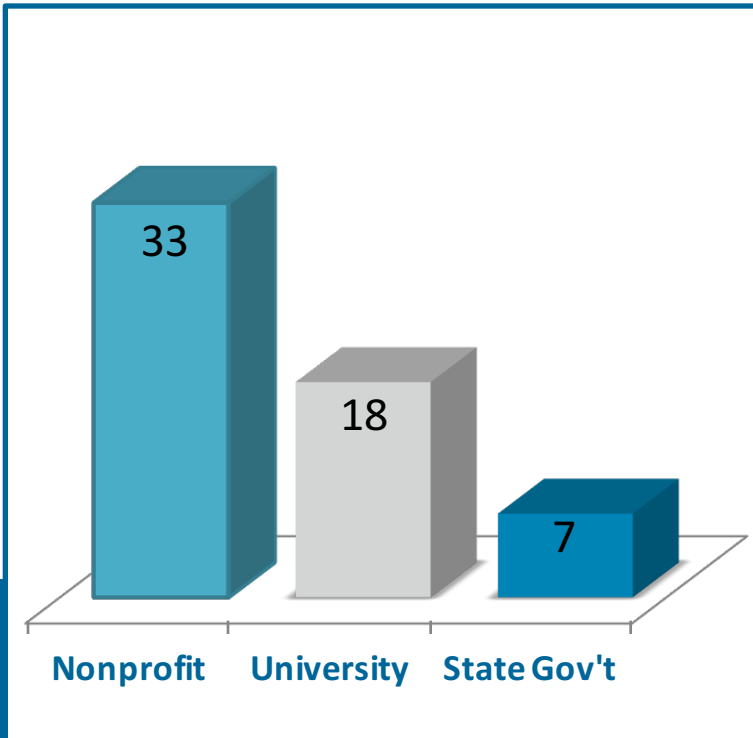
Support national, state, and regional manufacturing eco-systems and partnerships.

DEVELOP CAPABILITIES

Develop MEP's capabilities as a learning organization and high performance system.



Center Structure Diversity



Partnerships

Utilizes existing local resources to provide manufacturing extension services **relies heavily on partnerships**

Geography

Urban and Rural Areas.
Centers are never more than 2 hours away of a manufacturer.

Public & Private Sector

Staff are employees of the Center and its partners – **not** the Federal Government

Organization Type

Nonprofit
University
State Government

Organizational Structure

- Single location
- Principal organization with independent partner organizations
- Central office with regional offices
- Headquarters operation with multiple field offices

How Centers work with Manufacturers



1

Initial Contact

Group sessions, referral



2

Assessment

Informal walk-through, detailed company analysis



3

Identify

Find potential issues, define proposed project and approach for solving it



4

Negotiate

Consult with company and sign project contract with fee paid to center



5

Project Execution

Center staff, partner organization, and/or third party consultants



6

Follow-Up

After completion, project follow-up by center to assure customer satisfaction and explore further project opportunities



Project impact data collected by contractor for NIST approximately 6 months after project completion

What MEP Does



- ✓ Work with small and medium size manufacturers to help them create and retain jobs, increase profits and save time and money
- ✓ Focus on meeting manufacturer's short term needs, but in context of overall company strategy.
- ✓ Reach nearly **30,000 manufacturing firms** and complete over **12,000 projects** per year.
- ✓ Provides companies with a consistent set of services including:



