

Office Hours
CWX-018-CARLA
January 22, 2026 (2PM ET)

David Parsons – Deputy Director, DOE Office of Electricity
Anne Egger – Senior Project Manager, DOE Office of Electricity
Grayson Dorr – Program Manager, ConnectWerx

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Good afternoon. Good morning, everyone. We're going to give it about 30 more seconds, folks are still joining us and we'll get started here.

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2 min after.

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All right, we're going to go ahead and get started. Good afternoon. Good morning, everyone.

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My name is Grayson Dorr and I'm the program manager with ConnectWerx. If this is your 1st time joining us for any of our virtual events, welcome.

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We're excited that you have navigated and found your way to the Carll opportunity in today's office hours for this for this opportunity.

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Just as a quick reminder of the intent of today, this is a 30 min session of the slides, and the recording will be posted on our opportunities page along with our events tab where you can go back and review.

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As we've said in some of our invites, the intent of today is really just a focus on any last outstanding questions you may have.

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After our webinar 2 weeks ago back on the 8th we reviewed questions. That came in and updated our website.

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Just a couple days ago with some of those FAQs that came in. So, we encourage you not only to go back and review the webinar from the If you have not done so already but also visit our opportunities page.

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We reserve most of the time today to really stay focused on questions we haven't heard from or heard topics on and focus our attention there.

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We're not trying to ignore you if there is something we've already addressed.

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We may simply just post in the chat a link. Or excuse me, in the Q&A link to that.

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So just help us navigate today and make it as efficient as possible. Next slide.

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When you do post your questions, please use the Q&A feature. And in Zoom, it will reserve the chat for any links we may post for you all helpful links there or if you're experiencing any technical difficulties.

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Next slide. Is that mentioned if it's new, if you're new to this, please join our network, visit our program page opportunities page and follow along for future updates.

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As we continue to work great work with the Department of Energy. So, with that, I'll turn it over to David, the office electricity and, and as well as on the call, to do a brief recap of where we are and then yield the rest of the time for your questions.

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Dave?

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Great. Yeah, thank you so much, Grayson. Thank you to everybody who is here joining us for our office hour session.

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My name is Dave Parsons. I'm the deputy director for resource advocacy in the office of electricity here at the Department of Energy.

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So as Grace had mentioned, I hope most or all of you have had a chance to review the information about this opportunity on the ConnectWerx website and perhaps you attended or you saw the recording of the webinar that we had a couple weeks ago.

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So, I'm going to save as much time as possible for your questions if you have any. Remaining and I'm just going to move quickly through a couple of important reminders.

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So, for this funding opportunity. It's really the lead applicant must be a state. Entity and the collaboration have to include at least one large load customer or proponent and one at least one grid operator that could be a utility or ISO RTO or transmission owner, that sort of thing.

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We're really interested in collaborations that have multiple project partners. With expertise across the range of different topics.

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Some of them are shown here on the slide, energy systems, project development, demand forecasting. Planning and interconnection.

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Utility regulation, stakeholder engagement. Any other relevant experience or expertise really welcome in your collaborations?

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Okay, let's go to the next slide.

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So just let's just recap some of the steps in the application process. Just a reminder of that.

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We're closing in on the last step here. The applications are due on January 30th 2026 at 3 PM.

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Eastern time. So, with that, I think we can move right into the Q&A, portion of the session.

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Thank you very much.

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We're going to give everyone just a couple of minutes. Post their questions and I'll start calling out.

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In order that they receive.

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There is a question Dave, I'll answer this one. It's a good one.

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What are the reporting requirements for each organization? Since the grant calls for a collaborative with multiple organizations, really all of those details, regarding reporting, whether it's monthly, quarterly, who's on the calls during both the negotiation period or once awards are made that will all be determined during that.

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Selection and notification or excuse me, selection and negotiation period. So, all of those details will be discussed with each of the applicants.

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It will vary by each one. Based on what is determined and outlined in the technical requirements.

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But again, not really a focus for this stage as far as. Your application submission regarding that.

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So, we do obviously ask the prime will be responsible for coordinating with their collaborative members and so between ConnectWerx and the prime, we will work collectively together to have all of those.

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Scheduled in coordination with DE.

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Thank you for that question.

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I see a question here, Grayson, just about a couple of questions in one so I can try to.

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Easy.

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Tackle some of these so one question is about the technical depth of the proposal narrative so that's really up to the applicant.

