

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
OFFICE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY
NEPA DETERMINATION**



RECIPIENT: U.S. Department of Energy - Office of Manufacturing and Energy Supply Chains **STATE:** DC

PROJECT TITLE: Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: Industrial Assessment Center (IAC) Program -IACs at Trade Schools, Community Colleges, and Union Training Programs;and Building Training and Assessment Centers (BTAC) Program FOA

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0002940		GFO-FOA-0002940-002	

Based on my review of the information concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (authorized under DOE Policy 451.1), I have made the following determination:

CX, EA, EIS APPENDIX AND NUMBER:

Description:

A9 Information gathering, analysis, and dissemination	Information gathering (including, but not limited to, literature surveys, inventories, site visits, and audits), data analysis (including, but not limited to, computer modeling), document preparation (including, but not limited to, conceptual design, feasibility studies, and analytical energy supply and demand studies), and information dissemination (including, but not limited to, document publication and distribution, and classroom training and informational programs), but not including site characterization or environmental monitoring. (See also B3.1 of appendix B to this subpart.)
A11 Technical advice and assistance to organizations	Technical advice and planning assistance to international, national, state, and local organizations.
B3.2 Aviation activities	Aviation activities for survey, monitoring, or security purposes that comply with Federal Aviation Administration regulations.

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) issued a Funding Opportunity Announcement (DE-FOA-0002940) to seek applications that would lead to the selection of up to 90 awards. Two of the three topic areas within the FOA would support the establishment of new Industrial Assessment Centers (IACs) at community colleges, trade schools, and union training programs (including joint labor-management programs) to build on the success of the traditional IACs established at colleges and universities. A third topic area would provide grants to institutions of higher education to establish building training and assessment centers (BTACs) to educate and train building technicians and engineers on implementing modern building technologies.

DOE previously completed a FOA-wide NEPA Determination (ND) (GFO-FOA-0002940-001; CX A9, A11; 05/12/23) that applied to the issuance of the FOA as well as all awards selected under the FOA, provided the scope of the selected awards remained consistent with the intent of the FOA as described. If selected applicants proposed to use project funds for activities outside the scope of the ND, additional NEPA review would be required.

This ND applies to three awards from the FOA that would involve activities using small unmanned aerial systems (sUAS/drones), which are outside the scope of the ND signed on 05/12/23. The awards are for the following IACs: Sinclair Community College, Community College of Rhode Island, and Illinois Community College Board. The IACs would work with local/regional small- and medium-sized manufacturing facilities (SMMs) to improve energy efficiency. Once SMMs are identified, site-specific information would be provided to the DOE Technical Project Officer. Per IAC Program policy, sites would be within 150 miles of the IAC. Drones purchased would be selected from the Defense Innovation Unit's Blue UAS Cleared List.

Award recipients are responsible for ensuring that all activities involving sUAS are compliant with 14 CFR Part 107 or an applicable Certificate of Waiver or Authorization (COA). This includes, but is not limited to, aircraft requirements such as remote pilot-in-command certification, authorities, and responsibilities; ensuring the sUAS is in a condition for safe operation; registration; understanding airspace classifications and requirements; and accident reporting (if applicable).

The proposed project activities include conducting energy efficiency site assessments at SMMs. Drones equipped with thermal imaging cameras and other sensing technology would be used during the on-site portion of the assessments to examine existing conditions of the facilities. The drones would be flown inside the SMMs and immediately adjacent

to the exterior of the building(s) to gather non-invasive energy data related to the building envelope, lighting fixtures, etc. Collected data would be analyzed to determine energy loss and make recommendations on how to correct or reduce those losses.

The proposed project activities would be limited to building envelopes/footprints. No facilities would be modified, and the use, mission, or operation of existing facilities would not be changed. No ground disturbing activities would occur, and no equipment would be installed outdoors.

DOE has considered the scale, duration, and nature of proposed activities to determine potential impacts on resources, including those of an ecological, historical, cultural, and socioeconomic nature. DOE does not anticipate impacts on these resources which would be considered significant or require DOE to consult with other agencies or stakeholders.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Include the following condition in the financial assistance agreement:

These awards include the use of small unmanned aerial systems (sUAS). Award recipients are responsible for ensuring that all activities involving sUAS are compliant with 14 CFR Part 107 or an applicable Certificate of Waiver or Authorization (COA). This includes, but is not limited to, aircraft requirements such as remote pilot-in-command certification, authorities, and responsibilities; ensuring the sUAS is in a condition for safe operation; registration; understanding airspace classifications and requirements; and accident reporting (if applicable).

This NEPA Determination applies to proposed sUAS activities for awards selected under the FOA for the Sinclair Community College IAC, the Community College of Rhode Island IAC, and the Illinois Community College Board IAC. If selected applicants propose to use project funds for activities outside the scope of the NEPA Determinations completed for this FOA, additional NEPA review would be required.

Notes:

Office of Manufacturing and Energy Supply Chains (MESC)
This NEPA Determination requires legal review of the tailored NEPA provision.
NEPA review completed by Melissa Parker, 06/10/24.

FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATIONS

The proposed action (or the part of the proposal defined in the Rationale above) fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D. To fit within the classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, a proposal must be one that would not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders; (2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities; (3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph B(4) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B; (5) involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B.

There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

The proposed action has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. This proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: _____

 Electronically
Signed By: **Matthew Blevins**

NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 6/12/2024

FIELD OFFICE MANAGER DETERMINATION

- Field Office Manager review not required
- Field Office Manager review required

BASED ON MY REVIEW I CONCUR WITH THE DETERMINATION OF THE NCO :

Field Office Manager's Signature: _____

Field Office Manager

Date: _____