Supply Chain Development



Technology Acceleration



Workforce Development



Lean Process

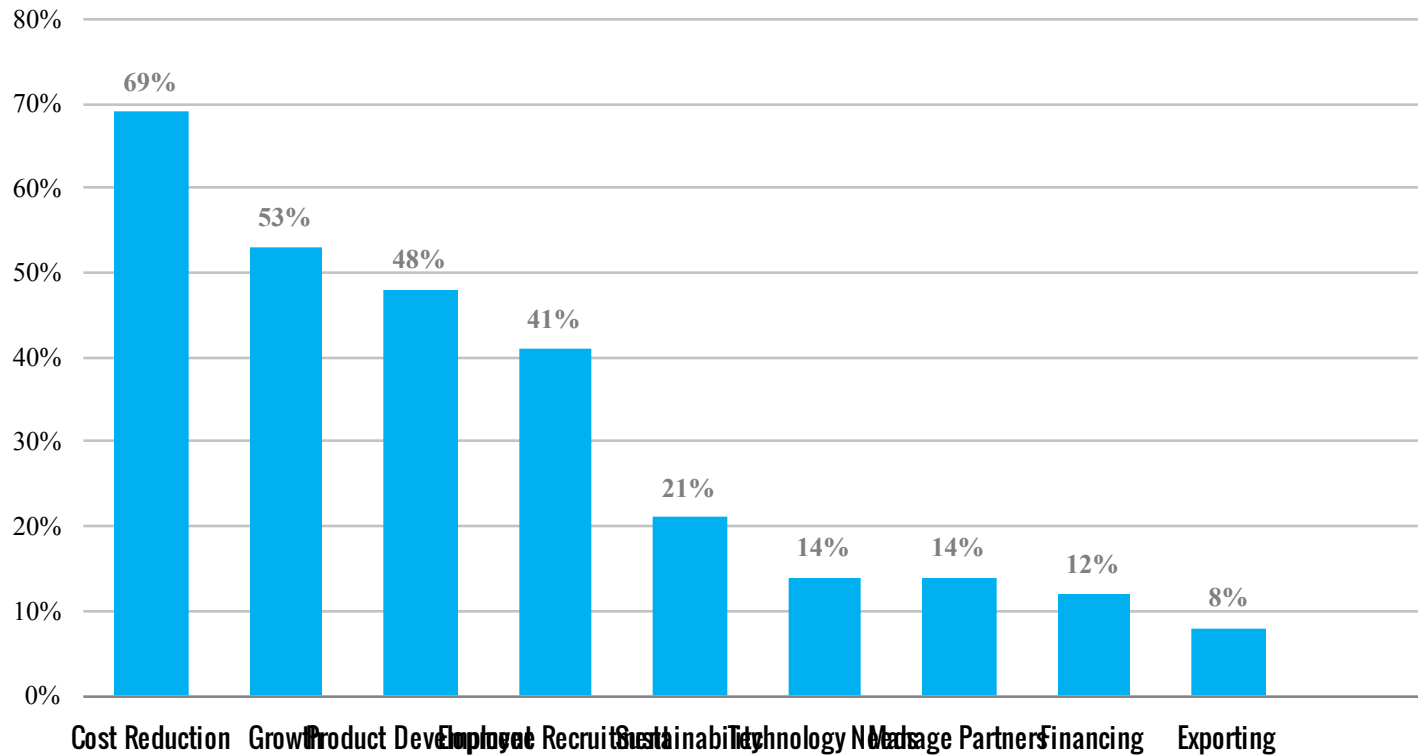


Innovation and Growth



Sustainability

Client Challenges



MEP Program Initiatives & Services



MEP's Program Initiatives & Services

are aimed to help manufacturers identify opportunities that will accelerate and strengthen their growth and competitiveness in the global marketplace

Partnerships

Centers serve as an invaluable partner to the manufacturing community by:



Educating

local and regional partners on small and medium sized manufacturer needs and drivers of behavior.



Providing Outreach

to manufacturers by connecting them to other programs and services offered by partner organizations.



Connecting the Gap

between technology developers / R&D organizations and manufacturers: finding firms that are interested in a particular technology, as well as informing tech developers of manufacturer's technology needs

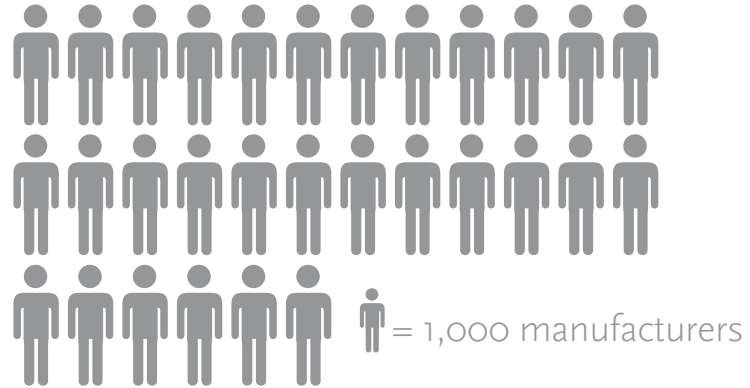


Supporting

workforce development programs.


