- **Unknown Speaker**
00:00:03
And starting Webinar. Now

- **Alejandro Suarez**
00:00:19
I will give it a moment as
  - members of the public join us.
  - Thank you. Everyone for joining us for the Acss program. Webinar. We'll just give another another minute for attendees to finish joining the session.
  - All right.
  - Looks like we are. Ah
  - reaching a bit of a plateau on members joining us. So welcome everyone to the advanced computing systems and services, or a Css program, Webinar um that will cover the solicitation that was recently released, and Sf. Twenty, three, five, one, eight, and I would like to first start us off with some comments from our deputy office director, Dr. Amy Walton to get us started.

- **Amy Walton**
00:01:17
Great! Thank you so much, Alejandro. Welcome, everyone, and thank you for joining us today. I know this is a very busy time of the year for all of you. Um! This is an important program within the office of advanced Cyber infrastructure, where i'm the deputy director, and this is a chance to
  - receive an overview of the changes to this this ah series of solicitations. Ah, just a couple of quick overview items for today that this program is seeking
  - resource providers that will provide the advanced cyber infrastructure and services that will be needed in the full range of computational and data intensive research across all the science and engineering areas that the foundation supports.
  - So far this program is invested in, and you'll see this a little later. Six category one systems. That's the kind of system that will be asked for in this solicitation, that is, for capacity resources that provide additional capacity, and throughput
  - the Ac. Ss program has also invested in five category two systems, and those are the ones that develop innovative prototypes and test beds. That result between the two of these. These result in a very rich and diverse ecosystem. And it's had a tremendous impact on the ability to to ah ah support research in the past few years. This you'll see in this solicitation that
  - that we will be adding to that rich and diverse ecosystem. You'll see, too, that we are doing it in
  - a series within this single solicitation, in a series of steps alternating between category, one and category, two investments.
  - The other thing that you'll see is that we're starting to include the environmental impact as a criterion, taking into consideration the full lifecycle environmental impact of these proposed resources or services in either category and that's including its acquisition, usage, and eventual disposal. Um impacts

- we're finding that this activity aligns very well with the national initiative, such as the national strategic computing reserve and the National Ai Research resource.
- And what the goal is is to have the vast majority of these systems and services available to the Science Committee once they are in production. Um! The allocation will be assigned through an open and peer-reviewed allocation process and Other support services, such as another program that was recently stood up by the office of advanced cyber infrastructure. Its acronym is access. It's the innest Cyber infrastructure for navy coordination ecosystem services
- So again, the the goal is to provide a broad range of the kinds of capabilities that you ah, that the community, as researchers and scientists and engineers need Ah! In the completion of their research. Today's presentation will be going over the requirements and the review, the criteria for the proposal submissions.
- One thing that I would note um, and to keep in mind is that Um and Nsf. Is transitioning away from the Fast Lane submission system at the end of January of next year. So When these proposals are new they will be coming through either the Grandst Gov. Or Research Gov systems. Any time people move to a new system.
- Um! It can take time for your business offices or the the folks that you work with to get your proposal submitted to to get that process to be an easy one. So I think that one thing that I would like to
- it's
- a We begin to pull together. Ah, consider! Adding a little bit of extra time for the submission process for your community other than that we're all during the day today. Happy to take questions from you. So let me turn it back over to you, Alejandro, and let you go ahead and and and start the Webinar discussion. Please.

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Alejandro Suarez
00:05:50
Thank you very much, Amy. And so, as as Amy said, My name is Alejandro Suarez, and I am joined today by my colleagues, Andre Kanayev and Bob Chaddock, of the office of advanced cyber infrastructure within and Nsf. To talk about the Acss program that Amy so eloquently ah summarized for us.
- So the solicitation number for the most updated solicitation recently released is Nsf twenty, three minus five, one hundred and eighteen.
- So
- the goals of today's Webinar, Arta, Orient, the National Research Cyber infrastructure community. About this this competition describe the current solicitation which you can see linked in the corner of this slide, as well as just paste it into the chat.
- Um, and we wish to take some time to answer questions from attendees that can be submitted via the Q. And a function in your ah zoom window. Our ultimate goal is to
- contribute to the community community response to solicitation, and is F twenty, three, five, one, eight, and potentially expand the breadth of the response and effectiveness of the proposals that we receive, and as a reminder, the slides, an audio recording and a transcript from this webinar will be available on the event page website. So this is the site that you registered for this event on a link to that is also available

