

Grid Modernization Lab Call
Questions and Answers (Q&As)
(updated on September 24, 2015)

The Q&As will be updated weekly at a minimum and then posted on this website.

1. **Q:** For the Concept Paper Template, does the “Project General Information” section, which takes up about 1.5 pages, count against the 3-page narrative limit?
A: The “Project General Information” section does not count against the 3 page narrative limit. The Concept Paper Template has been revised to clearly delineate where the 3 page narrative begins.

2. **Q:** Is every project required to complete Go/No-Go milestones at the end of every year even if the project is only requesting one year, or if the funding available is only listed for one year?
A: Go/No-Go milestones are not required if the proposed project is for one year or if the funding available is for one year. Go/No-Go milestones are required for multi-year project proposals.

3. **Q:** Is this Grid Modernization Lab Call funding a supplement to existing R&D funding commitments?
A: No, the Grid Modernization Lab Call funding is not a supplement to existing R&D funding commitments.

4. **Q:** Where should the budget be included in the Concept Paper Template?
A: The Concept Paper Template has been revised to include a section for the budget. The new Concept Paper Template is now posted on the NETL website.

5. **Q:** If a laboratory proposal has been submitted for the AOP and has not yet been awarded, can the proposal be modified and submitted to the Grid Modernization Lab Call also?
A: Yes, proposals submitted for the AOP but not yet awarded may be modified and submitted to the Grid Modernization Lab Call, except for proposals under: (1) the Solar Energy Technologies Office, and (2) the Wind and Water Power Technologies Office. Any submitted proposal must fit in either Category 1 or 2.

6. **Q:** Is there a typo regarding the recently added technical topic area “28. Mitigate Market Barriers”?
- A:** Yes, there is a typo on Mod 1 of the 2016 Grid Modernization Lab Call. The newly added technical topic area, “28. Mitigate Market Barriers” is under draft Multi-Year Program Plan (MYPP) task 7.3.3 (and not 7.3.4 as stated in Mod 1). Proposals are requested under technical topic area “28. Mitigate Market Barriers (7.3.3)”.
7. **Q:** Can we use the original concept paper template?
- A:** No, please use the revised concept paper template which is posted on the website.
8. **Q:** Is there a preferred file format for submission (other than pdf format), such as Category_Lastname_Lab?
- A:** All concept papers should be submitted with an easily understood naming convention, such as the suggested Category_Lastname_Lab. However, each concept paper submitted should have a unique name in case a lab staff member submits more than one concept paper for the same category/topic/technical area. All submitted concept papers will also be assigned a unique identifier after the initial review.
9. **Q:** The Grid Modernization Lab Call mentions submitting proposals as a separate document. Should each proposal be submitted individually or multiple per e-mail by Subcategory?
- A:** Concept papers may be submitted either individually or multiple per e-mail, since each will have a unique file name.
10. **Q:** The four founding National Lab partners of the Consortium for Electric Reliability Technology Solutions (CERTS) – LBNL, ORNL, PNNL, and SNL – request direction from DOE regarding the requirements for a concept paper which would be submitted solely to the OE/Transmission Reliability Advanced Synchrophasor Technology Research (ASTeR) program. The CERTS Labs understand that the process outlined in the GMLC is geared towards proposals for individual projects. As a result, the CERTS Labs seek guidance on whether DOE will accept for consideration a concept paper that outlines a process for developing a full technical proposal for a portfolio of projects, based on the historic joint planning processes relied on by our labs in past proposals to the TR program.

Specifically, the concept paper would describe a commitment by the CERTS Labs to review the portfolio of projects they are currently conducting under the current TR program categories subsumed in ASTeR (Advanced Applications R&D, Reliability and Markets/Load as a Resource, and Reliability Technology Issues and Needs Assessment), the review comments from the recent internal review of these activities in DC this past June, and then develop an integrated proposal of Lab activities. They would also consider involvement of other Labs that seek to participate in a joint proposal.

The CERTS Labs believe that, in the past, this integrated planning process has yielded benefits both for DOE and the Labs. They observe, however, that the time available between the release of the GMLC and the July 30th due date for concept papers will not provide the time required for the Labs to coordinate such an integration process.

A: DOE encourages multi-laboratory responses to the Grid Modernization Lab Call, not limited to existing coordination. The responses in Category 2 should be directed to the topics described. The Advanced Synchrophasor Technology Research (ASTeR) call states: “Proposals for continuing existing R&D should indicate how it contributes to the goals listed above, either directly or as a building block.”

The concept papers need to be submitted by the July 30th due date stated in the GMLC.

Coordination among the Lab teams can occur after the concept paper phase.

However, the broad Laboratory/industry partnerships should still be identified at the concept paper stage. The detailed commitments/roles are not required until the full proposal stage.

11. **Q:** Who should concept paper e-mail submissions be addressed to?

A: Concept paper e-mail submissions may be addressed to the “GMLC Team”.