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I think we did provide a page limit. So, keep that in mind. I don't think we're intending to have, you know, really extensive applications.

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Part of the idea with this opportunity is to keep it very streamlined and more accessible to applicants.

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So that's I think for everyone's benefit. So just make sure you keep in mind the page limits and the guidance that's up on the Connecticut website about what we're looking for.

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Those. I think in terms of budget, that's also addressed on the Connect Work website. We have sort of information about the total funding opportunity and sort of the range of potential projects that DOE is looking to fund.

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So, you can get a sense from that, I think, about sort of where we might be. But again, a lot of that is going to come down to the specific needs and sort of what you're proposing.

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And then also as Gracie was just talking about. The negotiation and selection. Aspect of all that.

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So that comes later on too. I just mentioned that just so that folks are aware that things might change as we go through a negotiation process for any proposal that might be selected.

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Okay, and then in for project duration, so we are we are asking for folks to put their proposals in, assuming a 12-month project duration, there is an option for DOE to extend the period of performance up to 2 additional 12-month period.

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So, if you think your project would really benefit from a longer, please include sort of explanation of what that looks like in your proposal.

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Thanks. And just to add to that, Dave, I know we've clarified the funding for that.

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This would remain the same whether it's not it would not be additional funding for each of those years of plant or incorporate that in your plan as well if you are incorporate that in your plan as well if you were considering.

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That justification for beyond the 12 months.

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There's a question. What's D's recommendation on treating project management as a task since the milestone payments will be based on task completion.

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Again, Dave, I'll let you come in on that. I think we touched on a lot of that as far as some funding and what's allowed and what's not.

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And that's directly tied to completion as far as those labor hours.

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Yeah, I would just say, you know, feel free to include. You know, explanation of how you're thinking about that in your budget.

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Proposal the budget aspect of your proposal and we'll know if you discuss that of course if your project is selected but the way that the payments are going to be made is sort of structured the way that Grace had just described.

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Let me take this question about the FFRDC. So. The question is, is whether the primes should include a budget spreadsheet for the FFRDCs.

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Yes, absolutely. So please include the budget assumptions and sort of the we will need that in order to evaluate your proposal.

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Just note that that we will, I think we put this on the website as well, but we if we select a project that includes an FFRDC, which is like a, sorry, that's a crazy acronym.

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It basically means like the departments, national laboratories or other kinds of, federally funded research and development organizations.

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Those, the funding that that would be provided for any selections will be coming directly from DOE. It won't flow through the prime.

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So that's just kind of the one exception that we have for the structure that we've laid out.

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But we just to just to emphasize we do need to know the budget and tasks and all that that are associated with any kind of FFR DC related scope.

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Thanks, Dave. I think there's a question. Just regarding subs and approve indirect rate.

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We have discussed obviously this being a firm fixed price agreement with the prime. We don't ask for those rates.

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But again, it's taped into the milestone and completion. Is that correct, Dave?

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Yeah, I think, it, you know, that's, that's up to you to kind of explain in your proposal.

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But it may be something that comes up if your proposal is selected in terms of negotiation and discussion of course because you know all aspects of this could be part of that.

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But yeah, you're right, Grayson. And

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This is a great question, Dave. I know, we can probably table this, but I do want to at least call it out to emphasize that we hear this question.

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So given the weather conditions that the East Coast is going to be experiencing could delay primes with developing their proposal proposals could the CARLA team consider.

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Issue in an extension. So, we have definitely noted that. I, many of us are on the East Coast as well.

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We understand it. Governors across various states have issued. Warnings to those so yes, we will discuss that offline and should there be any changes to that would publish to our website for them.

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So, thank you for that and understand from a utility standpoint that drastically impacts a lot of folks as well.

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So.

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Thank you all for these great questions. Just trying to go through, as I mentioned earlier, we're just deciphering which ones we may have not seen before and which ones we can redirect.

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There's 1 here, Grayson, about. The entity types in the collaborative.

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So. Is it allowable for the applicant to be both the state and entity and the grid operator? Certainly, that is acceptable.

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So, I think it's okay if we have a collaborative that has one entity kind of serving in both roles.

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But, but yeah, I think that would be. Yeah, and if you have any specific questions about your circumstance, I just wanted to say make sure to reach out to ConnectWerx and you know we can address your specific circumstance.

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But generally, that should be fine.

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There's a lot of questions just around award dates. Again, we've updated that. Folks can see the total funding and anticipated awards or estimated awards as well.

