(U) Cyber Defense Grant Solicitation

For

National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity (CAE-C)

S-004-2017

"Cybersecurity National Action Plan (CNAP) Investment in Expansion of CAE-C Education Programs"

SECTION I – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

This Grant Solicitation sets forth guidelines for areas of interest in cybersecurity for Community Colleges, Technical, and Trade schools designated as National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity. This solicitation is issued under Section 6.102(d) (2) of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), and under section 22.315 of the Department of Defense Grant and Agreement Regulations (DoDGARs), which provides for the competitive selection of proposals. Solicitations may be used by Agencies to fulfill their requirements for scientific study and experimentation directed towards advancing the state of the art or increasing knowledge and understanding, rather than focusing on a specific system or hardware solution. Proposals submitted that are selected for award are considered to be the result of competition in accordance with 10 U.S.C. 2361 and 32 C.F.R. Section 22.315 and 22.325.

The National Security Agency is soliciting proposals for grants in the area of cybersecurity education from National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity. Proposals using innovative approaches, employing input from a diverse set of cybersecurity education professionals, are sought.

1.1 SCHEDULE

Proposals shall be due no later than 14 April 2017. Proposal evaluations are expected to conclude no later than 30 days after the closing date. Notification of grant awardees will occur within two (2) weeks of evaluation completion (approximately mid-May 2017), with final awards being made by 30 June 2017.

1.2 FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION (CYBERSECURITY EDUCATION)

The primary purpose of funding through the President’s CNAP is to address expansion of the national cybersecurity workforce in terms of both quantity and quality. Offerors will be expected to provide a final report on actions taken, and make any resultant product available to the CAE-C program office within 60 days of conclusion of the project. The CAE-C program is soliciting grants for provision of awards in relation to cybersecurity education in the following areas:
1.2.1. **Integration of hands-on learning experiences into cybersecurity curriculum.** The CAE-C program will provide support to any institution designated as a CAE-2Y, CAE-CDE, CAE-R, or CAE-CO for the purpose of integrating hands-on experiences into cybersecurity curriculum. Since CNAP is primarily focused on growth and professionalism of the nation’s cybersecurity workforce, proposals supporting this initiative should contribute to a student’s ability to apply knowledge to cybersecurity practice. Costs included in this submission may include but are not limited to purchase of software, faculty time, or purchase of equipment to facilitate classroom integration. Offerors should create learning experiences that can be replicated by other designated CAE-C institutions and other cybersecurity institutions. Proposals should include a plan to disseminate the learning experiences to the CAE Community. If proposal is to address curriculum not mapped to the KU requirements during the application process, indicate how the target curriculum contributes to the success of the CAE-C program.

1.2.2. **Innovative approaches to cybersecurity education.** Major obstacles to expanding the nation’s cybersecurity workforce include inadequate access to cybersecurity education programs in rural areas, the need to reflect rapid technology change in curriculum and education programs, expense of access to experiential ranges and other cybersecurity practice opportunities, cybersecurity students’ poor soft job skills preparedness (speaking/communicating, writing, briefing, etc.), and high school student preparedness for rigorous undergraduate cybersecurity academic programs. Proposals are sought for initiatives taking innovative approaches to these and other challenges in cybersecurity education. Innovative approaches developed because of this task should be replicable for other institutions and rural areas. Proposals should include a plan to disseminate the approaches to the CAE Community.

1.2.3. **Initiatives focused on increasing the availability of qualified cybersecurity educators.** Colleges and universities are challenged with an extreme shortage of qualified educators in the field of cybersecurity education. Proposals are sought for initiatives taking innovative approaches to bringing professionals into cybersecurity education while maintaining requirements for credentials (certification, advanced degrees) and/or experience. Proposals may also address the continuing education and professional development of educators currently in the field.

