

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to the DOE Comparative Review in HEP

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Note 1: *Proposals to “FY 2023 Research Opportunities in High Energy Physics” [Comparative Review] Funding Opportunity Announcement [[DE-FOA-0002832](#)] are due on December 21, 2022 by 11:59 pm Eastern Time. Applicants are strongly urged to confer with their university sponsored research or program offices to determine their availability to timely submit by this deadline. Submissions earlier than this deadline are strongly recommended.*

Note 2: *Both the “FY 2023 Research Opportunities in High Energy Physics” [Comparative Review] Funding Opportunity Announcement [[DE-FOA-0002832](#)] and the questions and answers below use technical terms and acronyms specific to grant awards and the overall review process. Please refer to the ‘Glossary’ contained in Section IX of the Funding Opportunity Announcement for complete definitions of these terms.*

Registrations and Eligibility

Q1: In order to submit Letters of Intent (LOI) and/or Final Applications in response to the HEP comparative review Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA), what particular systems must applicants register in?

A1: The complete list of systems that applicants are required to register with are listed in Section VIII.A.16 of the FOA. These include:

- System for Award Management (SAM);
- Grants.gov;
- DOE’s Portfolio Analysis and Management System (PAMS);
- Obtaining a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN);
- FedConnect;
- Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act Subaward Reporting System.

As indicated in the FOA, registering in certain systems may take several weeks to process and complete. Therefore, the DOE Office of Science (SC) encourages applicants to register in all systems as soon as possible and well before the relevant deadlines.

Q2: As indicated in the HEP comparative review FOA, submitting a LOI is not required. Therefore, I did not submit the LOI, but do I still need to register in PAMS?

A2: Yes. Since several of our systems tend to be linked with one another for processing the full application and since final award decisions by DOE are conducted through PAMS, it is highly encouraged to register in *all* systems that are specified in the FOA regardless of whether or not a LOI was submitted.

Q3: Who is eligible to apply to the HEP comparative review program?

A3: The eligibility requirements are detailed in Section III of the FOA.

Q4: I have accepted a position as a tenure-track or tenured faculty member at a regionally-accredited domestic institution of higher education, but I have not yet begun the job. Am I eligible to be a senior investigator in the HEP comparative review program?

A4: In order to be eligible as a senior investigator for the FY 2023 comparative review in HEP, you must be employed in the position by the application due date, December 21, 2022. Further, in order to assist DOE during the processing of the submitted application, DOE requests the institution provide a brief letter verifying the position, title, and effective date of employment in Appendix 8 (“Other Attachments”) of the application.

Q5: How do I know whether my institution is regionally-accredited?

A5: The U.S. Department of Education maintains a list of the current regional accrediting agencies at: <https://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/agencies.aspx>.

Proposal Types

Q6: What kinds of proposals are you looking for?

A6: The DOE Office of High Energy Physics (HEP) is soliciting proposals for research in HEP for its comparative review FOA. All applications must address at least one of the six HEP research subprograms described in Section I of the FOA. Proposals that are not consistent with the scope of the research described in Section I may be administratively declined without review.

Q7: How will you handle proposals that are not for direct support of research, like conferences, project-specific R&D or fabrication, experiment operations, computing support, etc.?

A7: All such applications must be submitted to the general SC open solicitation [DE-FOA-0002844](#). The HEP comparative review FOA [[DE-FOA-0002832](#)] is for direct support of HEP research activities.

Q8: Can I submit a research proposal to the general SC open solicitation instead of the HEP comparative review FOA?

A8: New or renewal proposals submitted to the general SC solicitation (*i.e.*, DE-FOA-0002844,

available at the URL: <http://science.osti.gov/hep/funding-opportunities/>) will be reviewed following standard merit review criteria (see Section V of the general SC solicitation); however, funding available to respond to proposals submitted to the general SC solicitation will be extremely limited.

Q9: I have an existing research grant funded through DOE and I will be submitting a proposal to FY 2023 HEP comparative review FOA. Should the proposal be submitted as a “new” or “renewal” application?

A9: The type of application to submit is fully described in Section VIII.A.1 of the comparative review FOA. In determining whether to submit a “new” vs. “renewal” application, the proposal must satisfy the different criteria listed there and must correspondingly be marked as such on the SF-424 Research & Related (R&R) cover page accompanying the application. For cases with multiple co-investigators see also Q18: below. If you still have questions about the type of application to submit, please email sc.hepfoa@science.doe.gov.

