

**DOE Responses to National Lab Questions**  
**DOE National Lab Program Announcement No. LAB 23-EM001**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Date Submitted</b>	<b>National Lab Question</b>	<b>DOE Response</b>	<b>Lab Call Reference</b>	<b>Response Posted</b>
1	6/9/2023	Is industry considered a “research partner” (section D of Lab Program Announcement/Instructions)?	Yes, industry is considered a research partner.	Section I, p. 8	6/14/2023
2	6/9/2023	I’m thinking of modification of existing industry technology to achieve a focus area priority, which would be more “applied research,” i.e., I assume this opportunity is not limited to only “basic research”?	Proposals should address the project topics given in the National Lab Program Announcement Number LAB 23-EM001 (Lab Call), and are not limited to basic research.	Section I	6/14/2023
3	6/9/2023	June 19 <sup>th</sup> is a Federal holiday ... is the deadline for the LOI still going to be 5 pm EST that day?	Yes, the deadline is provided on the cover page of the Lab Call.	Cover page	6/14/2023
4	6/9/2023	In terms of partnerships, does industry include EM contractors?	There are no restrictions on how National Labs form partnerships with industry.	Section I, p. 8	6/14/2023
5	6/9/2023	Within a focus area can a proposal address more than 1 priority area?	Yes, as long as the proposal clearly states so.	Section I	6/14/2023
6	6/9/2023	Can a proposal include more than 1 focus area? What about if the research topic addresses one focus area, but has an impact on another focus area, should that be included in the proposal?	If the proposed technology is truly cross cutting, a proposal can address more than 1 focus area. Please provide clear explanation how it will address the other focus area(s). However, proposals should not be submitted to more than 1 focus area for the sole purpose of avoiding the limitation on submissions.	Section I	6/14/2023
7	6/9/2023	Could you clarify about the restrictions on no more than 2 proposals per focus area, some having higher priorities than the others? Would proposing to more than 1 focus area affect the number limitation per focus area?	The intent is not to have very disconnected parts of the proposals. If you have very interconnected ideas for addressing more than 1 focus area, you can team them up. However, applying to more than 1 focus area, would not affect the limitation on number of priority areas per proposal.	Section III	6/14/2023
8	6/9/2023	How do you ensure reviewers are aware of potential duplicates with the ongoing research funded by the Site, the EM Technology Development Office or other DOE programs?	We will take that need into consideration when putting the review teams together and when selecting the proposals for award.	N/A	6/14/2023
9	6/9/2023	Some Labs may not have all the information on what the Handford site is currently doing, if we propose something that is already being considered and underway, does that disqualify us? How can Labs be made aware of what is happening to avoid duplicate work?	Proposals should demonstrate a clear understanding of current site mission work.	Section V, p. 21	6/14/2023
10	6/12/2023	I was unable to attend the webinar. Could you point me to the posted recording?	The Webinar recording and presentation are posted on the DOE EM Website:	N/A	6/14/2023
11	6/12/2023	I am wondering what should be included in the Letter of Intent for the EM Call. Only the list of Lead PIs from the institutions proposed (no other Key Personnel?), themes to be addressed, but no budget, no COI?	In the Letter of Intent, "National Laboratories should submit a list of Lead PIs for all partnering institutions and intended project areas to EM-LabCall@em.doe.gov for all anticipated proposals by the due date as printed on the cover of this Announcement". The Lead PIs include all key personnel that you propose.	Section IV.B.1	6/14/2023

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12	6/13/2023	The PAMS database has "N/A" for a Letter of Intent. See screen shot below. Is this an error, or are we to provide an LOI in the database for each project proposal, in addition to the list sent to EM-LabCall@em.doe.gov, as required in Section IV.B.1, Letter of Intent and Pre-Proposal, page 13, of the Lab Announcement Lab-23-EM-001?	The Letter of Intent needs to be submitted only to EM-LabCall@em.doe.gov.	Section IV.B.1	6/14/2023