1.2.4. **Initiatives focused on expanding the student pool.** The need for cybersecurity professionals to fill vacancies in government and industry across the United States is acute. Programs that successfully identify under-served and under-utilized potential students are critically needed to accelerate growth of the profession. These groups of students could be untapped professionals needing/wanting to change careers midway through their professional lives such as transitioning police, fire, public safety, and military personnel, and professionals in related fields such as computer science, business, law, finance, or engineering wanting to expand their professional expertise.

1.2.5. **Collaboration and engagement in cybersecurity education programs.** Regional or topical collaboration among designated CAE-C institutions can produce a rich and productive educational environment. Collaboration could include colleges and universities sharing faculty or curriculum to expand their programs, or could include creating teams of students from diverse institutions to study a problem or conduct research. Proposals are sought for initiatives engaging multiple (two or more) institutions partnering to accelerate or expand the volume and quality of the national workforce through undergraduate and graduate programs.
1.2.6. Study correlation between commercial certification courses, government-sponsored cybersecurity designation programs and the CAE-C KUs/focus areas. Proposals are sought for a collaborative study on how curriculum leading to one of the Cybersecurity/Information Assurance certifications listed under DOD Directive 8570 (such as CISSP, CISA, CISM, CEH, Security+, etc.) and/or other designations offered by government authorities (such as the National Centers of Digital Forensics Academic Excellence (CDFAE)) map to the CAE-C knowledge units and focus areas. Lead institution must hold one or more of the CAE-C designations; participating faculty must hold one or more of the certifications included in the study. Offerors are encouraged to form a partnership with other institutions.

SECTION II – AWARD INFORMATION

2.1 AWARD TYPES AND FUNDING LEVELS

Awards made as a result of this solicitation will be in the form of a Grant.

Funding for this solicitation and anticipated awards will start in the third quarter of FY17. Individual awards should not exceed twelve months in duration. Offerors shall state in their proposal the expected period of performance in terms of specific months (1 to 12 months). Total available funding for this solicitation is expected to be up to $12,400,000.00.

Offerors should expect awards up to $300,000.00.

The CAE Program Office may exceed an awardee’s requested budget if the proposed project is deemed worthy of additional funding.

2.1 GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

As defined in the DOD Grants and Agreements Regulations, DoD 3210.6-R, a grant is “A legal instrument which, consistent with 31 U.S.C. 6304, is used to enter into a relationship:

1. Of which the principal purpose is to transfer a thing of value to the recipient to carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by a law of the United States, rather than to acquire property or services of the Department of Defense' direct benefit or use.
2. In which substantial involvement is not expected between the Department of Defense and recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated by the grant.

SECTION III – ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

3.1 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

United States Colleges and Universities - Public or Private – are eligible to apply. Those institutions currently designated as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense – Two-Year Education (CAE-2Y), Cyber Defense Education (CAE-CDE), Cyber Defense Research (CAE-R), or Cyber Operations (CAE-CO) will be given precedence.

CAE-designated institutions may partner with other CAEs, or may partner with institutions in good
standing in the Candidates Program, preparing for designation; the offeror must hold a current CAE designation

3.1 **COST SHARING OR MATCHING**

There is no requirement for Cost Sharing or Matching arrangements.

3.2 **OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

Collaborative proposals are permitted.

Individuals supported by a grant awarded as a result of this solicitation must be U.S. Citizens, or permanent residents admitted to the U.S. for permanent residence prior to award. To be eligible for an award, an organization must submit a certificate of Assurance or Compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and be constantly in compliance with the Act.

3.2.1. **SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (SAM)**

SAM is the primary Government repository for prospective federal awardee information and the centralized Government system for certain contracting, grants, and other assistance related processes. All contractors must be registered in the SAM to receive solicitations, awards, or payments. To register in the SAM, you may use any one of the following methods: (1) telephone: 1-866-606-8220; (2) input directly to the SAM through the internet at: https://www.acquisition.gov.

Processing time for registration of an application submitting an application may take up to five (5) business days.

Should you need additional information, visit their home page at: http://www.sam.gov.