- in the chat window and in the bottom of this slide. So look out for that after the after the holidays.
- So first some revision notes as to what has changed from the previous acs a css solicitation that we had in a step twenty, six hundred and six. So this just goes through some highlights. There's some more detailed revision notes in the solicitation itself.
- Um, As Amy pointed out, this solicitation now accepts only category, one or only category, two proposals on an alternating deadline schedule. So please take a look at the deadlines to see which category which which deadline alliance with which category you wish to propose to. We've added some clarifying and reminder comments on the performance requirements regarding
- ah proposals, submitted Um. Also some clarification on the operations and maintenance and user support funding, and how that should be structured and proposed in your proposal.
- There is also some edits to the introduction program description that have been updated to more accurately reflect the themes of interest for community consideration. A few other nomenclature revisions such as referring to these systems as research providers within the Snea Research community.
- And
- of course, most importantly, we have our first upcoming deadline in this revised solicitation, which is considering category one proposals only, that is, February twenty, first, two thousand and twenty three,
- so as an overview. This is requesting ah proposals from organizations that are willing to serve as resource providers within the Nsfp. Css program. So these providers will provide advanced ci capabilities and or services in production operations to support a full range of computational and data, intensive research across all areas of science and engineering.
- So this is an effort that we're making to increase the nation's capacity for transformative Sn e discoveries we're interested in. We're also interested in emphasizing the ecosystem of different computational resources and services
- in terms of the diversity of services and resources that can be available. We we focus on the growing scale and diversity of the S. And E. Community, and so, as well as the nature of S. And research requirements involving Ci landscape. And
- this going back to this transformative Sn. E. Discovery's main main mission.
- One important aspect of the solicitation is that the
- systems or services that are proposed must provide cia capabilities and or services that that demonstrate a high degree of stability and usability during production operations, so they can serve as a core infrastructure for usage by the S. Ande. Ah. Community.
- This activity is also guided by ongoing, planning and vision and visioning activities from within and nsf and government-wide. These include expansive visioning for the possible future federated cyber infrastructure resources like the national strategic computing, reserve,
- the national Ai research resource, and other elements of a future advanced computing ecosystem links to reports and activities with regards to these efforts can be found in the solicitation text.
- Furthermore, and Nsf. Recognises the the need to support the growing scale and diversity of the S. And the community, including making access to these resources more equitable. This is guided through reports such as the missing Millions community report, and the Ah.

- Of expanding the geography of innovation, as was discussed by the National Science Board in their vision two thousand and thirty report. These reports are also available within the solicitation text.
- In addition. Ah! The full consideration of life. Cycle environmental impacts are to be considered in these proposals, and
- as, since Amy Up
- brought up this consideration, I also wanted to clarify that the consideration of full lifecycle environmental impacts on these system acquisitions is not to be confused with the funding of core research on sustainability in computing. So if There are proposals that are interested in more fundamental
- research or testbed type activities with regards to sustainability and computing. Our
- encouraged to refer to a recent dear colleague letter in design for sustainability and computing that the computer and information science and engineering directorates court programs recently put out that link is also available in the solicitation text.
- So we talked about the two categories of resources that the Acss program Ah supports. So those two general categories have not changed from the previous solicitation, So the category one are defined as capacity resources that are production, scale, computational resources that are able to provide maximum capacity to the needs of the s and the research community and category. Two
- are proposals that are expected to be for resources that initially ah are prototype or test bed systems that have innovative, forward-looking capabilities or deploy novel technologies, architectures, usage modes,
- and can to work. And target new applications, methods and paradigms for s ande discoveries, however, these would be expected to um within the latter end of their award period, be able to transition to supporting that ah production-scale computational resource usage.
- So main difference from the previous solicitation is that we have an alternating schedule on proposal deadlines. So the upcoming deadline of Ah February is for category. One submissions only then we have a category, two submissions only deadline of October thirty. First, we have
- the following October category, one again, and the following October category two again,
- so as as we've noted earlier capacity resources, category, one is the the only type of resource that will be considered for funding in this upcoming February deadline.
- So now what is necessary for category? One proposals,
- or what are the capacity? One resources, What should they consist of? Um. So they should consists of a plan for provisioning the resource and addressing current future demand for computational data analytics capacity in the broad sneeze computational research community should have a forward-looking plan for engagement with other nsf-supported efforts in advance ci were possible, such as domain-specific centers housing software sensors or instruments to advances me research
- should have a persuasive articulation as to how the research will support less traditional or underrepresented computational snee communities, if appropriate, and how those models of engagement
- of things like campus supported ci will be explored. They should also describe how the resource will support communities that require national scale on demand computing data, analytics capabilities within a flexible and user-friendly environment