13	6/13/2023	Section IV.B.1, Letter of Intent and Pre-Proposal, page 13, states that a list of Lead PIs for all partnering institutions and intended project areas be sent to the EM-LabCall@em.doe.gov email address. This does not appear to be a typical PAMS Letter of Intent, as only an aggregated list of PIs/project areas (no abstract) is requested by June 19, as compared to the PAMS database which requires a Letter of Intent be submitted for each project proposal, that includes an abstract also be provided for each, as well as other information regarding the nature of the project.	This is not a typical Office of Science -type of Lab Call. National Labs should only submit the Letter of Intent with the required information (i.e., a list of Lead PIs for all partnering institutions and intended project areas for all anticipated proposals) to EM-LabCall@em.doe.gov.	Section IV.B.1	6/14/2023
14	6/13/2023	Section IV.B.1, Letter of Intent and Pre-Proposal, page 13, of the Lab Announcement Lab-23-EM-001, states that a list of "Lead PIs for all partnering institutions" be sent to the EM-LabCall email. It was my understanding that there is typically only one PI from the "Lead Laboratory" and that other partners contributed "Co-Investigators" (see Section IV, page 15 example to be included in the actual proposal abstract). So for the Letter of Intent, are we to provide these Co-investigators in the list for the project partners, or are there indeed multiple PIs for one Focus Area proposal	If you have only one lead PI from the lead lab and name the other PIs co-investigators, then please submit that PI and the co-investigators from the partnering institutions.	Section IV.B.1	6/14/2023
15	6/14/2023	I am writing because I have just registered in PAMS and added myself to our institution. I am new to the system so I went in and found the solicitation, and there is not an option to upload an LOI, and where the due date should be shows N/A. Has there been a modification to the mentioned call, and if so, can you please send it to me so that we can inform our interested Pi's of the change? If the LOI is still required and due on Monday, can you please provide guidance as to how the PI should upload?	Please see response to Question 12	Section IV.B.1	6/15/2023
16	6/14/2023	On page 17 of the announcement, the instructions for biographical sketches indicate that biographical sketches must not exceed 2 pages. However, the NSF Approved Format linked on page 28 ( <a href="https://nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/nsfapprovedformats/biosketch.pdf">https://nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/nsfapprovedformats/biosketch.pdf</a> ) is 3 pages and when produced using SciENcv, the guidance is that the biographical sketch cannot exceed 3 pages. Can you please clarify the page limit for biographical sketches?	Thank you for pointing out the discrepancy in the number of pages allowed for biographical information between Section IV, p. 17 and Section VIII, p. 28. The biographical information for each PI/key personnel should not exceed 3 pages.	Section IV, p. 17 Section VIII, p. 28	6/15/2023

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17	6/14/2023	While all of the labs appreciate the opportunity to respond to this important mission for EM, I think several of us are very concerned about the initial response timing. A week and a half does not give much time for the labs to coordinate a well integrated response. It's not clear to us why the initial intention is due almost a month before the proposals. One of the reasons the NNLEMS teams recommended brief pre-proposals was to give an opportunity for similar or complementary proposals to be jointly submitted. As currently scoped the call appears to miss that ability to form synergy and provide integrated solutions for the Hanford mission. The full proposal without screening also required a lot of work by the individual institutions for all proposals submitted which was also something we thought was an unnecessary burden when DOE's resources are stretched thin.	As was discussed during the Informational Webinar, the schedule for the Letter of Intent was set to allow time to establish the teams for peer reviews. Since NNLEMS have worked on the development of the R&D Roadmap and recommended the scope of work for the focus areas and priority areas and even identified the leads for each of the areas, and since DOE has encouraged the National Labs to plan for the upcoming Lab Call since they submitted the Roadmap in October 2022, we did not feel it was necessary to include a pre-application for this Lab Call.  The National Labs have until July 17 to submit the full proposals. In the event that a National Lab would like to request adjustments to their proposed lead PIs and priority areas after the submittal of the Letter of Intent, DOE will be willing to consider the request on a case by case basis.	Section IV, p. 13	6/15/2023
