

Solicitation 4.0 Questions & Answers

This document provides answers to questions submitted in regards to NOWRDC's Solicitation 4.0. More information on the solicitation is available in the Solicitation 4.0 Request for Proposals (RFP) and other documents available on NOWRDC's solicitation webpage: <https://nationaloffshorewind.org/solicitations/>

If we haven't gotten to your question, please submit it via email to info@nationaloffshorewind.org with the subject line "Solicitation 4.0 Inquiry".

Please clarify the geographic eligibility for proposers.

Proposals are welcomed from all geographic locations within the United States. Additional geographic eligibility parameters outlined in Section V of the RFP.

Can I submit a proposal to NOWRDC if I've submitted one before?

Any individual or entity qualified in the solicitation topic matter is welcome and encouraged to submit a proposal for consideration. Prior or current project awardees under prior NOWRDC solicitations are also welcome to submit concepts intended to continue their awarded work to date, provided said concepts meet the general criteria of the solicitation, including subject matter.

How many applications can I submit?

Proposers may submit a maximum of three proposals as a prime applicant in any single NOWRDC solicitation. There are no such limitations for project partners or sub-awardees (non-prime).

Could you clarify whether "proposer" refers to the institution or the individual PI?

Proposer refers to the institution, and not the individual PI.

In section XIII. Topic Area Specific Questions, there are two subsections labeled "Category 1 requirements UUV portfolio" and "Category 2 requirements Technology Advancement". Can you clarify where to find this information in the solicitation, and advise on which questions/sections should be answered or ignored?

On page 10 of the RFP, the "Proposed Innovation" section contains options for proposing innovation under "1. Uncrewed Underwater Vehicles (UUV) Portfolio Innovation...", "2. Innovative UUV Technology Advancement...", and 3 for projects proposing to do both 1 and 2. In the proposal narrative, complete the corresponding category requirements. For a project proposing to do both 1 and 2, then be sure to complete all questions.

How much total funding is available for the entire Solicitation 4.0?

Up to \$10.6M is available for Solicitation 4.0.



Do you have to be a member of NOWRDC to submit a proposal?

No, applicants do not have to be a member of NOWRDC to submit a proposal. NOWRDC intends to support projects in partnership with the best research and innovation organizations to achieve maximum impact. Proposals are welcomed from all geographic locations within the United States, with additional eligibility parameters outlined in Section V. Project Eligibility and Requirements of the RFP.

Do all Funding Category C - Demonstration of Technologies, Systems or Services projects need to take place in California?

No. The California Energy Commission is providing a portion of the funding available for each topic area, and their funding, if awarded to a demonstration project, requires that the demonstration project take place in the state of California. There is additional funding available in each topic area from other agencies that has no such restriction.

For projects spanning multiple funding categories, for example A+B, is the project capped at the B budget and duration limit, or the combined A+B limit?

Projects comprised of multiple funding categories may propose up to the combined budget and duration limit of both categories. For example, a project proposing a multi-category project comprised of Category A Feasibility Study (Phase I) and Category B Product Development (Phase II) may propose a budget up to \$1,450,000 and a project duration up to 48 months. Proposers should review the RFP in depth to assess the additional requirements pertaining to multi-phase projects, and the evaluation criteria pertaining to project budget and time duration.

The RFP mentions a NOWRDC advisory board. Is the advisory board provided to funded projects, or should advisory boards be put together by the project team as a part of the proposal?

Projects are welcome, but not required, to form an advisory board as a part of their proposal. This can help demonstrate industry engagement with and validation of the proposed technology. NOWRDC will form advisory boards for all awarded projects that do not have pre-existing advisory boards.

What are the restrictions for partnerships with educational institutions outside of the United States?

As stated in Section V. Project Eligibility and Requirements, Subsection A. Geographic Eligibility, the lead applicant must be based in the geographic United States. For any projects partnering formally with educational institutions, or other organizations, outside of the United States as a subcontractor, the applicant must justify why the proposed subcontractor scope is based abroad and how their work benefits a U.S.-specific offshore wind challenge. Beyond the geographic eligibility parameters outlined in the RFP related to prime applicants and subcontractors, NOWRDC does not impose limit or regulation on partnerships with educational institutions outside of the United States.

Is it possible to have part of proposals be confidential?

As stated under Section V. Project Eligibility and Requirements of the RFP, applications can be subject to public records requests under the Freedom of Information Act and the California Public Records Act (Cal. Gov. Code sections 7920.000 et al.) and applicants should consider this ahead of including confidential information in their application.

Are there strict limits on what activities are allowed in different funding categories of projects? For example, can laboratory testing be a part of a Category A project if it helps show the feasibility of a particular technology?

Proposers must complete the Attachment B3: TRL/CRL Calculator to determine the development stage of their technology, and select the most appropriate funding category to advance the technical and commercial development of that technology. Proposals will be scored based on whether the selected Funding Category is appropriate for the proposed solution.

Is Solicitation 4.0 open to projects proposed in U.S. territories such as Guam?

Yes, so long as the project proposed is in line with the intent and focuses stated in the topic areas.

Are federal agencies or government organizations eligible to serve as a PI in a project and receive funding?

Federal agencies, with the exception of federally funded national labs, are not able to receive funding under this Solicitation.

How is funding allocated across the various topic areas, and is there a specific percentage of funds reserved for California projects across these topics and categories?

As stated in the RFP, NOWRDC reserves the right to add or remove funding from any topic area. The allocation of funds to different categories and projects is not pre-determined.

Can NOWRDC funding be used as a non-federal source for cost sharing? For example, DOE has a funding opportunity for offshore wind with a requirement for cost sharing using non-federal sources.

Applicants should further clarify this with the funding agency they are seeking to apply NOWRDC funding as cost share to. Since there is federal funding in Solicitation 4.0, funding issued by NOWRDC under Solicitation 4.0 likely cannot count as non-federal cost share.

Are ASVs, tethered ROVs, and/or untethered ROVs eligible under topic area 3?

- **Remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) are tethered or untethered underwater robots used for research, exploration, and imagery collection in the water column and on the seafloor.**
- **Autonomous Surface Vehicles (ASVs) are surface marine vehicles capable of navigating and moving themselves in the water.**



As stated in Topic Area 3 in the RFP, this topic area is specifically designed to spur innovation in uncrewed underwater vehicles (UUVs) in midwater and benthic habitats. Autonomous surface vehicles (ASVs) are therefore ineligible under Topic Area 3.

Applicants proposing projects under Topic Area 3 should review the topic area description carefully in order to best shape their project to meet the goals of the topic area, including to develop “autonomous systems to replace longstanding conventional monitoring regimes such as wildlife/fisheries surveys”. Topic Area 3 is also intended to test “autonomous systems...in the depths and conditions associated with floating offshore wind infrastructure planned off the U.S. West Coast.” As stated in the Proposed Innovation Section - “priority innovation themes for this topic include precise and safe UUV navigability in the vicinity of anticipated floating offshore wind infrastructure, and technology development and testing of systems that may be able to mitigate or minimize anticipated impacts by floating offshore wind development to one or more ongoing scientific surveys (e.g., protected species, fisheries, physical oceanography).”

We also note that in Attachment A – Topic Area 3 specific-questions, there is further language detailing the technical considerations that will be scored.