Client Impacts

29,101
Manufacturers
served in FY15




JOBS RETAINED

49,011


JOBS CREATED

19,466


NEW CLIENT INVESTMENTS

\$3.2
Billion


COST SAVINGS

\$1.2
Billion


RETAINED SALES

\$5.7
Billion


NEW SALES

\$2.3
Billion

Funding Opportunity Overview (1)

- **Funding Opportunity Title:** Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) State Partnership Support Project
- **Funding Opportunity Description:**
 - *NIST invites proposals from eligible organizations to provide in-depth collaborative support in developing and advancing stakeholder relationships that are critical to the success of the MEP program, based on the recipient's expertise and knowledge of State manufacturing and technology agendas. NIST MEP is a federal-state-industry partnership program.*
 - *The MEP system of Centers and field offices throughout the U.S. provides a mechanism to integrate federal and state public policy goals, respond to market forces and address the needs of manufacturing sectors and of individual manufacturers.*
 - *To make the most of this partnership, NIST MEP strives to balance the priorities of U.S. national policy with those of state partners to create a robust and effective program providing U.S. manufacturers with the tools they need to grow and remain globally competitive.*

Funding Opportunity Overview (2)

- **Authority:** The statutory authority for this program is 15 U.S.C. §§ 272(b)(1), (b)(4), and (c)(18)
- **Funding Instrument:** Cooperative Agreement
 - The nature of NIST’s “substantial involvement” will generally be collaboration between MEP and the recipient organization(s).
 - Guidelines and assistance in developing scope of work;
 - Approval of key personnel;
 - Assistance, where possible, in accessing solutions to technical and managerial issues; and
 - Assistance to the Recipient organization to define, understand, and resolve issues pertaining to the successful implementation of the MEP project.

Funding Opportunity Overview (3)

- **Funding Available:**
 - NIST anticipates funding one (1) MEP cooperative award with a five-year (5) period of performance in accordance with the multi-year funding policy described in Section II.3. of this FFO. It is expected that funding for this award will be up to \$4,500,000 for the five-year period.
- NIST MEP funding for base level activities under this award will be up to \$750,000 per year.
- NIST MEP expects that the base-level activities will occur during all five years of the cooperative agreement. In addition, NIST MEP plans to work with the recipient to conduct more intensive, targeted activities in one of the five years (to be determined jointly) to proactively engage state and local leaders. While the specifics and timing of this year-long program will be jointly determined after award, the applicant should propose approaches that would accomplish the items specified in Section I.
- In the year selected for heightened activity (assume Year 3 for budgeting purposes), MEP anticipates providing up to an additional \$750,000 funding to support the expected increased activity, not to exceed \$1,500,000 total in federal funding for that year.

Funding Opportunity Overview (4)

Maximum Year 1 Federal Funding	Maximum Year 2 Federal Funding	Maximum Year 3 Federal Funding	Maximum Year 4 Federal Funding	Maximum Year 5 Federal Funding	Total Maximum Federal Funding for 5 Year Award Period
\$750,000	\$750,000	\$1,500,000 (which includes both base activities and targeted outreach activities)	\$750,000	\$750,000	\$4,500,000

Funding Opportunity Overview (5)

- Partnerships are critical to the success of MEP. In particular, regional, state and local partners:
 - demonstrate leadership to generate action to address regional, state and local challenges and opportunities;
 - set priorities for economic development and complementary activities (e.g., workforce, technology, sustainability, etc.) in their jurisdictions;
 - develop strategies and programs to advance those priorities; and
 - provide significant financial co-investment (non-federal cost share) that supports the operation of MEP Centers.

Funding Opportunity Overview (6)

- Base-level activities that will support stakeholder development:
 - Collecting and analyzing available data to inform strategies, services, and performance;
 - Conducting research about current practices and trends to inform MEP system program initiatives and policy decisions;
 - Developing and expanding the network of State, regional and local leaders supporting manufacturers, MEP Centers and the MEP mission;
 - Enabling MEP Centers to better align their work with State priorities; and
 - Increasing State support of MEP work.



Funding Opportunity Overview (7)

General categories of Intensive Year activities:

- convening meetings
- conducting targeted research
- consulting with individuals or groups of participants, and
- other such activities that help to accomplish intended outcomes.

Up to \$750,000 of additional MEP funding will be provided. (See Section II.2. of the FFO.)