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So please visit. That section of our website you'll see overall outline of that and that can help.

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Again, I would Always recommend not using that to craft a budget. Make your budget based upon your project proposal and obviously reference.

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The funding and a limited, we're not going to make recommendations on how to build a budget.

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Yeah.

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I see a couple more FFRDC related questions. I so the question about whether the FFR DCs would receive lump sums or funding through the milestone structure.

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I think that's a question that will perhaps depend on the proposal. So, I think that's it.

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That's going to be something that will be between DOE and the FFRDC, you know, in the event that D.

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LEE moves forward with a project that has a component like that. The budget spreadsheet question for the FFRDCs.

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I think just make sure to I don't think we have a specific spreadsheet just for FFRDCs, but I think we would like to see as I said in the proposal the funding that is you know, that is set for the FFRDC as part of the proposal and what the tasks and scope are so kind of leave that to you to include in the proposal.

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There's a question I see Dave. I'm jumping a little bit. I can take this one and if there's any above it did you see we understand the award use a milestone-based payment structure is there any guidance on the typical recommended number of milestones or is it fully up to the applicant?

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To define them based on the project, design, period, and objective. So just to clarify here, there's 2.

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So. 2 portions of what we call our statement of effort that we negotiate after selections are made.

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There's your milestone schedule and then your invoice schedule. So, pertaining to invoice is I would not really focus too much on that today as you're preparing.

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We will go through that. In detail and based upon the milestones and an individual review with your projects determine what is practical for both parties and what makes sense.

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But primarily focusing on your milestones and what those keys to deliverables would be. From there, we draft up and work together on an invoice schedule tied to it.

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So again, 2 distinctions are the focusing today and for the solution is your milestones and obviously the budget associated with it.

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You're welcome to put the obviously it has those rough numbers, but again, all of that will be fine to lost during that negotiation period.

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See.

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So, I'm seeing one here about a public university and whether that would be eligible to serve as the state entity.

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That's a good question. I think we will need to take that one back. I know we're getting very close to the deadline to apply.

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So, I will make sure that we can get an answer. Posted on the website as soon as possible.

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So let us make sure we get kind of clear on that internally and we'll put something on the website to address that question.

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So, there's a question Dave on whether the state prime has restrictions around receiving federal funding. Is it possible?

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That all the funding to flow through an FFRDC. Just to clarify, I don't know if this, would solve.

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Or answer that question but the contract for the agreement is not with the Department of Energy, in this case the states would be contracting with ConnectWerx.

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Or our parent organization, advanced technology international, and the funding would ultimately flow through Knetwork.

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So, the agreement is not with the DOE. I don't know if that fully answers, again, if there's follow-up, you're welcome to send us a separate, email.

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I see the person was marked anonymous, so we're not able to. Directly see and follow up offline, but please send us an email.

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And we can get in on the Knetwork side, clarify further with that.

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Yeah, I think. That's probably one we should connect on before whoever asked that question.

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You know, through the email as Grace and mentioned. I don't I'm not quite sure what the circumstance is that you're referring to and it would so it would be great to kind of better understand that before giving you an answer on that.

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Oh, I see another FFR DC question. So, this one was if the If the FFRDC is funded by the department directly, does that mean the portion of work doesn't count to the overall budget?

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No, it will count. It will be included in sort of our evaluation as part of the overall proposal.

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It's just, and hopefully this is clear, but it's just that. The funding that goes to the FFRDC will come directly from DOE as opposed to from ConnectWerx for the remainder of the. Yeah.

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There's a question. I don't know if you're able to, to comment or answer is, is there a Let's see, is there respected, is the state expected to do a certain amount of the work if the 3rd parties are reliable to do a bulk of it?

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Yeah, so we, we haven't specified any kind of like threshold like that. I know I think we're expecting that some proposal, some applicants.

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Our planning to. You know, really leverage the capabilities of other partners in the collaborative. We do need to have the state entity be the lead applicant and have it sort of the structure flow, the way that we've described just for legal reasons, but it's fine to, you know, to have the you know, to have the support and utilize that support of your of your partners in the

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collaborative that's the intention of this opportunity.

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Thank you for that.

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Another question about the FRDC. So the, if the question is if the national lab is part of the collaborative, can they have subcontracts from the lab and yeah in theory that's totally fine that's a normal thing for DOE again that would be part of the if that proposal would be selected that would be part of the negotiation that would occur.