3.2.2 **REQUIRED ACQUISITION RESOURCE CENTER (ARC) REGISTRATION**

1. Definitions. As used in this clause:
   a. “Acquisition Resource Center (ARC) Business Registry” means the primary Maryland Procurement Office (MPO) repository for contractor information required for the conduct of business with MPO.
   b. “Registered in the ARC Business Registry” means that all mandatory information is included in the ARC Business Registry.

2. (a) By submission of an offer, the offeror acknowledges the requirement that a prospective awardee must be registered in the ARC Business Registry prior to award, during performance, and through payment of any contract resulting from this solicitation.
   b. Lack of registration in the ARC Business Registry shall make an offeror ineligible for award.
   c. MPO established a goal of registering all contractors in the ARC Business Registry to provide a market research tool and to facilitate communication between the MPO and the contractor community. Offerors that are not already registered in the ARC should apply for registration immediately upon receipt of this solution.

3. The Contractor is responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the data within the ARC, and
of any liability resulting from the Government’s reliance on inaccurate or incomplete data. The Contractor agrees to periodically update information when previously provided information changes. To remain registered in the ARC Business Registry after the initial registration, the Contractor is required to confirm annually on or before the anniversary of the initial registration that the information is accurate and complete.

4. Offerors that are not already registered in the ARC Business Registry shall register via the internet at: http://www.nsaarc.net/

3.2.3 PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

Institutions are limited to one (1) submission, which may include, but not required, one response for each of the six (6) projects identified in Section 1.2 above. If multiple projects are being proposed, each project must stand-alone and have a separate technical and cost proposal. Collaborative proposals count as one proposal from each institution.

3.2.4. DEBARMENT

As indicated in Executive Order 12549, “…Executive departments and agencies shall participate in a government wide system for non-procurement debarment and suspension. A person who is debarred or suspended shall be excluded from Federal financial and non-financial assistance benefits under Federal programs and activities. Debarment or suspension of a participant in a program by one agency shall have a government wide effect.”

SECTION IV – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

4.1 WAY TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

4.1.1 ELECTRONIC PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Offerors are strongly encouraged to utilize e-mail and submit proposals electronically to the following individuals:

CAE Cybersecurity Grants Program Manager: Alice Shaffer, aeshaff@nsa.gov  410-854-6206
Grants / Contracting Specialist: Glenn Ellison, gmellis@nsa.gov  410-854-7051

4.1.2 HARDCOPY PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

For those who choose not to e-mail, submissions shall be mailed to the following address when using the U.S. Postal Service or other mails service (i.e., Federal Express, UPS, DHL, etc.):

NIETP/ Grants Submission
9800 Savage Road
Fort Meade, MD  20755-6804
Attn:  A233, Alice Shaffer,

Hand Carried proposals submissions will not be accepted.
4.1 SUBMISSION DATE AND TIME

4.1.1. SUBMISSION, MODIFICATION, REVISION, AND WITHDRAWAL OF PROPOSALS

1. Offerors are responsible for submitting proposals, and any modifications, or revisions so as to reach the Government office designated in the solicitation by the time specified in the solicitation. The time for receipt is 5:00 pm local time for the designated Government office on the date that the proposal or revision is due.
2. Any proposal, modification, or revision received at the Government office designated in the solicitation after the exact time specified for receipt of offer is “late” and will not be considered unless it is received before award is made, the Grants/Contracting Specialist determines that accepting the late offer would not unduly delay the acquisition; and
   a. if it was transmitted through an electronic commerce method authorized by the solicitation, it was received at the initial point of entry to the Government infrastructure not later than 5:00 pm one working day prior to the date specified for receipt or proposal; or
   b. There is acceptable evidence to establish that it was received at the Government installation designated for receipt of offers and was under the Government's control prior to the time set for receipt of offers; or
   c. It is the only proposal received.

Proposals shall be due no later than is 5:00 pm local time for the designated Government office 14 April 2017. Proposals received after this deadline will be considered late and shall not be evaluated. Proposals may be submitted any time between publication of the solicitation and 5:00 pm EST 14 April 2017.

Acknowledge of receipt of proposals will be provided via e-mail.