Funding Opportunity Overview (8)

- A process for the intensive year might include steps to:
 - Target a selected number of States and regions with concentrations of manufacturers;
 - Directly engage teams of State, regional and local leaders from diverse backgrounds to explore and inform thinking about strategies to support and grow manufacturing;
 - Convene forums where State and local leaders can interact with MEP Center leaders around strategies to support manufacturing;
 - Provide opportunities for peer-to-peer learning among selected participants; and
 - Provide exposure to research and leading thinkers regarding strategies that work to support manufacturers in key areas such as accelerating companies' technology adoption, increasing access to new markets, fostering innovative approaches; and effective supply chain practices.

Funding Opportunity Overview (9)

- **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.
 - Recipients will be required to submit detailed budgets and budget narratives prior to the award of any continued funding.
 - Continued funding for the remaining years of the project will be awarded by NIST on a non-competitive basis, and may be adjusted higher or lower from year-to-year of the award, contingent upon satisfactory performance, continued relevance to the mission and priorities of the program, and the availability of funds.
 - Continuation of an award to extend the period of performance and/or to increase or decrease funding is at the sole discretion of NIST.
- **Eligible Applicants.**
 - Applicants must be a U.S.-based for-profit or not-for-profit institution or organization. An applicant may propose to work individually or may include proposed subawards to eligible organizations or proposed contracts with other organizations in its application, effectively forming a team.
- **Cost Share is not required under this project.**

Funding Opportunity Overview (10)

Kick-Off Conferences

- **Recipient will be required to attend a kick-off conference**, which will be held within the first 30 days of the start of the project period, to help ensure that the recipient has a clear understanding of the program and its project components.
- The kick-off conference will take place at NIST/MEP headquarters in Gaithersburg, MD, during which time NIST will:
 - (1) orient recipient personnel to the MEP program and plans for enhanced partnership relationships;
 - (2) explain program and financial reporting requirements and procedures;
 - (3) identify available resources that can enhance the capabilities of the recipient.
- The kick-off meeting will last no longer than one day and must be attended by the project manager and up to but not more than two additional key personnel who would play a significant role in managing the award.
- Applicants **must** include travel and related costs for the kick-off conference as part of the budget for year one (1), and these costs should be reflected in the SF-424A. (See Section IV.2.a.(2). of this FFO.)
- These costs must also be reflected in the budget table and budget narrative for year 1, which is submitted as part of the budget tables and budget narratives section of the Technical Proposal. (See Section IV.2.a.(6).(d). of this FFO.)
- Representatives from key subrecipients and other key strategic partners may attend the kick-off conference with the prior written approval of the Grants Officer. Applicants proposing to have key subrecipients and/or other key strategic partners attend the kick-off conference should clearly indicate so as part of the budget narrative for year one of the project.

Funding Opportunity Overview (11)

MEP System-Wide Meetings

- NIST/MEP typically organizes system-wide meetings approximately four times a year in an effort to share best practices, new and emerging trends, and additional topics of interest.
- These meetings are rotated throughout the United States and typically involve 3-4 days of resource time and associated travel costs for each meeting.
- The Project Manager and up to two key personnel must attend these meetings.
- Applicants **must** include travel and related costs for four quarterly MEP system-wide meetings in each of the five (5) project years (4 meetings per year; 20 total meetings over five-year award period).
- These costs must be reflected in the SF-424A (see Section IV.2.a.(2). of this FFO).
- These costs must also be reflected in the budget tables and budget narratives for each of the project's five (5) years, which are submitted in the budget tables and budget narratives section of the Technical Proposal. (See Section IV.2.a.(6).(d). of this FFO).

Evaluation Review Criteria:

The applications will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria described below.

- a. **Executive Summary and Project Narrative (50 – Sub-criteria will be weighted equally)**
 - i. Research/knowledge development and sharing (25 pts)
 - ii. Network building and expansion (25 pts)
- b. **Key Personnel and Organizational Structure (30 – Sub-criteria will be weighted equally)**
- c. **Budget (20 – Sub-criteria will be weighted equally)**