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You know, after that between. ConnectWerx and DOE and the recipient.

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Dave for the Pia, subcontracts would have to flow through the prime, not through the FFR DCs.

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Oh, oh, I'm sorry. Okay, well I misspoke them

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That's why I'm here.

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Alright, just doing a quick check. We have about 7 more minutes.

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A lot of questions around the FFRDC.

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There's this question about that certification of, you know, not being owned or subject to a country of risk.

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So, our expectation is that that requirement is going to flow down from the prime to the subs. So.

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So yeah, so I think. There is like that that will need to be the case for any kind of partners on the project as well.

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Okay, there's another question about.

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Doing some drilling associated with the model and whether the budget can support that, and whether you can request the extension upfront.

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So yes, you can put that into your application and your proposal and just make sure to note sort of what your funding is for and what it's you know what the proposal is of course and then if you need if you think you're going to need more time than the 12 months or the project would benefit from having more time you can explain that in your app.

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Yeah, it looks like there's a number of questions we can follow up with. Thank you for some that have.

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Asked directly so we can get capture email just regarding. Restrictions from various states receiving federal funding. If there's concerns on that side, we can.

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Work together to get an answer very quickly back to you.

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Again, follow up on the country at risk. Obviously, those certifications are made. Turn the application process, you'll see all of that language as you're submitting.

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So again, thank you for that.

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Yep, can a state submit an application if they didn't submit a concept paper? Absolutely.

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The concept papers again, we recognize those were, accepted back. The middle around June 30th of last year, those were really intended just to kind of guide and strengthen some of the discussions for Dave and his team and as they, work together as we did all to finalize this and so after the period of pause we recognize that extension and so there's no requirement for that concept paper even if app or even

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if those did submit concept papers, received a discourage, we recognize that thanks could have changed and if you feel, your it warrants a further application here we're not restricting that as well.

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You have every right to still apply for this opportunity.

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I think a lot of questions, which we always get these just around like they're currently working with 3 DOE grant awards.

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There is sections, in our application. You'll see if you receive priority of daily funding.

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This is not a grant. It's a completely different vehicle. And so folks are. If you really would like to go to sleep at night, read up on the pia and just the overall work with the DOE across the 3 partnership intermediaries and just understand some of the differences.

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And the requirements centered on this. So again, as we've said, this agreement flowing through ATI or ConnectWerx.

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David a question. I know we and for everyone's knowledge we did update our FAQs regarding respecting large load customers the question is just to confirm with respect to large OS customers noted in FAQ as being those of a 50-megawatt load or greater, it is understood that this is not a strict requirement, is that correct?

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And are there and there are considerations for regional. Variability in size and low types, although large loads would still be a major element studying just part of the Carlo project.

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And I think that that gets directly back to the spirit of addressing that question and recognizing the regional. Variations for those large.

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David anything else you want to add to that I think we received that question many times in our last one and attempted to put some further clarification out for that.

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Yeah, yeah, absolutely. I think it in the FAQ you have the answer there. So I think you can and you can address that in your in your application as well.

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There's a question regarding, David, to the very bottom. I'll take this one if you see any above, as we look to wrap up.

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Will there be a DOE? Programming it or PM, or ConnectWerx PM assigned to the project.

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And the answer to that is yes to both. So, we will have both, ConnectWerx, project manager as well as on the DOE side.

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Someone from the Office of Electricity Assigned to this project is, but ConnectWerx will serve as liaison between the 2 as far as scheduling meetings, wherever those cadence looks like and managing your milestones and all of that.

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So ConnectWerx will be on board through the life of the project.

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Davis, we wrap. I know that we still have a few outstanding. Is there any one that you want to look at or call out?

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That would be good to use during the time. During this session.

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Again, thank you everyone for these great questions.

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Yes, I just wanted to say again if we didn't have time to get to your question, I know there's a few others that are in the list here.

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Please highly encourage you to send an email to ConnectWerx. I think we have it in the chat.

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Then, and we can get you a specific answer to your question kind of. Tailored to your specific circumstances.

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So, I apologize. I mean, we've kind of run low on time, but we'll definitely get you an answer directly, if you reach out to ConnectWerx.

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Thank you, Dave and thank you everyone for the time today. You'll see in the chat, our team just posted that email address.

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We looked forward to any follow-up questions and seeing your applications come in. On or before January 30th and should there be any updates to that schedule we will let everyone know and communicate out.

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So, thank you all very much for joining us today.