- plan for operations of the project duration with operational science and impact metrics to ensure that it will be an asset for the Sna Research community should have a detailed risk mitigation, plan and deployment plan to ensure the proposed resource will be in production operations
- within a certain time period, and i'll get into a bit more detail on that in a future slide it should have reliability requirements that follow the expectation
- that there's a certain amount of uptime and availability that it should have to the research community. And furthermore, about ninety percent of the provision system or service should be available through a nationally allocatable structure, such as the access program.
- Um, to be allocated to the research community.
- And of course, as with even in capacity, resources, exploration of novel methods of Ci Federation, other novel architectures, et cetera, are to be considered.
- So where does this Ah land us in terms of the landscape of what is currently been funded by the acss program. Um. Well, this is a quick map in a snapshot of what? Ah, one section of the high-performance computing acquisition space within Oac looks like including the two categories of the Acss program. So, as Amy pointed out, we have the six category, one capacity systems
- that have been funded so far. Um, including the legacy stampede two system which now falls under that category and the category. Two innovative prototypes test bed systems that include some longer running systems that are reaching the end of their prototype phase as well as some newer systems that are still ongoing the prototype test bet phase. This is also
- complemented by our leadership class and distributed services, leadership class being the fronttera system for the upper echelon of ah computing needs in terms of sheer capacity and complexity, and then distributed services, such as the open science grid, or the path facility which allows for distributed high throughbook computing services, and the access program which is
- centralized, or a federated system of user support allocation operations and metric services. Um, that work together with resource providers and the user community.
- So if you wish to learn more about Ah, specifically, the category one and category two systems that have been deployed. Ah! You are welcome to learn more about those systems, either through the access to ah ah website,
- or through the Nsf. Award search page. If you go to the Nsf. Gov. Awards search mechanism. You can search through the There's an element code that's called seven, six, one, nine in the in the awards search, and that will bring up all of the proposals, or all the awards that were made through this program. A simpler version of doing just that is, if you go to the Acss program page
- and select browse projects funded by this program that will take you directly to that that search bar of the seven thousand six hundred and ninety, and you can see the awarded projects through there.
- So a note on eligibility. There are these are the categories of what institutions and or organizations may be able to submit to the acss program. So those include institutions of higher education, non-profit, non-academic organizations, or
- federal agencies or federally funded research and development centers Ffrdcs please note the
- quite ah important caveat that these may apply, provided that they are not including costs for which Federal funds have already been awarded or expected to be awarded. We heavily encourage anyone that's in that Ffrdc. Or in that nonprofit organization category to reach out to

one of the cognizant program directors for this program. If you have questions about your your eligibility, and there are no restrictions on the who may serve as ti.

- Continuing with eligibility. There is a limit on the number of proposals that an organization may submit. That is, that is one note that collaborative projects must be submitted as a single proposal. So any collaborative work must be done through a single proposal, with some award arrangements, as opposed to several collaborative proposals that make a project.
- Ah! The limited and number of proposals for Pi or Copi is also one. Um. However, there's no limit on the proposal may be associated in other capacities, such as senior personnel.
- I also want to note here. Ah, since We've been receiving some questions on this that the eligibility information, including the limits on the number of proposals for organization
- or per pi, is independently associated with each competition due date. So the upcoming due date of Ah, in in February will have these limits in place, but those limits will reset for the following October deadline, and each subsequent deadline they will reset.
- So when it comes to proposal. Ah, preparation, guidance, one ah large item that I think everyone should be aware of is that the project description has a solicitation-specific limit, and that is thirty pages
- Um. In addition to the standard instructions for the sections of a proposal that are described in the proposal awards A policies and procedures Guide, or the path. G.
- Ah, in the project Description. Ah! You must also include the following sections in your project description. So those are the sections A. Through H. That you see on your screen here, and more detail about what those ah different sections require can be found in the solicitation text under the proposal, preparation, guidance.
- Furthermore, there are required supplementary documents that are asked for in this solicitation those documents include actual or estimated performance benchmark results.
- It includes detailed projected operating costs of the system or service, and a list of all institutions and companies involved in the project. And so, if you look at Section five of the solicitation,
- you can find more detailed preparation and submission instructions
- now regarding budgets,
- the budget for the category one. So this upcoming deadline cannot exceed ten million dollars.
- Ah! And this is for the acquisition um of the of the resource or service. Um. So any proposals that whose budget exceeds that threshold may be considered. Ah! They be returned, or may not be considered appropriate, and maybe return without review.
- So note that the funds for user support and operating costs should be detailed elsewhere in your proposal. Ah, namely, in the Operations plan section of your project description and the detailed projected operating costs. Ah, supplementary document. So note that the user support and operating costs should not
- be included in the budget section. The actual Nsf. Table Budget section of proposals responding to this solicitation.
- So when it comes to user. Support and operating costs
- the requirement, there is that the user support and operating cost of the system may be for up to twenty percent
- or twenty five percent, with very strong justification of the acquisition costs per year.
- So the acquisition costs in this case is ah taken to be the total value of the acquisition award. So, for example, if you proposed and were awarded a category, one resource with a budget of ten

million dollars. Then that could have two or two and a half million dollars of user support and operating costs per year. Associated with that proposal.