Review Criteria #1- Executive Summary and Project Narrative

- a) **Executive Summary and Project Narrative.** (50 points; sub-criteria will receive equal weight) Reviewers will evaluate how well the applicant's proposed approach will achieve project goals and support the MEP mission as described in Section I of the FFO. Reviewers will consider the following topics when evaluating the Executive Summary and Project Narrative:
- i. **Research/knowledge development and sharing** (25 points) Reviewers will assess the applicant's plans for collecting, analyzing, and sharing budget, policy, and trend information relevant to the MEP system. Reviewers will assess the extent to which the applicant's proposal:
- Describes a reasonable plan for routinely tracking and analyzing information from a wide range of data sources on current state budgets, economic development and technology policy initiatives and investments, program evaluation practices, and other actions or trends that could impact the MEP system;
 - Defines a thoughtful approach to conducting original research on topics of interest related to manufacturing, partnerships, accelerating technology adoption, and similar issues, and the policies and practices employed in States and other organizations; and
 - Defines a strategy for sharing information with and providing technical assistance to the MEP system, individual Centers, and partners to build system capacity, address challenges, and proactively take advantage of emerging opportunities.

Review Criteria #1- Executive Summary and Project Narrative continued

- ii. **Network building and expansion** (25 points) The applicant is expected to have an in-depth understanding of data, current trends, and emerging issues as well as access to a professional network of practitioners and experts who can inform the MEP system and their manufacturing clients. Reviewers will assess how well the proposal describes strategies, techniques and activities for building and expanding partnerships across the MEP network. . Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant's proposal:
- Incorporates clear strategies for fostering collaboration and dialogue among NIST MEP, MEP Centers, MEP partners, industry, and the public to develop effective working partnerships and identify mutually beneficial opportunities for the MEP system;
 - Defines a sound approach for prioritizing States and/or regions for attention, developing strategies to address opportunities and concerns, recommending effective communication strategies, and convening stakeholders as needed to facilitate partnership development;
 - Describes a reasonable plan to provide nationwide access to State and stakeholder relations and support services;
 - Provides innovative ideas and approaches to carry out the year of more intensive activities envisioned (in Year 3 for the purposes of this FFO).

Review Criteria #2- Key Personnel and Organizational Structure

- b. **Key Personnel and Organizational Structure**(30 points) Reviewers will assess the ability of the key personnel and the applicant's proposed management structure to deliver the services proposed. Reviewers will consider the following when evaluating the qualifications of the applicant and of program management:
- Proposed key personnel have the appropriate education, experience in working with state government representatives and related organizations, and access to professional networks to carry out proposed activities and support achievement of the MEP system mission and project objectives;
 - Proposed management structure and organizational roles are clearly defined and aligned to plan, direct, monitor, organize and oversee the implementation of the proposed approach to achieve project objectives; and
 - Proposed organizational structure flows logically from the specified approach to the proposed services and project deliverables.

Review Criteria #3 – Budget

- c) **Budget.** (20 points; sub-criteria will receive equal weight) Reviewers will assess the suitability and focus of the applicant's five (5) year budget. The reviewers will consider whether the:
- Proposed budget projections are reasonable and appropriate for the scale of services that are to be delivered by the applicant over the five (5) year project plan; and
 - Proposal's narrative explains the rationale for each of the budgeted items, including assumptions the applicant used in budgeting for the overall project, and the proposed budget is aligned to support the execution of the proposed project consistent with the objectives of the project and to advance MEP system goals.

Review and Selection Process (1)

Initial Administrative Review of Applications. An initial review of timely received applications will be conducted to determine eligibility, completeness, and responsiveness to the scope of the stated program objectives of this FFO. Applications determined to be ineligible, incomplete, and/or non-responsive will be eliminated from further review. However, NIST, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for an application that is missing only non-substantive information that can easily be rectified or cured.

Full Review of Eligible, Complete, and Responsive Applications. Applications that are determined to be eligible, complete, and responsive will proceed for full reviews in accordance with the review and selection processes below:

- (1) **Evaluation and Review.** Each application will be reviewed by at least three (3) technically qualified individual reviewers who will evaluate each application based on the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1. of this FFO). Reviews will be limited to technical and cost matters, based on the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1 of this FFO). A mix of Federal and non-Federal reviewers may be used. The reviewers' must discuss the applications with each other but scores will be determined on an individual basis, not as a consensus, and will be supported by written technical comments. The reviewers may ask questions of some or all applicants in writing. Reviewers will assign each application a score, based on the application's responsiveness to the FFO evaluation criteria, with a maximum score of 100.
 - Applicants whose applications receive an average score of 70 or higher out of 100 will be deemed finalists. If deemed necessary, all finalists will be invited to participate with reviewers in separate conference calls and/or all finalists will be invited to participate in individual site visits that will be conducted by the same reviewers at the applicant's location. Finalists will be reviewed and evaluated, and reviewers may revise their assigned numeric scores based on the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1. of this FFO) as a result of the conference call and/or site visit.