4.2 FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

4.2.1. In accordance with Department of Defense Grant and Agreement Regulations, section 32.25(d)(2)(i), NSA authorizes the grantee(s) to expend funds for the awarded grant at the grantee’s risk 90 days prior to grantee signature. All pre-award costs are incurred at the recipient’s risk (i.e., NSA is under no obligation to reimburse such costs if for any reason the recipient does not receive an award of if the award is less than anticipated and inadequate to cover such costs.

4.2.2. There are no other funding restrictions

4.3 CERTIFICATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

The Government's required Certifications and Representations, as listed below, are attachments to this solicitation. By signing and submitting a proposal, the prospective participant acknowledges acceptance of the terms and conditions of the attachments.

1. Military Recruiting on Campus – 32 C.F.R. Section 22.520, Campus Access for Military Recruiting and Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC)
2. Debarment and Suspension – 2 C.F.R. Part 1125, Government-wide Debarment and Suspension
4.4 PROPOSAL ORGANIZATION

This section specifies the instructions for proposal preparation to ensure a consistent sequence and content of information, and to ensure that all proposals set forth full and sufficient information to facilitate timely and complete evaluation.

All proposals must include a technical proposal and a written cost proposal for each project proposed. Proposals must adequately describe the technical objectives and approaches, impact on the Area of Interest (identified in Section 1.2), and requested expenditures. All submissions will be evaluated by technical reviewers in accordance with the evaluation criteria during the selection process.

Note that proposals shall not be returned to Offerors. Proposals shall be handled in accordance with the procedures set forth in FAR 15.207 and 3.104.04.

4.4.1 PROPOSAL COPIES AND LENGTH

1. Six (6) hard copies and one (1) electronic copy (CD) of each document shall be provided in the event that the offeror does not utilize the electronic submission option. If emailing the documents, all documents must be in PDF with the exception of the CAE CNAP General Solicitation Budget Sheet. This document must be in Excel Format.

2. The Offeror’s proposal shall not exceed page limits identified in section 5.1.2.f - h. Page limits exclude covers and title pages, table of contents, budget sheets, and appendices. Additional pages will not be read or evaluated in any way by the evaluators. The Offeror is urged to minimize unnecessary elements and to seek brevity where it does not sacrifice completeness. Figures, diagrams, charts, and tables will not be included in the page count.

3. Offerors shall mark their proposals to indicate the use of proprietary information and/or data.

4.4.2. DOCUMENT AND SECTION COMPLETENESS

Each document and major section within each document shall stand alone and shall contain all information necessary to evaluate that portion of the response, including complete coverage of any responses to relevant evaluation criteria. Appendices will be treated as auxiliary information that may be read at the option of the evaluator; therefore, the ability to evaluate a section must not depend upon the content of appendices. A brief description of the contents of these sections is provided in these proposal preparation instructions.

SECTION V – PROPOSAL FORMAT

5.1 PROPOSAL FORMAT

All proposals must include a technical proposal and a written cost proposal for each project proposed. Proposals must adequately describe the technical objectives and approaches, impact on the Area of Interest (identified in Section 1.2), and requested expenditures. All submissions will be evaluated by technical reviewers in accordance with the evaluation criteria during the selection process.
1. The proposal must be clear, readily legible, and conform to the following requirements:
   a. Use one of the following typefaces identified below:
      i. Arial, Courier New, or Palatino Linotype at a font size of 10 points or larger
      ii. Times New Roman at a font size of 11 points or larger
      iii. Computer Modern family of fonts at a font size of 11 points or larger
      iv. NOTE: A font size of less than 10 points may be used for mathematical formulas or equations, figure, table or diagram captions and when using a Symbol font to insert Greek letters or special characters. Offerors are cautioned, however, that the text must still be readable;
   b. No more than 6 lines of text within a vertical space of 1 inch; and
   c. Margins, in all direction, must be at least an inch.
   d. Digital signatures where applicable are acceptable.