18	6/21/2023	I am writing because we sent our list of LOI's by the due date printed on the Hanford EM call and our institution had a question regarding full proposals. Due to the quick turnaround time for full proposals, we would like to start the process of collecting required information to ensure timely and accurate submission of full proposal documents. Can you let us know how and when we will be informed if full proposal will be encouraged or discouraged for each of the interested applicants we submitted?	There will not be any DOE feedback on the Letters of Intent, as there is no requirement for pre-proposal. The Letters of Intent are used primarily to set up peer review teams. The full proposals are due by July 17, 2023.	Section IV.E	6/26/2023
19	6/20/2023	For the instructions on the cover page to the Project Narrative, the call instructs to list the DOE/EM Program Office. Is there a specific EM program office that this call aligns to, or is this something we should identify ourselves based on the project topic? We are not very familiar with submitting to EM so we aren't necessarily sure which program this would fall under.	On the cover page of your project narrative, you can list the EM Lab Policy Office as the EM program office responsible for this program.	Section I, p. 1	6/27/2023
20	6/23/2023	We, Lab A, a university, and potentially Lab B team, are preparing a proposal, responding to Focus Area 1-Priority research area 6 about "improved methods to detect/repair leaks for storage tanks." We would like to get more in-depth information on the limitations and challenges of the current tank infrastructure methods to detect leaks detection. We would really appreciate your help and if you could direct us to the right resource/source.	Please see response to Question 9.	Section V, p. 21	9/12/2023

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21	6/23/2023	Are there any restrictions on Foreign National's participation? We have a UK team member, working in the US on a work visa, that we plan to team with. Is there any problem with this?	As discussed at the Second Informational Webinar on August 28, 2023, there are no other restrictions on foreign national's participation in this program, as long as the National Labs comply with DOE P 485.1A and DOE O 486.1A and DOE O 142.3B, and any other applicable requirements. Please also note that there are disclosure requirements, e.g., biosketch, and current and pending support, in the Lab call.	N/A	9/12/2023
22	6/27/2023	In addition, are there restrictions on foreign nationals affiliated with universities, National labs, and foreign owned companies.	Please see response to Question 21.	N/A	9/12/2023
23	9/1/2023	We appreciate the overview of current Hanford and TD activities, but what wasn't clear was how the \$20M of funds to DOE-ORP from the \$50M allocated for the roadmap will be used. This information is needed to avoid submitting Lab proposals that are duplicative of work that is already planned and funded by ORP.	Additional information on the \$20M Site-led TD projects that support the near-term project deliverables will be posted to the EM Website ( <a href="https://www.energy.gov/em/hanford-tank-waste-national-laboratory-funding-announcement">https://www.energy.gov/em/hanford-tank-waste-national-laboratory-funding-announcement</a> ).		9/12/2023
24	9/1/2023	Please specify who all should be cited on the proposal abstracts. Is it sufficient to list only the lead PI from each proposal partner? Should additional contributors (i.e., multiple people from the same institution) also be listed?	As the example in Section IV.B.2 illustrates, please list the Lead Lab PI and key contributors from all partnering institutions.	Section IV.B.2	9/12/2023
25	9/1/2023	Please specify who is required to provide a bio-sketch. Is it required for all the lead PIs? Only the Lead Laboratory partners? All contributors?	Section IV, Appendix I states "Provide a biographical sketch for the PI and each senior/key person as an appendix to your technical narrative."	Section IV, Appendix I	9/12/2023
26	9/1/2023	Upon award, will the lead lab be able to add, or change, subcontractor or university partners? This flexibility may be needed to adapt the research based on preliminary data results and/or emerging issues.	After award, requests to change partnering institutions will be reviewed by EM on a case-by-case basis.	Section III.D	9/12/2023