Review and Selection Process (2)

- **Ranking and Selection.** A rank order will be prepared based on the average of the reviewers' scores and assigned adjectival ratings in accordance with the following scale:
 - Fundable, Outstanding (91-100);
 - Fundable, Very Good (81-90);
 - Fundable (71-80); or
 - Unfundable (0-70).
- The Subject Matter Expert, who will be a NIST MEP federal employee, will review the evaluators' written technical comments and the ranking of the proposals and may recommend to the Selecting Official that awards be made out of rank order based upon one or more of the selection factors described in Section V.3. of this FFO.
- The Selecting Official is the MEP Director or designee. The Selecting Official makes the final recommendation to the NIST Grants Officer regarding the funding of applications under this FFO. NIST/MEP expects to recommend funding for the highest ranked applicant; however, the Selecting Official may decide to select an applicant out of rank order based upon one or more of the Selection Factors identified in Section V.3. of this FFO. The Selecting Official may also decide not to recommend funding any of the applicants.
- NIST reserves the right to negotiate the budget costs with any applicant selected to receive an award, which may include requesting that the applicant remove certain costs. Additionally, NIST may request that the successful applicant modify objectives or work plans and provide supplemental information required by the Agency prior to award. 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. 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.

Selection Factors

Selection Factors. The Selection Factors for this FFO are as follows:

- a. The availability of Federal funds;
- b. Relevance of the proposed project to MEP program goals and policy objectives;
- c. Reviewers' evaluations, including technical comments;
- d. Whether the project duplicates other projects funded by DoC or by other Federal agencies; and

Administrative Requirements of Application (1)

- Complete applications/proposals must, at a minimum, include the following forms and documents and meet the following requirements identified in the FFO which are:
- **Required Forms*:**
 - **SF-424 -Application for Federal Assistance**
 - The SF-424 must be certified through www.grants.gov by an authorized representative of the applicant organization.
 - SF-424, Item 12, should list the FFO number 2016-NIST-MEP-STATE PARTNERSHIP-01.
 - SF-424, Item 18, should list the total budget information for full five (5) years of the project.
 - The list of certifications and assurances referenced in Item 21 of the SF-424 is contained in the SF-424B.
 - **SF-424A's - Budget Information Non-Constructions (for all 5 years)**
 - The applicant should reflect all five (5) years of the project on the **SF-424A form**. Please carefully follow the directions found at
 - <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424a-instructions.html> when filling out this form.
 - **SF-424B -Assurances - Non-Construction Programs**
 - **CD-511 -Certification Regarding Lobbying**
 - **SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable)**
 - **Technical Proposal**

*Forms are available as part of the Grants.gov application kit

Administrative Requirements of Application (2)

Proposal Requirements (Section IV.2(a)(6)):

- **Technical Proposal.** The five (5) year Technical Proposal is a word-processed document not exceeding 25 pages responsive to the program description (see Section I. of this FFO) and the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1. of this FFO). The following is a suggested format that applicants may use for the technical proposal.
 - **Table of Contents** (Does not count towards page limit)
 - **Executive Summary** - The executive summary should briefly (usually no longer than two pages) describe the proposed project, consistent with the evaluation criteria (see Section V.1. of this FFO).

Please note, if an applicant's proposal is selected for funding, NIST may use all or a portion of the Executive Summary as part of a press release issued by NIST, or for other public information and outreach purposes. Applicants are advised not to incorporate information that concerns business trade secrets or other confidential commercial or financial information as part of the Executive Summary. See also 15 C.F.R. § 4.9(c) concerning the designation of business information by the applicant. (Does not count towards page limit).
 - **Project Narrative**
 - **Budget Tables and Budget Narratives**

Administrative Requirements of Application (3)

- **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 DoC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. (Does not count towards page limit)
- Alternatively, in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f), applicants that have never received a negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to charge indirect costs to an MEP award pursuant to a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (MTDC), in which case a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement is not required. 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.

- **Resumes**

- One-page resumes of no more than five key personnel may be included; these do not count toward the page limit.
- Any information beyond one page for each resume and any additional resumes submitted will not be considered.