Q10: I am planning to submit a “renewal” application to the FY 2023 HEP comparative review FOA. Am I required to complete and submit ‘Renewal Proposal Products’ through the Office of Science PAMS website?

A10: Yes. Please refer to Section VIII.A.8 of the FOA for further information as well as Section 9.2 of the PAMS User Guide, which is available at the URL: <https://pamspublic.science.energy.gov/WebPAMSEPSEExternal/CustomInterface/Common/ExternalUserGuide.pdf>

Applicants completing this section in PAMS must enter each product created during the previous project period of the award. Example products include publications, intellectual property, technologies or techniques, and other products such as database or software publicly available. Accessibility to this section in PAMS will be available to the applicant after the application has been submitted to DOE; all information is requested to be entered within 5-7 calendar days after submission of the application. The submitted product list in PAMS will be sent to reviewers to be considered as part of the merit review of the application. The application will not be considered complete and cannot be sent for review until the renewal proposal product list has been submitted.

Q11: I am a collaborator on a large HEP experiment, and therefore, an author with several other international collaborators on many publications by the experiment. For the Renewal Proposal Products section in PAMS on ‘publications’, should I list all the publications that the experiment produced during my grant’s previous project period or only the ones where I was the primary author?

A11: For the ‘publication’ section in the Renewal Proposal Products in PAMS, Principal Investigators collaborating on large HEP experiments should list the publications where they were the primary author (*i.e.*, one of the main contributors to the paper). Of course, PIs are free to enter all the publications that the collaboration published during the previous project period, but for the HEP comparative review process, DOE and merit reviewers are mainly interested in the ones where the PI was a primary author.

Q12: I am planning to submit a “renewal” application to the FY 2023 HEP comparative review

FOA. Due to the proximity of the proposal deadline to holiday periods, I am concerned about being able to submit Renewal Proposal Products in a timely fashion. What should I do.

A12: Please submit the Renewal Proposal Products as quickly as possible. Your application will not be considered complete, and cannot be sent for review, until they are received. Submission by the end of the first full week of January, 2023, will avoid any delay in the review process.

Q13: How do I submit my Letter of Intent?

A13: The Letter of Intent must be submitted electronically through the DOE Office of Science Portfolio Analysis and Management System (PAMS) website (via URL: <https://pamspublic.science.energy.gov/>). The Principal Investigator and/or anyone submitting on behalf of the Principal Investigator must register for an account in PAMS before it will be possible to submit a letter of intent or a full proposal. Please carefully read Section IV.B.1 of the FOA for details, including instructions on how to register with PAMS and procedures on submitting your LOI. It is highly recommended that you register with PAMS well in advance of submitting your LOI to avoid any delays.

Q14: I have accepted a position as a tenure-track or tenured faculty member at a regionally-accredited domestic institution of higher education, but I will not begin the job until after the Letter of Intent submission deadline of November 16, 2022. Can I still submit a Letter of Intent in response to the FY 2023 HEP comparative review FOA?

A14: Yes. However, in order for your final application to be eligible for the FY 2023 comparative review process, you must be employed in the position by the application due date, December 21, 2022. The application must also comply with all other requirements and guidelines described in the FOA. Further, in order to assist DOE during the processing of the submitted application, DOE requests the institution provide a brief letter verifying the position, title, and effective date of employment in Appendix 8 ("Other Attachments") of the application. See also Q4: above.

Q15: Are pre-applications required?

A15: No.

Q16: I was planning to submit my proposal to the HEP comparative review FOA [DE-FOA-0002832] but the proposal was incorrectly submitted to the general SC solicitation [DE-FOA-0002844]. Can the proposal still be submitted to the correct FOA?

A16: If the application is received by DOE before the given deadline of the respective FOA number, it will be processed according to the guidelines specified in the FOA. However, if the application is received after the deadline of the comparative review FOA, it will not be reviewed or considered for an award under that FOA. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator at the institution and its Sponsored Research/Program Office to begin the submission process of an application in sufficient time to accommodate reasonably foreseeable incidents and contingencies such as these.

Q17: What is the difference between a proposal submitted to the general SC solicitation and a proposal submitted to the HEP comparative review FOA?