27	9/1/2023	General Comment: The competitive call as written does not address maintenance of the existing competencies of the labs (that are necessary to assist with the EM mission) and promotes more competition instead of collaboration.	EM is pursuing a balanced, sustainable R&D portfolio that includes both competitive and non-competitive research elements. This Lab Call focuses on competitive research that aims at developing breakthrough technologies that can significantly reduce the life cycle cost and accelerate the schedule for the Hanford tank waste mission.	N/A	9/12/2023

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28	9/1/2023	Regarding: "INDIVIDUALS WHO SHOULD NOT SERVE AS MERIT REVIEWERS Follow the updated instructions in Section VIII and consider the use of the template available at <a href="https://science.osti.gov/grants/Policy-and-Guidance/Agreement-Forms">https://science.osti.gov/grants/Policy-and-Guidance/Agreement-Forms</a> . Do not include this list as part of the biographical sketch." Comment: It would be far easier for the reviewers to identify when they have conflicts. This practice is used for SBIR proposals to the TD office.	Including a list of persons who should not serve as merit reviewers is standard practice for similar Lab Calls within DOE. It should be rather straightforward to provide the required information for the lead PI and key personnel as described in Section VIII.A.4. PIs who have submitted to other funding sources should have this list already available and the time burden should be minimal. Providing this information allows DOE to eliminate some conflicts of interest more efficiently.	Page ii	9/12/2023
29	9/1/2023	Regarding: "Proposals must ensure that the lead National Lab performs a greater portion of the scientific and technical work than any other team member." Comment: This requirement is not needed and reduces flexibility. It looks to be intended to prevent a lab from skirting the 7-proposal total. (See next comment).	Section III.D states that "The designated lead National Laboratory must perform a greater percentage of the effort than any other partner organization or sub-awardee." This requirement is intended to ensure that funding from this Lab Call goes to the Lab that has the most promising project and also manages the effort holistically.	Section III.D	9/12/2023
30	9/1/2023	Regarding: "Each proposal must identify a lead DOE National Laboratory. Each DOE National Laboratory is limited to no more than seven (7) proposals as the lead lab, with no more than two (2) proposals per focus area." Comment: Some labs are more familiar with the science and technology needed to fulfill the tank waste mission, as an example SRNL is the corporate laboratory and has been successfully providing R&D for the SRS tank waste mission for over 40 years. This constraint ignores that reality and represents an unnecessary restriction that may hinder the best solutions coming forward. It also doesn't necessarily allow for EM relevant capabilities to be maintained nor help foster collaboration amongst the labs.	EM anticipates funding 10 – 15 awards through this Lab Call. EM is interested in receiving proposals from multi-institutional teams led by DOE National Labs. Each lab is allowed up to 7 awards as a Lead Lab, which is approximately 50-70% of the total awards. There is a great deal of R&D work to be done in support of the Hanford tank waste mission. Therefore, additionally, each lab is also encouraged to participate in other multi-institutional teams, which should promote collaboration across the labs and provide the full capabilities of NNLEMS to support the Hanford tank waste mission.	Section III.D	9/12/2023
31	9/1/2023	Regarding: "Requests to change the institution performing the greatest portion of the scientific and technical work after a proposal is submitted will result in the proposal being declined unless the request is the result of the lead PI's death, incapacitation, or relocation." Comment: Unnecessary restriction given the direction of the R&D could make one partner more suited to perform the work scope than another.	The referenced language is for the period leading up to project evaluation and award. After the award, requests to change the Lead Lab will be evaluated by EM on a case-by-case basis.	Section III.D	9/12/2023