- The actual funding of this user support and operating costs
- budget would come in a second requests. A second supplementary request for funding that would be submitted to Nsf. After the initial award.
- So if you have any questions regarding the ah specifics of acquisition costs, or is this user support and operating costs. Ah, please contact one of us, one of the cognizant program directors for this program.
- Now note on review criteria.
- So ah! All proposals will be evaluated by the standard. Nsb. Approved review criteria, namely, intellectual merit and broader impacts. And within those two criteria there are five questions that reviewers will be asked to serve as elements for their comments on both criteria. That is, namely, what a proposer is going to want to do.
- Why are they doing this? How do they plan to do it? How will they know if their success, how benefits, what benefits would it? Ah, crew, if the project is successful. This is true, for ah nearly all projects submitted to to and Nsf.
- In addition, this solicitation has some solicitation, specific review criteria, namely, that it will be. Ah! Reviewers will be asked to assess the adequacy of the descriptions provided in the required sections of the proposal that we discussed earlier.
- You can find more details about the And so the solicitation-specific review criteria, as well as the nsf-wide review criteria. In Section six of the solicitation the nsf proposal processing review procedures.
- So here we want to make a note on what the award process would look like in the case of an awarded system.
- So if an award is made.
- Ah! For one of these systems the Awardee institution will work with an asf on mutually Ah! Mutually agreeable project terms and conditions. Um. This will include the preparation of a project execution plan which will include criteria for eventual acceptance of a completed system
- Spending authority of the award will be limited only to the necessary administrative work regarding the project and the acquisition.
- After award. The user's support and operating costs are described in the project descriptions, operations, plan and the detailed projected operating costs
- will be considered via this separate supplemental funding request to the award.
- So the expectation is that in approximately twelve months after the award is made, a system may be fully deployed, and an acceptance review will take place
- in this acceptance Review. The criteria laid out in the project execution plan will be assessed.
- Should this review be successful, the remaining authority to spend funds
- against the acquisition award will be released to cover the acquisition costs.
- So note on schedule. You may have seen that there's a different deadline for this year versus other years that's just due to shifts in when this solicitation came out. But note that this is generally following fiscal year or October through September time frames of the Federal government. So this upcoming deadline corresponds to fiscal year twenty three activities.
- The following deadline will correspond to fiscal year, twenty, four activities, and all of this is,
- of course, a subject to availability of funds, And this is also why we discuss these as having independent proposal limits depending on the deadline. Ah, also, with regards to schedule, as I

just noted in the previous slide. The acquisition and deployment of the full systems are expected to be completed within twelve months of the awards start date. We realize that this may be an ambitious schedule, especially with issues like supply chain and other. Ah!

- Kovat maybe related delays that may occur while acquiring and deploying a system.
- But any challenges in such a schedule are something that we encourage proposers to include, and for the risk, mitigation, strategy that is part of the required sections of your proposal,
- Amy, beat me to the punch on this one, but there is note I wanted to make on the Fast Lane decommissioning. So note that the
- independent of the schedule of Fast Lane coming offline. This solicitation specifically asks that proposals only be submitted via research, check of or grants. Gov: Um. So they may not be prepared or submitted via Fast Lane. So we we do encourage proposers to
- get acquainted with Ah Research, Gov. Or, if you use it, Trans. Go to to be able to submit your proposal in a timely manner.
- All right. So in summary we have the upcoming deadline of I want to make sure. I'm absolutely clear here. February twenty first.
- So you saw February twenty, third, February twenty first um, and it will be category one only. The future deadlines will correspond to independently run competitions in terms of submission limits. So
- the following October deadline will be category two only, and will be for the next fiscal year, et cetera, et cetera. There are required sections in submissions, and there are solicitation, specific review criteria. For this solicitation.
- I have a note, remember, about the budget restrictions on operating versus acquisition costs,
- and that summarizes generally. Ah, what Ah! This new solicitation is about? Ah! We are always happy to open the floor for questions. Ah, any attendees may submit questions using the Q. And a functionality in zoom. And
- while we wait for some questions I will go through some some questions that we see somewhat frequently, so that we may cover those to start off.
- So there was the eligibility question in terms of submission limits. If my organization applied within the submission submission limits of the February twenty first deadline, my organization eligible to apply for other deadlines, so barring any other
- Ah, any other difficulties. Yes, the eligibility information for ah and submission limits for one competition is separate from the next competition or the next deadline.
- Ah, there's a question we often get about user support and operating costs. Um, which is saying that twenty percent of the acquisition costs per year is what is being asked for does. Each year of operating expenses constitute twenty percent of the yearly acquisition costs or twenty percent of the total acquisition costs.
- In this case we see the initial acquisition cost to be defined as the total value of the acquisition award,
- irrespective of how a proposal may break it down. So a category, one system that's budgeted for ten million dollars can request that two million or two and a half, with strong justification in terms of their annual user support and operating costs.
- We also often receive the question of where one should include the user support and operating costs. Um, In their proposal, for example, should it be included in the budget section, and the answer to that is no. This solicitation is considering funding for ah,