A17: The technical content of either proposal should be essentially the same if you are proposing the

same scope of research. However, there are important formatting differences for proposals to the HEP comparative review FOA, including hard page limits, separating the descriptions of research tasks by subprogram, and accompanying budget documents. Details can be found in the HEP comparative review FOA. Also see the notes above in the *Proposal Types* section.

Q18: What is the definition of “senior investigator”?

A18: For the purposes of calculating the page limit, a senior investigator is considered to be an active tenured or tenure-track faculty member at the sponsoring institution. Research collaborators at other institutions are not included. Non-tenure-track faculty (*e.g.*, research faculty) or senior research staff members with term appointments are not included *unless* they are the sole principal investigator on the proposal. However, the roles and responsibilities of all senior research faculty and/or research staff included as part of the proposal should be clearly spelled out in order for their activities to be considered during the comparative review process. For Research Scientist(s) listed in the application, see also [Q37](#): and [Q41](#): below as well as Section IV, the subsection on Appendix 1 in the FOA for guidelines in preparing respective supporting narratives.

Q19: What mailing address should I specify on my application?

A19: Please list your professional or institutional work mailing address (not your home address).

Q20: Are there limits on the length of the proposal?

A20: Yes. The total length of the research description(s) in the narrative section must not exceed 9 pages per senior investigator. Other parts of the submission (Cover Page, Cover Page Supplemental for Proposals with Multiple Subprograms or Thrusts, Project Summary/Abstract and appendices) do not count against this limit; see full text in Section IV of the comparative review FOA for complete details. Additional supporting material (*i.e.*, Publication Lists, etc.) should be put in appendices according to the format and guidelines specified in Section IV of the FOA. Moreover, as noted in the format for Appendix 8 (“Other Attachments”), do not include copies of previously presented or published research papers, technical notes, presentations at meetings or conferences, or reports written for respective experiments or collaborations. Material for the appendices should not be attached as a separate file. Note: any proposal that exceeds the page limit will be declined without review, and therefore, cannot be considered for funding.

Q21: In an application with multiple senior investigators, does the page limit apply to the narrative of each investigator or to the aggregate of all the narratives?

A21: The page limit will be applied to the whole proposal based on the number of senior investigators. For example, if an application contains 4 senior investigators, the page limit for the application narrative would be 36. One of the senior investigators may exceed their allotted 9 pages as long as the total page count does not exceed 36.

Q22: I am involved in two different experiments. Is the page limit really 9 pages per senior investigator or 9 pages per senior investigator per experiment?

A22: The page limit refers to the total number of pages per senior investigator, irrespective of the number of activities being described.

Q23: I work on the CMS experiment and on the DUNE experiment. Do I have to split my 9 pages of research narrative into the Energy and Intensity Frontiers section of the proposal or can I have a single section describing all of my work?

A23: Because each of the six HEP subprograms will be reviewed separately, senior investigators with efforts in more than one subprogram must split their narratives according to subprogram and place them in the appropriate section of the application. Please note that the 9-page limit per senior investigator still applies.

Q24: According to the instructions we are allowed ten appendices. My institution is involved in several different efforts (e.g., ATLAS, Theory, VRO/LSST). Do we get ten appendices for each of these? Or do we break each appendix into sections for the different efforts?

A24: The total number of appendices per proposal should not exceed ten regardless of the number of efforts. Fewer than ten are allowed but no more. Further, the material contained in the appendices is listed in Section IV of the FOA, and applicants must follow the format and guidelines described there.

Q25: In the proposal, I'd like to attach explicit copies of previous publications or reports in order to provide reviewers additional information that would help support my research. Can this be included in the Appendices?

A25: No. The format for material contained in each section of the Appendix is listed in Section IV of the FOA. You should not include any copies of previously published research papers, technical notes, and/or reports written for respective experiments or collaborations in the appendices. If you plan to add this material to the Project Narrative instead, this will count against the page limit that applies to the narrative of each senior investigator. Instead, we encourage you to cite the appropriate references in the project narrative, and consequently, list these in Appendix 2 of the application.

Q26: The proposal needs to include a Project Summary/Abstract (Field 7 on the SF-424 R&R form) which contains a summary of the proposed activity suitable for dissemination to the public. My research group is involved in several different efforts (e.g., CMS, Theory, VRO/LSST). Do we submit a Project Summary/Abstract for each?