2. The proposal will consist of the following documents in this order.
   a. Proposal Cover page (see Attachment 1)
      i. Title of proposal submitted in response to the Cybersecurity National Action Plan (CNAP) Investment in Expansion of CAE-C Education Programs. Offerors are encouraged to give their proposals a unique name/title.
      ii. Name, Title, Contact Information and Signature of the Principal Investigator (PI) or Project Director (PD):
      iii. Name and Title of the University Official authorized to obligate contractually and with whom business negotiations should be conducted:
      iv. Current federal or DoD grants, identify the Agency, Point of Contact, Phone Number, and amount.
      v. Provide a copy or link to the most recent A-133 Single Audit Report: All non-Federal entities that expend $750,000 or more of Federal awards in a year ($300,000 for fiscal year ending on or before December 30, 2003) are required to obtain an annual audit in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996, OMB Circular A-133, the OMB Circular Compliance Supplement and Government Auditing Standards. A single audit is intended to provide a cost-effective audit for non-Federal entities in that one audit is conducted in lieu of multiple audits of individual programs. The audit may be added at the end of the proposal and does not count towards page limits. If you are providing a link to the report, a single sheet of paper with the link may be included at the end of the proposal, this single sheet does not count towards the page limits.
   b. Proposal Summary: (continuation of the Proposal Cover Page Attachment 1)
      i. Funds Requested:
      ii. Requested Grant Start Date (if no date is identified grant will start on/or about June 2017.)
      iii. Indicate proposed partnership with another institution, and if the proposed partner is a minority institution. The U. S. Department of Education reference for minority institutions is located at: http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/edlite-minorityinst-list-tab.html and the United States code 20 U.S.C. 1067k refers to the term "minority institution" as an institution of higher education whose enrollment of a single minority or a combination of minorities include: American Indian, Alaskan Native, Black (not of Hispanic origin), Hispanic (including persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and Central or South American origin), or Pacific Islander.
iv. Mandatory Required Codes / Registrations:

1. Provide a response for each:
   a. Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)\(^1\)
   b. Data universal numbering system (DUNS)\(^2\) Number
   c. System for Award Management (SAM) https://www.acquisition.gov
      (printed copy of registration is acceptable)
   d. Acquisition Resource Center Registration (ARC)
      http://www.nsaarc.net/Index (printed copy of registration is acceptable)

2. Provide one or both:
   a. Federal Interagency Committee on Education Code (FICE)
   b. Integrated Postsecondary Education System Code (IPEDS).

v. Signature of the Authorized University Official (use blue ink) and the Date

   c. Executive Summary (one page)
   d. Table of Contents (one page)
   e. Sign and attach - Certifications 2017 (Attachment 2)
   f. Technical Proposal - Offerors shall mark their proposals to indicate the use of proprietary information and/or data. No more than 20 pages for each proposed project from Section 1.2 for a total of 120 pages. (6 projects @ 20 pages each – 120 pages total). Individual projects must be clearly identifiable within the proposal.

   g. Cost Proposal
      i. Excel Spreadsheet Cost (Attachment 3)
      ii. Offerors will submit a separate written cost proposal for each proposed project from Section 1.2. No page limit on written cost proposal.
      iii. Standard Form-424A Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs. (Attachment 4)

   h. CVs / Resumes are limited to 5 pages per faculty member and do not count towards the technical proposal page limits.

5.1.2 TECHNICAL PROPOSAL CONTENT

The technical proposal shall include an executive summary, a detailed description of the proposed program idea, a discussion on key challenges and risks, the resources necessary for successful execution of the proposal, and the expect impact on the Area of Interest. It shall thoroughly address the evaluation factors described in the “Proposal Evaluation Criteria” portion of the solicitation (Section 6). Administrative information regarding the Offeror's organizational structure, capabilities, and collaborations relevant to the proposal shall also be included. A brief overview of the contents of these sections is provided below.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The executive summary is intended to provide an overview of the salient features of the entire proposal. It shall explain briefly the Offeror's proposal without including any cost data. The Offeror's compliance with the requirement of the solicitation shall be indicated in

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\(^1\) The DoD is required by 31 U.S.C. 7701 to obtain each recipient's Tax Identification Number (TIN) (usually the Employer Identification Number) for purposes of collecting and reporting on any delinquent amounts that may arise out of the recipient's relationship with the Government.