- just the advanced computing systems and services Acquisition not the not anything about Oops, not anything
- about the operations and user support in the initial in the initial award, so that would be listed in the relevant supplementary documentation, such as the detailed project operating costs, and those would be requested through a separate supplemental funding request.
- And I see that
- there is a question that has asked, Does each deadline have a budget of thirty million dollars, or is thirty million dollars? The total across all four deadlines?
- Um. So thank you for that question I will let my colleagues chime in, but I think at first pass the only budget that we can comment on. And obviously this is all subject to availability of funds is the
- the upcoming deadline of the February deadline, and I believe, if one of my colleagues can correct me, that that thirty million dollars is the

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Robert Chadduck
00:34:41

the cap, or in terms of the maximum amount, subject to availability of funds for that upcoming February deadline. I see my colleague, Bob Chaddock can comment on this.
- Yeah, thank you, Al: And again, thank you for your question.
- You know, Dr. Soare. As you are correct, the the Nsf. Commitment to the competition
- with the February, the twenty first twenty three, the
- deadline.
- It is the thirty million dollars.
- The subsequent competitions, you know, would be subject to, you know, future availability of funds.
- So the thirty million dollars, you know, is is presently committed to only the current competition. Thank you all.

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Alejandro Suarez
00:35:39
They give up.
- Ah! We have another question that has come in when considering expanding access to underrepresented communities, Can the proposed system be focused on education and training use cases in addition to S. Ande research activities,
- Or is there a preferred mix of research versus educational use cases?
- I think I have some comments on that. But Andre or Bob. I don't know if either of you wish to start us off.
- What's a comment on that?

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Robert Chadduck
00:36:14

So again Thank you for your question, and again. Thank you. All the the you know, the the breadth of of and Nsf. Interests include um research, you know, in science and engineering. Ah, and also education. So really the aspect of making the compelling case

- that for this kind of a resource also having an educational component, you know, is appropriate within Nsf. Authorities.
- Dr. Kind of do you have a You have any reflections or thoughts?

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Andrey Kanaev
00:36:49
No, no, I don't have anything more than that.

- I think you eliminated them.
- Our point of view on this.

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Alejandro Suarez
00:36:59
Yes, I agree that there's the It's a question of How are you making the case to provide this kind of infrastructure for the Sd Research community which could include research training which could include some educational components. But it's up to you how you wish to make the case for putting that, putting that mix together, and if you have anything specific to your proposal that you wish to discuss, we can also.

- We can reach out, or you may reach out independently as well.
- So we have another question that has come in
- their solicitation, specifically mentioned, build America by America, a system with requirements to build America by America act no funding made available. It may be adapted for award. Yes, so this is the text from the solicitation
- Um, As everyone knew almost all chips, interconnect networks, um servers, et cetera forcia system are made out of America. How our proposals should address this
- requirement. So thank you for that question
- there is actually so this this build America by America language is required in all. Ah, I think it's in all solicitations. Now it's some some standard text that that and Nsf. Needs to comply with when it comes to construction
- activities. So I think the the key term here is construction. So the Acss program, as we have put it forth, does not fund construction of infrastructure,
- as, for example, the Mr. Efc. Program would, or a major research. Ah, facilities account. So when it comes to the acquisition of computing resources, we do not see that, as under the purview of build America by America,
- more, any infrastructure that may possibly fall under that That would likely be something that would be out of scope of
- the solicitation, as that would be, you know, things like the power and cooling, and the building requirements are independent of the acquisition of the system itself, and are out of scope of this solicitation.
- I don't know if any of my colleagues have any further comment on Build America by America?