A26: No, only one Project Summary/Abstract must be submitted per proposal. The Project Summary/Abstract should summarize all efforts.

Q27: In the proposal that I plan to submit to the FY 2023 HEP comparative review FOA, request for support of Research Scientist(s) presently in the group will be made. Is there a mechanism to describe the Research Scientist's efforts in the application?

A27: Yes. The research efforts of any Research Scientist listed in the application can be included in the 9-page per senior investigator Project Narrative when describing the overall research activities and plans. If so, this will count towards the 9-page per senior investigator page limit of the Project Narrative. Further, we have reserved Appendix 1 strictly for *named* Research Scientist(s) to provide any supporting narrative. Such a narrative in this section of the appendix must not exceed 2 pages per Research Scientist and should include brief background information as well as a description of the roles, responsibilities, and scope of research efforts to be conducted by the scientist. This scope should support the research activities described in

the Project Narrative of the application. When preparing this appendix narrative, the guidelines specified in Section IV, the subsection on Appendix 1 of the FOA must be followed.

Q28: Who qualifies as a Senior/Key Person?

A28: A Senior/Key person is required to fill out the Senior/Key Person Profile, see Section IV.D.3 (“Research and Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)”), as personnel who are identified by name in Section A of the application’s budget, as well as other personnel who contribute in a substantive, meaningful way to the scientific development or execution of the project, whether or not salaries are requested. Research Scientists and Consultants should be included as Senior/Key Personnel.

Q29: In the proposal, what items should or should not be included for the Biographical Sketch for Senior/Key persons described for Section IV.D.3 (“Research and Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)”)?

A29: New since FY 2021: the Office of Science requires the use of the format approved by the National Science Foundation (NSF), which may be generated by the Science Experts Network Curriculum Vita (SciENcv), a cooperative venture maintained at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/>, and is also available at <https://nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/nsfapprovedformats/biosketch.pdf>. The use of a format required by another agency is intended to reduce the administrative burden to researchers by promoting the use of common formats.

The full content of items for the Biographical Sketch that the project director/principal investigator (PD/PI) and each senior/key person ([see Q28, above](#)) is described in section VIII.A.9. The information should include the individual’s education and training, research and professional experience, list of up to 10 publications most closely related to the proposed projects, and up to 5 synergistic activities related to the proposed projects. Note that a list of any potential conflicts of interests that can arise with the proposed projects can no longer be part of the Biographical Sketch and must be attached to the application as indicated in the FOA ([See also Q31, below](#)). *No personally identifiable information (PII) such as social security number, date or place of birth, citizenship status, home address, and/or any other sensitive information that a merit reviewer will not use of should be given in any part of the application.*

Q30: Should the Biographical Sketch list potential reviewers who might have conflicts of interest or bias toward the proposal?

A30: No, the Office of Science provides an Excel template for submitting such information. Attach this information to Field 12 of the Research and Related Other Project Information Form. See Section VIII.A.10, and the Excel template itself, for instructions on what information should be included.

Q31: In the proposal, what items should or should not be included for the Biographical Sketch for Research Scientist(s) described for Appendix 1?

A31: Biographical sketches for Research Scientists should not be included in Appendix 1. Named Research Scientists whose research would be described in Appendix 1 should be counted among the Senior/Key Persons ([see Q28, above](#)) and their Biographical Sketches should be attached to the appropriate box of their entry in the “Research and Related Senior/Key Person

Profile (Expanded)” form. Biographical sketches for Research Scientists should follow the same format and page constraints as those for all other Senior/Key persons.

Q32: Are there limits on the length of the project period for the proposed research?

A32: No, but HEP research grants are typically awarded for a three-year period.

Q33: When are final applications (i.e., proposals) due?

A33: 11:59 PM Eastern Time on December 21, 2022.

Q34: When are new awards issued under this FOA expected to start?

A34: Awards are anticipated to be made during the spring of 2023 with project period start dates on or about April 1, May 1, or June 1, 2023.

Q35: I have already submitted a research proposal to the general SC solicitation [DE-FOA-0002844] but am interested to submit to the FY 2023 HEP comparative review FOA [DE-FOA-0002832]. How should I proceed?