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32	9/1/2023	Regarding: "APPENDIX 4: FACILITIES & OTHER RESOURCES" and "APPENDIX 5: EQUIPMENT" Comment: Since only National Labs are eligible for this call, and the capabilities of these labs is known to EM, these sections seem unnecessary. Partners capabilities do not need to be addressed as the lead lab will be responsible for completing the work scope.	One idea underpinning this Lab Call is to bring in new people and approaches to partner with the National Labs in an effort to develop breakthrough technologies. For that purpose, the unique capabilities of the partnering institutions would be extremely useful to know. If the partnering PI will conduct research at a Lab using lab facilities and equipment, please indicate so in the proposal.	Section IV, Appendices 4 and 5	9/12/2023
33	9/5/2023	A question came up about the Senior/Key persons we list on our LOI. Can you please let us know if two labs are partnering, in this case Lab A, and Lab B, would it be sufficient to list one PI at Lab A as Senior/Key and one PI at LANL as the Senior/key PI, who will then obtain all information from the partnering academia and industry partners, or should we list a Senior/Key person for all partners i.e. universities? We are asking these questions as LANL will be leading this proposal, with SRNL as partner. LANL has their own list of academia partners as does SRNL, all of which will be working on the same proposal in question.	Please see the response to Question 24.	Section IV.B.2	9/12/2023
34	9/5/2023	We submitted a proposal to the earlier version of the call in response to the original due date in July. Do we need to resubmit the proposal in PAMS in response to the revised call?	There is no need to resubmit.	N/A	9/12/2023
35	9/20/2023	We are preparing our EM-Lab Call proposal budgets and have a question regarding funding. In cases where two National Laboratories are partnering on a proposal, will each Lab receive the funding separately via Work Authorization? Or will the Lead Lab receive all the funding and then send the partner lab funding via an MPO? (The answer impacts how the budget forms are filled out).	We plan to fund the partnering labs through separate Work Authorizations (WAs). The costs for other partners (including Non-DOE FFRDCs, universities and industry partners) will be included in the WA for the Lead Lab.	N/A	9/21/2023
36	9/27/2023	There is an error in PAMS: The EM Lab Call proposal due date shows as 10/6/2023 instead of 10/16/2023 (as it appears in LAB 23-EM-001, Amendment 001). PAMS will prematurely suspend the portal on the 6th unless the submission date is corrected.	Thank you for catching this error. The EM Lab Call proposal due date has been corrected to be 10/16/2023 in PAMS.	N/A	9/28/2023
37	9/27/2023	Do we know an estimated date of award for budget sheet completeness?	It is anticipated that the award selection will be completed by December 2023 and that awards will be made in Fiscal Year 2024.	Section V.C	9/28/2023
38	9/27/2023	Are we able to add lead PI's to the list we included on our LOIs for proposal submission?	As discussed at the August 28 Informational Webinar, "In the event that a National Lab would like to request adjustments to their proposed lead PIs for any participating institution(s) and any project/priority area(s) after the submittal of the LOI, DOE will be willing to consider the request on a case-by-case basis."	N/A	9/28/2023
39	9/27/2023	We missed the deadline for submitting the letter of intent, but we are interested in submitting a full proposal. Is this still possible?	See response to item 38	N/A	9/28/2023

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40	10/6/2023	I had a question on changes to the personnel for the lab call. One of our partners from the LOI submission has dropped out, and we have identified a different PI who is interested in joining the proposal instead, but his university affiliation will be ending in May 2024. In this case are we able to add personnel as a paid consultant at this stage? If so, is this budgeted under the “consultant services” category in the budget justification or treated as a subrecipient?	Please revise the LOI with the new PI’s information, and include the PI's costs under the “consultant services” category in the proposal.	Section IV.B.2; Section VIII.A.6	10/10/2023
41	10/9/2023	For the LAB23-EM001 proposal title page, there is a field requesting the DOE/EM Program Office. What is the correct response?	The responsible EM Program Office is the Laboratory Policy Office.	Section IV.C.4	10/10/2023