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Robert Chadduck

00:39:29

No, again, you know. Thank you. Thank you, Dr. For us The key piece of this really is looking at the authorities in the in the you know, build America by America Act,

- I think, because I, you know, successfully described, is really the focus is on construction. And and basically the authorities ah, that are established there. Don't, apply in this context of the Acss competition, which is fundamentally an acquisition activity.
- So again thank you for your question. Um,
- you know. And and then Dr. Swore as you are correct,

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Alejandro Suarez

00:40:06

Thank you. Next question that we have asks our category. Two proposals evaluated with the same metrics as category One Are we expected to accept users with some time after deployment? How many users, et cetera.

- So I guess just to start us off on this one. There is a term in the solicitation specific to category two. That is the expectation that the
- A category, two system would transition to high availability production services that would be broadly available and allocatable. Essentially in line with how the allocation would work for a category, one system through an open peer-reviewed process
- during the final two years of the of the project award period. So it's not right at the deployment stage, but it would be in the final two years of the award period.
- I don't know if my colleagues have any further comment on those sort of metrics of production operations for a category, two system.

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Robert Chadduck

00:41:17

Now, once again, doctors, whereas you are correct, the the category. Two competitions provide for basically the

- you know, a an innovative model for the acquisition of
- the You know the test bed systems, but the expectation is is that they will
- provide for, you know, production capabilities in the final two years of their award.
- So again thank you for your question. Thank you for interest. And again, you know, Dr. So as you are correct.

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Alejandro Suarez

00:41:55

Thank you, Bob.

- We have another question that has come in asking: Does the operation budget include salaries, utilities, and other expenses related to the main system.
- Do you have to do? One of my colleagues want to take that one

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Robert Chadduck
00:42:16
again? Thank you. Um. And again, thank you for your question basically the operations, you know, um budget and information is intended to be, you know, comprehensive to provide for. Again, the operations, including the maintenance of the system to serve as the
- you know, production, capacity, resource.
- So in the context of of potentially what would you, you know, include, You know, salaries or things like that. You know that that is appropriate, but also it depends on the you know, the specific details of of your proposal and your um and your institutional model.
- So again, thank you for your question.

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Alejandro Suarez
00:43:03
Thank you, Bob, for that. I think that that pretty well covers it. We still have the
- some time available. If there are any further questions
- that folks may wish to ask.
- And again, as a reminder, we have our our contact information on the screen here. Email is always preferred. But please, if you have anything specific to your proposal that you, you may wish to ask in terms of eligibility in terms of some of this documentation in terms of whether it's an appropriate fit for a consideration by this program, Please feel free to reach out to us at the emails listed there

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Andrey Kanaev
00:44:02
while we're waiting for the other questions. I'd like to return the question
- before the last one. There was a question: How many users category two
- the word that
- specified, and I would like to know that we don't specify how many users we
- the systems are, need to have.
- It's. It's
- a metric. At least
- this is the required.

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Alejandro Suarez
00:44:27
Thank you, Andre.

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Robert Chadduck
00:44:29
Yes, it's very specific.

- You are correct.
- There is no there is no specified
- a number of expected users,

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Alejandro Suarez
00:44:39
I think the only relevant

- metric there again. This is with regards to category one, and with regards to category two once they have transitioned to full production operations is that there should be some some mechanism to have ninety percent of the ah, the cycles, or whatever service units of the system available through an open allocation process for that system,

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Robert Chadduck
00:45:10
you know. Again, Thank you, Al: You are correct.

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Alejandro Suarez
00:45:17
So another question has come in. This one has asked, Will this solicitation fund software development, such as tools and utilities and millware in additional, in addition to the physical Ci acquired and assembled.

- So this is, I think it's clear to say, we we don't fund a software development per se in this activity. If, for whatever reason, the acquisition of your your, your
- So if it's a service or the hardware has some software development component to it to ensure that the system is acquired, or that it can be operated. Then you may need to make a case that that is necessary for the acquisition or the operation and user support funding of the system. But that may
- Ah, that may be a bit more nuanced, and you can get in touch with us more directly if you have a specific question on that. But I can also open it up to my colleagues if if anyone else wants to bring some insight

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Robert Chadduck
00:46:22
again. Thank you all again. Thank you for your question. What I would draw your attention to basically is, look at the the scope of the competition

- as presented in this solicitation, or fundamentally, what you see in this is intended to be a, you know, an open competition for systems and services. But you know, you know Dr. Soarez is, you correctly stated, depending upon how you may potentially make a case.
- You know, the aspects of this fundamentally is focused on again the acquisition of systems and services to provide for fundamentally production
- capabilities, to advance science and engineering, research and education. The:

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Alejandro Suarez
00:47:11
Thank you, Bob.

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Robert Chadduck
00:47:12
They shouldn't.