A35: We strongly encourage you to withdraw your proposal from the general SC solicitation and resubmit to the HEP comparative review FOA. If so, please make sure your proposal is compliant with all requirements and guidelines of the HEP comparative review FOA. New or renewal proposals submitted to the general SC solicitation will be reviewed following standard merit review criteria (see the *Review Process* section of this FAQ below); however, funding available to respond to proposals submitted to the general SC solicitation will be extremely limited.

Q36: I want to submit a collaborative research proposal with my colleagues at other institutions. Is this allowed? If so, how do I do this?

A36: Yes. There are two options for submittal: (1) a single application from the lead institution, containing the entire proposal and budget, with collaborating institutions supported via subcontracts or purchase orders (this is referred to in the FOA as an “unincorporated consortium”); or (2) multiple applications (typically one per participating institution), each requesting funding for that institution (referred to in the FOA as a “collaborative proposal”). In the latter case each application should have the same title and clearly indicate the linkages with the other consortium applications in the narrative. In either case the applications should clearly state institutional roles and responsibilities, discuss management and organization of the collaboration, and delineate each institution’s budget. Final decisions on support for either kind of application(s) will depend on the scientific merit review process and other programmatic priorities and factors. DOE may elect to fund some, none or all elements of the proposed collaborative research scope at its discretion.

Q37: I submitted a grant application in a previous year that was only partially funded. Can I submit a proposal that will supplement that existing grant?

A37: Yes, but not through the HEP comparative review FOA. Applications submitted to and selected under the HEP comparative review FOA are standalone research grants. To request additional funding for an existing grant, supplemental applications must be submitted to the general SC solicitation (i.e., [DE-FOA-0002844](#)). For best consideration you should submit your supplemental application on or before the HEP comparative review deadline. We note

however that funding available to respond to applications submitted to the general SC solicitation will be extremely limited

Q38: I am applying to the FY 2023 HEP comparative review FOA. Do I need to include a Data Management Plan (DMP) in the application?

A38: Yes. For complete details, see Section IV, the subsection on Appendix 5 of the HEP comparative review FOA.

Q39: Are there any page limits to a DMP required in Appendix 5 of my application?

A39: Yes. The appendix should not exceed 2 pages per HEP research thrust (*e.g.*, ATLAS, CMS, LSST, DUNE, phenomenology, lattice gauge theory, etc.) where support is being requested in the application. Any particular HEP research thrust in an application, where support is being requested, that does not provide a DMP or does not comply with the guidelines given in Section IV, the subsection on Appendix 5 of the FOA, will be declined without review, and therefore, that research thrust cannot be considered for funding.

Q40: I forgot to include a DMP in my proposal and the deadline has passed. Will DOE accept it if I send it by email after the proposal deadline?

A40: No.

Q41: Under “Current and Pending Support”, should I list all sources of funding, including my start-up, or just federally funded support

A41: New for FY 2023: Current and Pending support is no longer provided in a dedicated appendix. Instead, a report of Current and Pending Support for each Senior/Key Person ([see Q28, above](#)) should be attached to the appropriate box on that Senior/Key person’s entry of the “Research and Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)” form.

New since FY 2021: All foreign government-sponsored talent recruitment programs must be identified in current and pending support. The Office of Science requires the use of the format approved by the National Science Foundation (NSF), which may be generated by the Science Experts Network Curriculum Vita (SciENCv), a cooperative venture maintained at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/>, and is also available at <https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/nsfapprovedformats/cps.pdf>. The use of a format required by another agency is intended to reduce the administrative burden to researchers by promoting the use of common formats. Note that the NSF format is not fully compatible with the information requested in the FOA. Please append extra pages with the requested information to the end of the NSF formatted Current and Pending statements. Section VIII.A.11 of the HEP comparative review FOA provides instructions on preparing a report of Current and Pending Support.

Q42: Are letters of recommendation limited to a total of three for the entire proposal or three per research thrust?

A42: Each separate HEP research thrust (*e.g.*, ATLAS, CMS, LSST, DUNE, phenomenology, lattice gauge theory, etc.) may include up to three letters of recommendation in Appendix 8 (“Other Attachments”). Please note the page limit requirement for each letter, as specified in Section IV.D of the FOA.

Q43: Is it required that we include all eight appendices?

A43: No. Appendix 8: Other Attachments is optional. All other appendices must be included and numbered as stated in the FOA. If the appendix contents are empty (e.g., no Research Scientist support is requested), include the appendix with text "N/A".