\(^2\) The institution's number in the data universal numbering system (DUNS) is a unique nine digit (all numeric) identification number for organizations. Dun & Bradstreet Corporation assigns it. You can receive a DUNS number by calling Dun & Bradstreet at 1(800) 333-0505 or go to the Dun & Bradstreet Web site at https://eupdate.dnb.com/requestoptions.html?cm_re=Homepage*Resources*DUNSNumberLink
the Executive Summary. The Offeror may also provide high level diagrams and illustrations of the proposed approach.

2. **PROPOSED IDEA:** Introduce the proposed idea, identify key challenges and risks, outline the proposed solution and well-defined objective(s) and benefits to the Cyber community, analyze the impact on the Area of Interest (identified in this solicitation) if successful, and identify the investigators and resources.

3. **PERSONNEL, FACILITIES, RESOURCES:**
   a) Describe the personnel, facilities, physical location, and other resources available for accomplishment of the objective
   b) The personnel section shall describe the qualifications of the principal investigator / program manager and other key individuals involved in the project. This section may include resumes/curriculum vitae. For all proposals, one individual shall be the designated principal investigator / program manager for the purpose of technical responsibility and contact.

4. **ADMINISTRATIVE**
   a) The Offeror's program organization and ability to carry out the requirements of the solicitation shall be presented in this section. It shall contain any other supporting information that gives insight into the way that the program will be organized and conducted. The organization and effectiveness of the proposed program will be evaluated based in part on the information presented in this section.
   b) Describe the process by which the tasks will be administered.
   c) Identify other parties to whom the proposal has been/will be sent.
   d) Describe in detail any proposed sub-contracts or relevant collaborations (planned or in place) with industry, government organizations, universities, or other institutions. The proposal shall describe how the particular collaborations are expected to facilitate the work performed. If subcontracts are proposed, the Offeror shall make clear the division of the activities.

5.2 **COST PROPOSAL**

5.2.1 **COST PROPOSAL TITLE PAGE**

The cost proposals title page will be incorporated with Technical Proposal Title Page. Offerors may use the CAE Grant Template included in this solicitation or create one of their own containing the following information:

1. Solicitation Number (S-004-17)
2. Name of Offeror:
3. Area of Interest:
4. Proposal Title:
5. Technical Point of Contact including:
   a. Name
   b. Telephone Number
   c. Electronic e-mail address
   d. Fax Number
e. Mailing address

6. Type of legal instrument: Grant

7. Period of Performance: 364 Days after date of award

8. Original signatures on the title page

9. Mandatory Required Codes / Registrations:
   a. Taxpayer Identification Number (TINS):
   b. Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS):
   c. SAM Registration:
   d. ARC Registration:
   e. Federal Interagency Committee on Education Code (FICE):
   f. Integrated Postsecondary Education Code (IPEDS):

5.2.2 BODY OF COST PROPOSAL

In order to evaluate the proposal for completeness and reasonable of price, a separate breakout of the amounts, types, and structure of the award shall be included in the cost proposal.

The Grants Officer will need enough information to complete a price/cost analysis and establish the total amount as reasonable and fair.

The cost proposal shall include the anticipated schedule summary for the program, and may address the potential impact of a schedule slip in the event of a delayed contract award.

SECTION VI – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

6.1 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The primary basis for selection shall be (in order of importance):

6.1.1 POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION AND RELEVANCE TO GOALS (35%)

The proposal shall be evaluated according to the alignment of proposal offerings/goals with National interests in the project. Return on investment, or program impact compared to program cost, play a significant role in determining potential contribution.