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Alejandro Suarez
00:47:13
Yes, and I should note that we do have a separate program. Ah, namely, the Csi program the Cyber infrastructure for a sustained scientific innovation program that has a deadline that did just pass. But that is, I think, a more appropriate software development type
- a program with regards to scientific software development. But again, you can, if if you have specific questions on the nature of of your proposal, feel free to reach out.

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Amy Walton
00:47:42
Great Answer. And that's appropriate, Alejandro, Because
- Cssi is a much larger cross-organizational software. And data focused program. Thank you. Great Answer:

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Alejandro Suarez
00:47:56
Thank you. Amy.
- So we have. Another question has come in: Can the proposed acss system be housed on a commercial data center or by a cloud provider? Does any and Nsf. Have any specific requirement for location or facility hosting the system.
- So again, I think that comes to the I think, just two pieces to that. One is the
- the eligibility requirements require the proposing organization to be one of those three categories institution of higher education, nonprofit, or a

- Ffr. Dc. Given some caveats um independent on that. If through some partner there is some, you you can make some case for housing the system physically in a different building than the Ah,
- say the campus of your institution that is, that is up to you to make the make the case. Ah, but i'll let my colleagues chime in on it. If there's any further further clarity we may wish to bring on them.

Robert Chadduck
00:49:04
No, I mean thank you, Dr. Wyatt. The key piece of this really is the aspect of the is the eligibility, and also as defines the cohort of the potential Awardy institutions. So fundamentally the the intent of the awards would go to again institutions in that
- in those three categories. Now, how, as as Dr. Sores mentioned, is really how a compelling case could make for you know, potentially a co-location or partnerships under a sub award,
- you know, to the awarding institutions that that fundamentally is how the case is made.
- Um! So again, But if you look at what would be the expectations again for the operations, the system as specified in the solicitation, I think you will find guidance available there. So again, thank you for your question.

Alejandro Suarez
00:50:03
Thank you so hopefully that Ah, that answers the the question that we we don't have any specific requirements on where the physical system can can be housed. It's more of a question of what are the eligible institutions that can serve as the proposing institution.

Amy Walton
00:50:22
We have another question that come in? Are there guidelines for an open allocation process? Are the restrictions on allowed users? Or is it at the discretion of the proposers for that we mainly

Alejandro Suarez
00:50:38
talk to the advanced cyber infrastructure, coordination, ecosystem services and support or access. Ah program. So if you have questions about how to work with the access program or other allocation details Within that program you may reach out to the contacts through access Ci. To be able to answer questions about what

Unknown Speaker
00:51:07

what the process looks like.

Alejandro Suarez
00:51:10

But we, we do ask that the allocation of of of cycles be coordinated through us. Ah, an open sort of peer-reviewed type of allocation process, such as the one by by access. Um! Or if there's some sort of this important here, Nsf. Approved alternative as as may um emerge. So I think if you're looking at using some alternative allocation mechanism, you may wish to

- send, send us a note to ask about whether that would be an appropriate way to allocate the system.
- Any other notes for my colleagues on that one.

Robert Chadduck
00:51:53

Once again, how you are correct. The key piece of that is The intent of this is that the the allocation mechanisms are supported through the access national coordinated services.

- So again, that's a question, you know, is appropriately to be addressed into the
- you know, to the access um
- program through through the web page that i'll identify.
- So thank you.

Alejandro Suarez
00:52:22

Ah, next question. It's maybe technical. Are there any guidelines for performance results when new processors running and turboota may be difficult to compare apples to apples. So actually,

- that's a perfectly ah appropriate question here. This comes down to. Ah, what are the performance? Metrics that you wish to? Ah! With that you wish to propose right? So I think it is up to you and up to You know what, what, what architecture, what computing model you're using to to propose, what what you feel would be the best case for successful operational metrics,
- metrics of the of the resulting system or service,
- Andre or Bob, any other thoughts on any specific guidelines of performance benchmarks.

Robert Chadduck
00:53:19

No. Once again you are, you are correct. The key piece of this really is the present presentation of what would be, You know, the compelling story for the

- you know, for the proposed system. In the competitive context of this
- you know of, of of this solicitation and competition. You know the the specific aspects of how that case is made in terms of performance. You know presentation of ben benchmarks, other aspects of what would be the description of the system.

- You know, you know that is, that is laughed up to you all in your sense of your, of your your your best compelling case.

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Alejandro Suarez
00:54:05
Thank you.

- Next question asks, it is assumed, it is assumed that a Css. Proposed systems like to connect with the access organization,
- who slash what part of access would be appropriate point of contact for a Css. Proposals. Downtown's. P. I. Of the Aco, maybe. Ah, that that is a good question I will refer you to, and I see Amy has raised her hand. If you have a note on that one, Amy
- and you, I think you may be uh muted.