Budget

Q44: Are there minimum or maximum limits on the budget that can be requested?

A44: No.

Q45: What is the typical size of an HEP research award?

A45: There is a wide range of awards typically from \$20,000 to over \$1,000,000 per year. Usually the size of the award scales roughly with the number of senior investigators on a grant. However, any scaling also depends on the scientific merit review of the proposal and the senior investigator(s) in the application and/or Program Policy Factors specified in Section V of the HEP comparative review FOA.

Q46: What budget form(s) do I have to submit?

A46: You need to submit the standard Grants.gov budget sheets for the *entire* proposal (for each budget year, plus a cumulative budget page) following the standard procedure described on the Grants.gov website. In addition, DOE budget sheets must be included for the proposed activities described in each subprogram section of the application. These should be included according to the format specified in Section IV of the comparative review FOA.

Q47: I am applying for support across two or more HEP research subprogram areas. Section IV, the subsection on Appendix 7 indicates that I must include additional budget material as part of Appendix 7 of the application. However, the application already contains the material earlier as part of the full submission process. Is Appendix 7 still required?

A47: Yes, we request for completeness that you include Appendix 7 by following the details given in Section IV of the FOA. Note that the subsection on Appendix 7 offers an alternative adding budget sheets in the style of SF-424 (R&R) and justifications in Appendix 7. Instead, as described there, you can submit actual SF-424 (R&R) subaward budget sheets and justifications for each HEP subprogram at the same time that you enter the main application budget information. We recommend that you adopt this alternative method.

Q48: Is cost-sharing required?

A48: No.

Q49: The HEP comparative review FOA indicates support and infrastructure provided by the sponsoring institution should be described in the proposal. Do I need a separate budget form and justification for this?

A49: No. The support and infrastructure provided by the sponsoring institution (as appropriate) should be separately described in the research narrative but does NOT have a separate budget. Infrastructure and support activities should be reported on budget sheets as direct

and/or indirect costs (whichever is customary at your institution) in each subprogram section of the proposal as noted above.

Q50: My research requires purchase of capital equipment for project R&D, fabrication, and/or operational related activities. Will such requests be supported under the HEP comparative review FOA?

A50: Requests to support equipment for project R&D, and/or fabrication and experiment operations efforts will not be supported within the respective experimental frontier research areas in the HEP program. Such requests may be submitted to the general SC solicitation (*i.e.*, [DE-FOA-0002844](#)) with appropriate justifications. Requests to support general-use equipment will be considered under the HEP comparative review FOA.

Q51: My research requires staffing research scientists or engineers for project R&D, fabrication, and/or experiment operational related activities. Will these be supported under the HEP comparative review FOA?

A51: Requests to support engineers and/or research scientists dedicated full-time to operational and/or project related activities for individual experiments will not be supported by the respective experimental frontier research areas in the HEP program. However, if such personnel are conducting physics research related activities, requests to support such efforts, appropriately scaled to the fraction of time on these activities, can be included. Specifically, support for engineering and other technical efforts required for particle detector R&D is included in the Detector R&D subprogram. Final support will be based on the comparative review process (see also the *Review Process* section of this FAQ below and Section V of the FOA).

Review Process

Q52: What are the criteria for acceptance of proposals?

A52: All proposals must be responsive to one or more of the scientific research subprograms detailed in Section I of the FOA and to the provisions detailed in Section V of the FOA. Proposals determined to be non-responsive will be declined.

Q53: Are there additional requirements?

A53: Provisions for any additional requirement in the proposal are given in the FOA. Applicants are strongly encouraged to carefully review the section titled 'Important Updates and Reminders' on pages 1-3 of the FOA.

Q54: What are the review criteria for the HEP comparative review FOA?

A54: Both the Initial Review and the Merit Review Criteria are given in Section V of the HEP comparative review FOA.

Q55: How will the merit reviews be conducted?

A55: All proposals determined to be responsive to the FOA will be submitted to external experts for merit (peer) review. For the HEP comparative review, the six different subprograms outlined in the FOA will each organize separate mail and panel reviews that will compare the

relative strengths of the proposals in that subprogram. For each subprogram's review, reviewers will consider those proposals in that subprogram that passed the Initial Review Criteria, as specified in Section V of the FOA. Reviewers will typically evaluate multiple proposals and will be asked to provide a written evaluation for each of these. All proposals will be evaluated by at least three experts. Individual panel members will be requested to rank order these proposals in terms of overall merit and impact.

