

2019 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CENTERS FOR ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY (CAT) PROGRAM

RFP Number: 19-6133

Frequently Asked Questions (Received through 2/15/19)

AMENDED 3/20/19

- *The last row on the cover page template asks for identification of specific application area(s) of the Technology Focus in which the CAT will specialize (refer to Section 1.F.). Section 1.F is “Activities to be support with ESD funds” and makes no reference to specific application areas. I assume this is a typo and the correct reference is Section 1.G. which is Technology Focus. With that said, what exactly are you looking for in terms of specific application area(s)? Are you looking for “key words” describing the type of work the CAT plans on conducting under its selected Technology Focus?*
 - Yes; this is a typographical error and should read "Section 1.G".
- *With that said, what exactly are you looking for in terms of specific application area(s)? Are you looking for “key words” describing the type of work the CAT plans on conducting under its selected Technology Focus?*
 - Yes.
- *Question: do we need to provide a commitment letter from the company if there is already a signed contract for the project between the Company and the CAT/RF?*
 - No - Pursuant with the Project Summary Template contained in RFP Number 19-6133, Appendix B; applicant will not need to provide a “letter of attestation from the Industrial Partner demonstrating their commitment

to this project”; rather, a copy of the pre-existing contract agreement may be substituted as attestation.

- *Are there any formatting requirements in terms of font size and page margins?*
 - Applicant institutions are to ensure proposals have been thoroughly reviewed for clarity and professional presentation, refer to font and point size settings within the forms/templates cited as Appendices to RFP Number 19-6133; which is Arial 12 pt.
- *Are there any minimum/maximum limits on the number of partners?*
 - No – Pursuant with RFP Number 19-6133; Appendix A, Glossary of Terms Used Throughout the RFP, New York State Company, New York Company or Company in New York is “A for-profit enterprise with a permanent place of business located in New York State employing a full-time workforce. The company’s New York facility must either be (1) the intended recipient of the CAT’s assistance or (2) directly benefit from the CAT’s assistance. **The CAT’s assistance must also demonstrably enhance the company’s economic activity in New York.**” There is no requirement as-to minimum/maximum number of partners
- *Can a parent company’s various subsidiaries count as an industry partner for an eligible CAT industry project?*
 - Yes – Pursuant with RFP Number 19-6133; Appendix A, Glossary of Terms Used Throughout the RFP, New York State Company, New York Company or Company in New York is “A for-profit enterprise with a permanent place of business located in New York State employing a full-time workforce. The company’s New York facility must either be (1) the intended recipient of the CAT’s assistance or (2) directly benefit from the CAT’s assistance. **The CAT’s assistance must also demonstrably enhance the company’s economic activity in New York.**” This requirement extends to a parent company’s various subsidiaries regarding ‘counting as an industry partner for an eligible CAT industry project’.
- *Would it be prudent to focus our proposal on more than one theme as appropriate OR focus only on one theme; more specifically, can a proposal include multiple CAT themes and/or integrate CAT themes including AI, Sensor technology, IOT, Autonomous Vehicles?*
 - No - Pursuant with RFP Number 19-6133; Section 1.G; “Specific application areas of each of the Technology Foci for which ESD will consider proposals are defined... Proposals submitted in a Technology Focus other than one of these six will be rejected without review. **Select the Technology Focus that is most representative of the applied research that will be conducted by the CAT.** The Technology Foci descriptions are not meant to be limiting; applicants are encouraged to demonstrate which elements they would concentrate on and other related

areas of research which would leverage their institutions' expertise and result in economically beneficial academic-industry R&D."