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Amy Walton
00:54:40
It's my favorite pastime, Bob and Andre. I'll let you go first. But yes, the great question. So please go ahead if you have something, Bob Laundry.

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Robert Chadduck
00:54:49
No, thank you. I mean the key piece of what I would suggest is really again, You know,

- you know, you know we will defer to you all in making your compelling case the
- the aspect of you who you view is potentially your most. You know effective engagements and context,
- you know, in the access program. Um, What I would suggest is basically you know, can can confer with the folks that are available to you all through the um access. Ci: Ah, Web Page, and start there
- if you have further questions about specific details. Now, please follow up um, You know, with us, you know, after the after the Webinar, and we'll be happy to um, you know. Continue to engage with you all, Amy.
- All right.

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Amy Walton
00:55:41
Anything from you on and right

- erez agmoni to the points of contact we think would be relevant one hundred, and
- it's a great question that has been asked. Thank you for that question. Um. Access is much wider than any prior set of services that has existed in the past. Some of the services that were supported through ah exceed You'll see that those are on that page. But if you're unsure. I would

go straight to the program officer who's or program officers who are leading this activity. Access is being led by Tom Gil Bronson

- in our organization, and his name is there. But you'll also see people like Alejandro and some of the other program directors that are there. Um! There's a wide variety of organizations that are working together collaboratively to try and provide these services, because, just as you would imagine, there are a wide variety of services that are needed. So um great question. Um, there's a ah access is ah a sort of a major step forward for for our organization.

- Um, and it's just coming online. It has a number of different uh organizations involved. Um! And again, the the goal is to have these capabilities. If you don't know you have a place to go and ask so great question. Thank you for asking us.

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Alejandro Suarez
00:57:18
Thank you, Amy, and we are also happy to. If If you have questions about the access program in general. Ah! Since there are many awards associated with that program. Ah, we we are happy to. Ah Field, those questions, and ah put you in contact with any ah Nsf side staff that may be able to answer them as well.

- And and I think in that similar vein another questioner asks, are our letters of collaboration with the access program or awards required? And I think this comes back to

- the case that Dr. Chaddock made about making

- and make making a compelling story, and making a compelling case that your system would be able to be allocated through this process. So I don't believe We have a required letter, a letter of collaboration requirement for this, but you have to make the case that that it will be supported through that that program should it be awarded Bob Andre any further comment on that one.

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Robert Chadduck
00:58:25
So thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Sworez. The key piece of this also is, you know, going back to the solicitation, I think what you will, you will confirm is really the expectation, and what would be a term of a potential award

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Amy Walton
00:58:40
to a system responding to this solicitation is that the cooperation with the access program will be in place,

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Robert Chadduck
00:58:51
you know. So again, it's. You know it's It's the aspect of you know, presenting that that you know compelling story, including again with,

- you know, letters of support, Anything else, you know. The key thing is really the census is making making the compelling story.
- So thank you, Al: You are correct,

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Alejandro Suarez
00:59:15
thank you. But
- so that's it for questions in the queue at this time. We do have some additional, some additional time. If there are any further questions

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Amy Walton
00:59:30
while questions are coming up, i'd like to take a moment and to thank the three program officers that were ah involved in this activity today. Alejandro Suarez, who has been um leading the the program. Ah, Webinar today. Thank you so much. Robert Chaddock and Andrei Khanayev really appreciate the time and effort that you put into this, and also thank you to the Webinar people who at this busy holiday season managed to get some time
- um, and get this Webinar up and available so people could start to get their questions answered. And so for that I do have a um thanks to Elena Hillenburg, Fred, Hannah, and Derek Hampton always appreciate your kind help with that. So,

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Alejandro Suarez
01:00:21
bridge
- i'll give it just another few seconds using the
- professor rule of count to ten, Captain twenty.
- But if there are no further questions,

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Andrey Kanaev
01:00:36
What's this

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Alejandro Suarez
01:00:55
right? It looks like. There are no
- further questions at this time, so I think
- we can conclude the
- conclude the Webinar at this time, and we thank everyone who was able to to make it to attend what I, as Amy pointed out, as a very ah, very busy and end of the year Ah, timeframe. So we.

We thank you for being able to join us today and again as a reminder. Ah! Shortly after the holidays we hope to have the presentation and recording materials available at the event website. Should you wish to refer back to this presentation?

- So thank you very much. Everybody.
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Andrey Kanaev
01:01:39
Thank you. Thank you. All.

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Amy Walton
01:01:42
Happy holidays

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Alejandro Suarez
01:01:56
all right. As we wind down I will

- stop share.