Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for the DOE Traineeship in Accelerator Science & Engineering FOA Solicitations

General Advice

- Please read the FOA carefully as the requirements are complex.
- Please contact the Technical/Scientific Program Contact listed in Section I of the FOA if you have questions.
- DOE Traineeship programs are expected to leverage existing university resources and grant-funded R&D activities to provide a complete educational experience for the students. Take care to **clearly differentiate how Traineeship funds are used** to support the Traineeship students' activities.
- "Efficient use of requested budget" (see FOA Section V under sub-criteria "Reasonableness and Appropriateness of the Proposed Budget") can be interpreted as maximizing the fraction of the award funds that go towards Traineeship student expenses (e.g., stipend, tuition, fees, travel, M&S).
- The FOA is very specific about the technical areas of critical need in accelerator science and engineering. These derive from HEPAP subcommittee studies of workforce needs. Traineeship funds will only support students studying accelerator topics in these four specific topic areas. See Section I of the FOA for details.
- Program Evaluation Plans should include, as one element, an external evaluation process that is substantially independent from the Traineeship program being evaluated.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion plans and plans to include professional development coursework (e.g., project management, science communications, etc.) need to be clear, and clearly described in the application. Please note that a **P**romoting **I**nclusive and **E**quitable **R**esearch (**PIER**) Plan is now an application requirement. See Section V of the FOA for details.
- The PIER Plan should describe how inclusivity and equity are to be expressed in the Traineeship being proposed, and how senior investigators on the proposal are involved in the effort. PIER is not meant to be a general-purpose exercise in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), nor does it ask for participation in unrelated outreach efforts. A PIER Plan can leverage institutional DEI plans and resources, but it is not enough to simply describe those programs and resources; the PIER Plan must discuss how they are to be implemented in the proposed Traineeship. Please look at the information available at: https://science.osti.gov/grants/Applicant-and-Awardee-Resources/PIER-Plans.

Are four new students per year a mandatory minimum? Would one student per year be enough?

Four new enrolled Traineeship student per year is a mandatory minimum. The intent is to have a "critical mass" of students within each cohort both so they can study together and share experiences, and so that university minimum class-size requirements will be met. In both cases, one student per year would be inadequate.

Why are only U.S. citizens eligible for Traineeship program participation?

This restriction is DOE-wide policy for all Traineeship programs, which originated under former Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz. Note that non-U.S. students may co-enroll in classes, share advisors, and collaborate on R&D activities with Traineeship enrollees, but Traineeship program funding cannot be used to support non-U.S. students.

Is course development covered under the Traineeship funding?

Yes, subject to the limitations listed in Section I of the FOA.

Can organizations other than a DOE National Laboratory qualify as a provider of a DOE-focused element of Trainee's experience?

Yes. Private sector organizations sponsored by DOE and other non-DOE organizations capable of addressing a specific DOE workforce training need are also eligible partners. See Section I of the FOA for details.

Can NNSA labs participate as partners to provide the DOE-focused element of a Traineeship program?

Yes. See Section I of the FOA for details.

Is a letter from a partner DOE Lab required even if they are not a paid subcontractor of the Traineeship?

Yes. The lab will bear costs of, e.g., hiring students as interns or providing a workshop, so a letter of support is required.

Does the $70,000/student limit include overhead costs?

The $70,000/Traineeship student limitation is all-inclusive. See Section I of the FOA for details. Note that to make efficient use of Traineeship funding it is desirable to keep overhead costs to a minimum. Note that the maximum award per Traineeship student has increased to $70,000 in this FOA from $55,000 in previous DOE Traineeship in Accelerator Science & Engineering FOAs.

Can we co-mingle Traineeship, Research Assistantships, and Teaching Assistantships within the two-year period that a student is in the Traineeship Program?

Yes. Take care that the funding use is distinct in each Trainee's case by, for example, not co-mingling funding sources within a single academic quarter. The proposal must make very clear how the distinct funding sources fund distinctly different aspects of the student's training.

Are letters of endorsement from collaborators helpful?

Yes, this may be helpful.

What is the typical award size?

The award size depends on the number of Traineeship students enrolled per year and the total cost of each Trainee's tuition, stipend, and other program costs. Assuming a 5-year award, the minimum enrollment (4 new students per year, 8 students total in the Traineeship program in years 2-5), and the maximum cost reimbursement per student ($70k), the maximum award size is $2,520,000.

What is the typical award duration?

The typical award duration is 5 years. DOE reserves the right to conduct an external progress review in year three of the award to inform the decision to fund the remainder of the 5-year award.

What does the language in section II(B) "Estimated Funding" mean?

"Total value of grants" refers to value of all grants awarded under this year's FOA over the full duration of the grants. This number is subject to the availability of appropriated funding in this and future years. Note that "total value of grants" does not include the value of the DOE National Laboratory awards made under the companion Program Announcement.