Q56: How will the reviews be used by the DOE?

A56: DOE program managers will consider the written evaluations, panel deliberations, as well as the individual rankings of proposals or senior investigators as input to making final decisions on which proposal or investigator will be recommended for funding, and if so, at what level the support will be. Additional considerations such as programmatic priority, alignment with the 2014 Particle Physics Project Prioritization Panel (P5) strategic plan for HEP, overall program balance and continuity, and other program policy factors may also be considered into DOE decisions. Written reviewer evaluations will be returned to the applicant after redaction of information that could compromise reviewer confidentiality.

Q57: How can I improve my chances of receiving funding?

A57: Selections are made on the basis of scientific merit (peer) review, alignment with HEP programmatic priorities, program policy factors, the expertise and technical decision of program managers, and the availability of appropriated funds. If you have peer reviews from previously submitted proposals, you are strongly encouraged to read those reviews carefully and to address any deficiencies identified by the reviewers. A critical assessment of draft versions of your current proposal by colleagues or collaborators may also be helpful in improving your proposal.

Q58: Are there any changes to the Merit Review Criteria?

A58: New in FY 2023 is a Merit Criterion asking reviewers to assess "Quality and Efficacy of the Promoting Inclusive and Equitable Research (PIER) Plan." See the FOA for details. Appendix 6, "Promoting Inclusive and Equitable Research (PIER) Plan", is provided for applicants to describe their PIER Plan. A PIER Plan is a required component of the proposal and omission will result in declination without review.

More information about PIER Plans, including Frequently Asked Questions and a link to a recorded public Webinar are available at <https://science.osti.gov/grants/Applicant-and-Awardee-Resources/PIER-Plans>.

A previous Merit Review Criterion, asking reviewers to assess "Alignment of the proposed research to the priorities established in the P5 strategic plan" has been incorporated into the existing criterion concerning "Appropriateness of the Proposed Method or Approach."

Q59: Will peer reviewers penalize me for delayed progress because of the pandemic when submitting a new or renewal proposal?

A59: No. Reviewers are charged with assessing the quality of a proposal or an application. Reviewer comments about past performance must be grounded in reasonableness: DOE will read these comments in light of the situations affecting applicants and investigators. Applicants and

investigators are encouraged to explain any impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their research. Such explanations could be part of the applicant’s research narrative or could added to Appendix 8 (“Other Attachments”).

Q60: Will HEP take the pandemic into consideration when making award decisions?

A60: Yes. HEP continues to recommend research proposals to be awarded, knowing that research projects require time to ramp-up and that the evolving situation may continue to pose challenges. The Office of Science “[is committed to maximum flexibility in administering awards, recognizing potential delays in research caused by impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic](#)”.

HEP Program or System Questions and Agency Contacts

Q61: I am planning to submit an application to the FY 2023 HEP comparative review FOA, but I have a question specific to the research subprogram that I am applying within. Who should I contact regarding such inquiries?

A61: If you have further questions regarding specific research program areas, please direct inquiries to the respective DOE technical contact listed in Section I of the FOA. For questions about program rules and/or program review process, please email sc.hepfoa@science.doe.gov and reference the HEP comparative review FOA number [[DE-FOA-0002832](#)].

Q62: I am having difficulties accessing Grants.gov or need further assistance with the system. Who should I contact?

A62: For assistance with Grants.gov, please contact Grants.gov at 1-800-518-4726 or email support@grants.gov. DOE cannot answer such inquiries. In your correspondence with Grants.gov, please request them to open a service/help ‘ticket’ for tracking.

Q63: I am having difficulties accessing PAMS or need further assistance with the system. Who should I contact?

A63: For assistance with PAMS, you may consider any of these options:

- Refer to the “PAMS User Guide” on its website: <https://pamspublic.science.energy.gov/>;
- Contact the PAMS Help Desk at 1-855-818-1846 (toll-free) or 1-301-903-9610; or email sc.pams-helpdesk@science.doe.gov. Please consult Section VII of the FOA for the PAMS Help Desk hours of operation. All inquiries should reference this FOA number [[DE-FOA-0002832](#)], and in your correspondence, please request the Help Desk to open a service/help ‘ticket’ for tracking.