- **Data Management Plan**

Administrative Requirements of Application (4)

- **Application Format (Section IV 2(b)):**
 - Page Limit. **The Technical Proposals are limited to twenty five (25) pages.** Information on pages beyond the page limit will not be considered.
 - Page limit **includes:** Cover page, Technical Proposal (with the exception of the Executive Summary), figures, graphs, tables, images, pictures, and all other pages of an application, with the exception of the page limit exclusions listed below.
 - Page limit **excludes:** Table of Contents, Executive Summary, SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance; the SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs form; SF-424B, Assurances – Non-Construction Programs; SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities; CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying; Table of Contents, Budget Tables and Budget Narratives; Indirect Cost Rate Agreement; Resumes; and the Data Management Plan.

Administrative Requirements of Application (5)

- **Dates:**

- Electronic applications must be received no later than 11:59 p.m via www.Grants.gov. Eastern Time on Monday, February 29, 2016.
- The approximate start date for awards under this FFO is expected to be June 1, 2016.
- *NIST will not accept applications submitted by mail, facsimile, or by email.*
- *Applications received after the respective deadline will not be reviewed or considered.*

Administrative Requirements of Application (6)

- **Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM).**
 - Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. part 25, applicants and recipients (as the case may be) 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.
 - *When developing your submission timeline, please keep in mind that (1) all applicants are required to have a current registration in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov); (2) the free annual registration process in the electronic System for Award Management (SAM.gov) (see Section IV.3 and Section IV.7.a.(1).b. of this FFO) may take between three and five business days or as long as more than two weeks; and (3) electronic applicants are required to have a current registration in Grants.gov; and (4) 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. Please note that a federal assistance award cannot be issued if the designated recipient's registration in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) is not current at the time of the award.*
 - *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 FFO, 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.*

Reporting Requirements

- The following reporting requirements described in Sections A.01 Performance (Technical) Reports and B.02 Financial Reports of the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions (December 26, 2014), <http://go.usa.gov/hKbj> apply to awards in this program (see Section VI.2.b. of this FFO):
 - **Financial Reports.** The Recipient shall submit an SF-425, Federal Financial Report, into the MEP's Enterprise Information System (MEIS) **on a semi-annual basis after the sixth and twelfth month of each operating year**, unless other reporting intervals and/or due dates are identified by the NIST Grants Officer pursuant to a Special Award Condition. Reports will be due within 30 days after the end of each semi-annual reporting period. The Recipient shall submit a final SF-425 within 90 days after the expiration date of the award.
 - **Performance (Technical) Reports.** The Recipient shall submit a Technical Report (completing all required MEIS fields) **on a semi-annual basis after the sixth and twelfth month of each operating year**, unless other reporting intervals and/or due dates are identified by the NIST Grants Officer pursuant to a Special Award Condition. Reports are due in MEIS no later than 30 days following the end of each reporting period. The Recipient shall submit a final Technical/Quarterly report within 90 days after the expiration date of the award. Technical/Quarterly Report details are accessible on the MEIS website (<https://meis.nist.gov/>). Technical progress reports shall contain information as prescribed in the NIST MEP Reporting Guidelines (OMB Control Number 0693-0032). For further information regarding the NIST MEP Reporting Process, you may download a copy of the NIST MEP Reporting Guidelines at <http://www.nist.gov/mep/ffo-statepartnership.cfm>.

Agency Contacts

Subject Area	Point of Contact
Administrative, budget, cost-sharing, eligibility questions and other programmatic questions.	Diane Henderson Phone: (301) 975-5105 Fax: (301) 963-6556 E-mail: mepffo@nist.gov
Technical Assistance with Grants.gov Submissions	Christopher Hunton Phone: (301) 975-5718 Fax: (301) 975-8884 E-mail: grants@nist.gov or Grants.gov Phone: (800) 518-4726 E-mail: support@grants.gov
Grant Rules and Regulations	Michael Teske Phone: (301) 975-6358 Fax: (301) 975-6368 E-mail: michael.teske@nist.gov

Have additional questions.....

Please submit all questions in writing to NIST MEP, mepffo@nist.gov

Questions and Answers will be posted regularly on the NIST MEP Public Site,
<http://www.nist.gov/mep/ffo-statepartnership.cfm>



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