12. **Q:** Do cost-share partners need to be identified and named in the concept paper, with no changes allowed, or are Labs permitted to leave some cost-share partner information incomplete in the concept paper and then use that additional time to flesh out the partnership details before the full proposal is submitted?

A: Potential cost-share partners should be identified as much as possible in the concept paper, along with an indication of their commitment status. All industry/university cost-share partners listed should have some acknowledged willingness to actively participate in the proposal outlined in the concept paper. However, changes are allowed before the full proposals are due in September to provide more time to flesh out the details.

13. **Q:** The revised template has page numbers that restart at the 3rd page. Is it okay to insert page numbers when converted to .pdf that number sequentially? I would also like to insert an identifying header on each page for reviewer reference, is this allowed?

A: Yes, it is acceptable to have the pages numbered sequentially as long as the concept paper narrative does not exceed three pages, as indicated above in Q&A number 1. Yes, it is acceptable to insert an identifying header on each page.

14. **Q:** The GMLC will be submitting concept papers for all National Laboratories in the GMLC. The GMLC would like to list the GMLC as the Principal Investigator and list the GMLC Steward as the Point of Contact (POC) for all concept papers. A Principal

Investigator and Point of Contact (POC) would then be identified at full proposal stage. Do you have any issues or concerns with this approach?

The GM Concept Paper Template also requires us to list National Laboratories Involved. Do you prefer us to list under this section the GMLC or do you prefer us to list all 14 National Laboratories that are a part of the GMLC?

A: For the Category 1 topics, where responses are to be coordinated by the GMLC it is expected that the GMLC would be the submitting National Laboratory (NL) and the GMLC Steward would be the Point of Contact. The GMLC may be designated as the Principal Investigator for concept papers. It is acceptable to include the PI's name that will lead the effort at the full proposal stage and to identify the corresponding NL Point of Contact.

It is intended that the field entry for National Laboratories Involved would include those NLs that are expected to contribute to the work anticipated for that Concept Paper. If it is too early at the Concept Paper stage to identify which NLs would perform the work, then it is acceptable to designate the GMLC.

For Category 2 topics, it is expected that the PI would be the individual leading the work from the NL submitting the Concept Paper and the Point of Contact would be an individual at the same NL, which may be different than the PI. Consistent with the above, it is intended that the field entry for National Laboratories Involved would include those NLs that are expected to contribute to the work anticipated for that Concept Paper.

15. **Q:** Will you be sending confirmation via e-mail that you received the concept papers submitted for the Grid Modernization Lab Call?

A: Each National Laboratory has received a response for each submitted concept paper.

16. **Q:** The current Full Proposal template is "editable" and does not include the budget in the "Project General Information" box. Will this template be considered the final template or will it be replaced with an updated or locked version?

A: The updated version has been posted.

17. **Q:** Will the "Project General Information" box count against the 25 page limit?

A: No, the "Project General Information" box will not count against the 25 page limit.

18. **Q:** Is there a page limit per each resume?

A: No, there is no page limit for resumes.

19. **Q:** Will Cost Share be a part of the final GMLC negotiations?

A: As stated on pages 12 and 18 of the lab call, cost share is not required but is highly encouraged. Regarding negotiation of cost share, that would be handled on a case-by-case basis during negotiations for any proposal selected.

20. **Q:** The WBS refers to “Three (3) Quarterly Progress Measures Required PER PROJECT” in the first year. Is this due to the fact we are expecting project funding to be received by the labs in time to start the second quarter of FY 2016?
A: DOE intends to make project awards in the first quarter of fiscal year 2016.
21. **Q:** Should Quarterly Progress Measures only be included for the first year, as they are in the template?
A: Yes.
22. **Q:** The 2016GMLabCall document (Dated 08/26/2015, bottom of page 5) includes a table of OE program-specific funding levels for FY 2016 through FY 2018. For OE programs that list only a single year of funding for Category 2 projects, does DOE-OE desire a proposal that defines three years of scope assuming an additional two years of budget may become available, or would DOE-OE prefer to see a single-year project proposal with scope matching the budget defined on page 5?
A: The referenced table lists the planned OE funding for this lab call, regardless of the duration of the project. Per the table, one program area, ADMS, intends to make FY 2017 and FY 2018 funds available for selected projects but the remaining OE areas do not plan future FY funding for projects selected via this lab call. The introduction to the table states, “For OE programs, the funding levels cover a three year period as follows: Note that for the OE FY17 and FY18 funding years, separate future lab calls will issue for those years at approximately the same level of total OE funding as FY16; funding levels by program will vary.”
23. **Q:** What specific documents are required from collaborators (industry, academia, and other lab partners) for the full proposal submission? There is nothing mentioned in the full proposal template.
A: To support criterion #3, “Team and Resources”, letters of support/commitment are strongly encouraged.
24. **Q:** Should Full Proposals be submitted in Microsoft Word or in Adobe pdf format?
A: All Full Proposals should be submitted in Microsoft Word format no later than 9/30/2015 at 3:00 pm EDT.