

Upstate New York Energy Storage Engine Generating Regional Opportunities in Workforce (GROW) Round 1 Request For Proposals (RFP)

I. PURPOSE

The **Upstate New York Energy Storage Engine** (U.S. National Science Foundation [NSF] award 2315695) is dedicated to building a comprehensive battery and energy storage ecosystem in Upstate New York by fostering innovation, technology translation, workforce development, and inclusive collaboration to support U.S. independence and leadership in these industries. The Engine's **Generating Regional Opportunities in Workforce (GROW) Round 1** Request for Proposals (RFP) seeks proposals for pilot workforce development and training programs from qualified applicants across the Engine service region in Upstate New York that aim to advance the pathways into and readiness of the regional and national battery and energy storage labor force. Applicants are encouraged to contact to GROW program manager to discuss proposals prior to submission.

II. ELIGIBILITY

II.A. Applicant Eligibility

Eligible applicants may include K-12 educational institutions, institutions of higher education (IHE), non-profit organizations, industry firms, Tribal Nations, Workforce Development Boards, and other government-sponsored entities, but must satisfy the following requirements:

- Lead applicant must be eligible to receive federal funding and must have a SAM.GOV Unique Entity Identifier.
- Applicants must be located within the following New York State Counties:
 - Allegany, Broome, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Madison, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Onondaga, Orleans, Oswego, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates.
- Each organization is eligible to submit only one proposal as the lead applicant.

II.B. Project Eligibility

Projects within, but not limited to, the following categories will be considered:

- **Development and Implementation of New Programs:** Develop and implement innovative workforce training programs tailored to the battery and energy storage sector, including hands-on experiential learning opportunities and broadening participation of underrepresented groups. Proposed programs can cover various educational and training levels.
- **Scaling of Existing Programs:** Expanding existing, proven programs to new locations or new populations.

III. APPLICATION PROCESS

All applications must include the following documentation to be submitted via the GROW application portal:

1. **APPLICATION FORM:** An online application that requests information about the lead applicant and partner organizations (including Unique Entity Identifier from SAM.GOV), and proposal summary information.
2. **PROPOSAL NARRATIVE** (2 pages maximum, minimum 11 pt font and 1-inch margins:
 - (i) **Abstract (250 words max):** Provide a summary overview of the proposed project, including brief description of the training program and its goals, alignment with the Engine's mission, and anticipated impact.
 - (ii) **Problem Statement and Project Relevance (250 words max).** Explain how the project aligns with the Engine goals of advancing the battery and energy storage sector, addresses specific industry needs, and responds to regional or community needs.
 - (iii) **Project Design, Implementation Plan, and Expected Outcomes (500 words max).** Provide a detailed plan and timeline (maximum 12 months) for project execution with a time-delimited scope of work including specific

activities, milestones, deliverables, and outputs and outcomes (include specific quantifiable metrics as appropriate for your proposed program). Describe any relevant partnerships.

(iv) **Budget Narrative (250 words max)**. Describe how the requested funds will be used during the award.

3. BUDGET

(i) A project budget using the Excel template provided on the GROW application portal.

(ii) Duration of awards will be up to 12 months.

(iii) Proposers requesting projects budgets greater than \$100,000 (including indirect costs) should the contact program manager prior to submission.

IV. REVIEW PROCESS & PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

Application Window. Proposals for GROW Round 1 will be accepted from 9am EDT July 15, 2024 through 5pm EDT November 15, 2024. Successful applicants will be notified of their award during the application window and no later than December 15, 2025. Notification of awards is expected to begin in August, 2024.

Proposal Review. The evaluation process will comprise:

1. Preliminary screening of applicant, project, and budget eligibility by sponsor.
2. Project merit review by evaluators, which will focus on the following criteria:
 - **Relevance and alignment with Engine and program goals**, including alignment with battery and energy storage industry, as well as regional community needs.
 - **Project design and implementation plan**, with the proposal expected to provide a detailed plan with specific activities and timelines. The plan should be realistic and feasible, with clearly defined objectives and outcomes.
 - **Inclusive community engagement**, with the proposal demonstrating strategies for broadening participation and increasing diversity among participants.
 - **Budget and cost effectiveness**, with the proposal including a detailed and realistic budget that aligns with the project plan. The budget should be cost-effective and demonstrate efficient use of grant funds.

V. POST-AWARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Progress Reports. All awardees will be required to provide quarterly progress reports and a final report upon completion of the project. Awardees agree to provide training participant data as appropriate or to facilitate administration of trainee evaluation surveys as required under the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) Engines: Upstate New York Energy Storage Engine (2315695) award. Awardees must annually report economic impact data to NENY for a period of two years following the completion of the project.

Financial Administration. Awards will be managed by the Syracuse University Office of Sponsored Programs. Awardees must follow all applicable regulation in the Office of Management and Budget Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200) for administration of Federal awards by non-profit organizations.

Conflict of Interest Policy. Awardees must have an established conflict of interest policy for Federal awards. Awardees must disclose in writing any potential conflict of interest to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with National Science Foundation policy.

Termination. Sponsor reserves the right to terminate approved funding in the event of any of failure to initiate any project activities within 2 months of execution of award agreement; failure to meet progress milestones; failure to meet NSF-required reporting criteria.