- Are there CAT themes more important than others; particularly in light of the recent IBM-SUNY AI announcement?
 - No.
- Will the IBM-SUNY AI announcement affect ESD/NYSTAR's review/scoring of proposals, one way or the other?
 - No.
- Is it possible for an authority (i.e., public-benefit corporation) to count as an industry partner for an eligible CAT industry project?
 - No.
- Is it possible for an authority (i.e., public-benefit corporation) to contribute towards the matching fund requirement?
 - Yes - Pursuant with RFP Number 19-6133; Section 1.E; "Other Sources of Support: Up to 50 percent of the total required matching funds may be from this category and may include:
 - Cash from non-New York State companies: Cash provided to the CAT from an entity not meeting the definition of a New York State company (as defined in Appendix A) including non-New York State companies and not-for-profit organizations in support of the CAT's ESD-approved activities."
- Will the first year's budget be \$921,200 or \$500,000 for a new CAT?
 - Pursuant with Section I.B.1; "In the event a new Center is selected in this designation process, ESD shall provide up to \$500,000 in funding for reimbursable expenses (or 54.28% of the individual CAT allocation if funding levels change) that will be used as ramp up funds during the first contract year. In contract year two and thereafter, the newly designated CAT will be eligible to seek reimbursement for the full individual CAT funding level."
- The RFP states "for the purposes of this RFP, use a total five-year budget of up to \$4,606,000." However, the RFP also states that "ESD shall provide up to \$500,000 in funding for reimbursable expenses" for the first year. How can an applications budget reach \$4,606,000 (or 5 years x \$921,200) if only \$500,000 in ESD funding will be provided to the applicant in year 1?
 - Pursuant with Section I.B.1; "ESD shall provide up to \$500,000 in funding for reimbursable expenses (or 54.28% of the individual CAT allocation if funding levels change) that will be used as ramp up funds during the first contract year." The Appendix B, Proposal Checklist, third checkbox states "Up to \$921,200 of ESD funds have been requested for year one..." The \$500,000 funding limit during the first contract year for a newly designated

Center falls into the range cited in the checklist; specifically, 'Up to \$921,200' therefore no conflict exists.

- As-to Section III.F. (p.17) which states "Budget Form Two – Projected Five-Year Budget for ESD Funds (for the purposes of this RFP, use a total five-year budget of \$4,606,000."; the phrase 'up-to' is included to address the original condition cited in Section I.B.1 of the Request for Proposals.
- *It appears from the RFP that ESD will provide up to \$500K in reimbursable expenses as the CAT ramps up. So does this mean that the initial match is \$500K (and not \$921K)?*
 - Yes.
- *If we request funding for a period of ten years, are we still submitting the budget for the first 5 years based on Budget form Two's requirement?*
 - Yes.
- *Does it mean that all partners only need to demonstrate their committed matching funds for the first 5 years in the Project Summary; or do they also need to demonstrate matching funds for years 6-10?*
 - Yes – demonstration of matching funds for years 6-10 will be reconciled during the second contract covering this period.
- *Since a separate Budget form Two for each consortium member is required, does it mean that each consortium member will need to provide matching funds for the exact amount that they're going to receive from ESD per year?*
 - No – Pursuant with Section I.D.1 of the Request for Proposals, eligible candidates for the program are limited to: "A 'University', 'University-Affiliated Research Institute' or Consortia lead thereof that meets each of the following criteria is eligible to apply: a. at least one on-site doctoral program in the research field(s) related to the Proposal's Technology Focus; and, b. demonstrates its ability to meet the Matching Funds requirements described in Section I.D. of this RFP." Therefore, it is the Lead Institute of the Consortium which needs to meet the Matching Funds requirements specified in Section 1D.
- *Will the required matching funds be evaluated and reviewed by each of the ten projects, or based on the aggregated budget for the entire CAT proposal?*
 - No – the required matching funds will be evaluated and reviewed based on the aggregated budget for the entire CAT proposal.
- *Is inter-institutional collaboration across higher education weighted during the scoring process or beneficial to include in a CAT proposal?*
 - No - There is no special weighting of scores given to collaborations.
- *There are no required forms currently in the RFP. When will they be posted?*

- All required forms/templates are in the “*Upload Properties*” of the Grants Gateway. No forms/templates are listed under the RFP. Please contact the NYS Gateway Administration at (518) 474-2784; or (518) 486-9159.
- (AMENDED 3/20/19) *The Project Summary Form was inadvertently locked. This has been corrected allowing each of the fields on the form to be completed.*
 - *The revised form (**named RFP 19-6133 (2019 CAT) Project Summary Template (Revised 3-20-19)**) is: posted to the ESD Website under the applicable Request for Proposals section; and, been sent to those applicants presently completing an application on the Grants Gateway; and, been sent to the Grants Gateway Help Desk for use/distribution by any applicant seeking assistance.*