6.1.2 TECHNICAL MERIT (35%)

This section includes the overall technical merit, approach, and deliverables of the proposal made by the Offeror. Proposals will be evaluated on their technical feasibility (the extent to which the Offeror's proposal meets the technical goals as defined in Section 5.1.2 of this solicitation), and quantifiable measurability. Solutions using innovative approaches, including student opportunities and partnerships with other CAE groups will be scored more favorably. Failure to demonstrate an adequate process for retaining and disbursing any award funding shall render the proposal unawardable.
6.1.3 PAST PERFORMANCE / EXPERIENCE (15%)

Prior experience with programs similar to the Offeror’s proposal, or prior experience with NSA, may be used to judge potential benefits of the proposal. Demonstrated success with the topic areas will be scored more favorably. In the absence of any relevant previous experience, evaluations will be based solely on the remaining three criteria.

6.1.4 COST/SCHEDULE REALISM AND FUND AVAILABILITY (15%)

The Government shall perform a price analysis of all proposals. The Offeror’s cost proposal and supporting data will be analyzed and compared to the technical effort proposed by the Offeror to determine the extent to which the Offeror has proposed a realistic price and schedule.

6.2 EVALUATION PROCESS

The Government anticipates multiple awards as a result of this solicitation. However, the Government reserves the right to select for award all, some, or none of the proposals received, if it is determined to be in the best interest of the Government. The Government may also make partial awards and make awards for one or more grants on the same subject matter. The actual number of grants awarded will depend on the number of selectable proposals, cost of individual awards, and availability of funds.

The Government intends to evaluate proposals and make awards without discussions; however, the Government reserves the right to conduct discussions, at the discretion of the Grants/Contracting Officer. Because of the unique nature of each proposal, the Grants Officer may select one or more individual proposals for discussions. Selection of one or more proposals for discussion will not obligate the Government to enter into discussions with any other offeror.

The Government intends to conduct a two-stage evaluation process. First, Offerors submit full proposals to the Government for evaluation. A Proposal Review Board (PRB) will conduct the evaluation of proposals. All proposals will be carefully evaluated using the above criteria. All PRB members will determine the degree to which each proposal fully addresses the requirements of the solicitation. As soon as the Government proposal evaluation is complete, the Grants Officer will notify the Offerors of the selectability or non-selectability of their proposals. Second, the selected proposals will be considered for funding. Non-selected proposals will not be returned to Offerors. Decisions to fund selected proposals will be based on the selection criteria specified above and funds availability. As a result of funding constraints, not all proposals deemed selectable may be funded. Awards resulting from this solicitation will be made to the Government, considering cost and non-cost factors. Where there are no significant differences in the evaluation of non-cost factors among proposals determined selectable, and such proposals are found to be equal importance in support Cyber education, then funds availability alone will be the determining criterion for award.

SECTION VII – AWARD NOTICES

7.0 AWARD AND PRE-AWARD SELECTION NOTICES

Following evaluation, an applicant can expect to receive a letter indicating that a proposal will be
selected or not selected. A letter indicating selection is not an authorization to begin performance. In accordance with Department of Defense Grant and Agreement Regulations, section 32.25 (d)(2)(i), NSA authorizes the grantee(s) to expend funds for the awarded grant at the grantee’s risk 90 days prior to grantees signature. All pre-award costs are incurred at the recipient’s risk (i.e., NSA is under no obligation to reimburse such costs if for any reason the recipient does not receive an award or if the award is less than anticipated and inadequate to cover such costs.)

The notice of grant will be signed by the Grants Officer and e-mailed to the authorized institution official.

Unsuccessful Offerors may request additional information via e-mail.

7.1 ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

See General Provisions for NSA Grants and Cooperative Agreements, attached hereto.

7.2 REPORTING

The awardee is required to deliver a mid-cycle report no later than 6 months after award and a final report no later than 60 days after completion of the grant. Barring any proprietary information, the reports may be published on an internal government database to share among those doing similar work. Format for technical reports will be provided to grantees by the program office.

Awardees will also be required to submit SF-425, Federal Financial Report https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms along with the final invoice (SF-270) 60 days after completion of grant.


SECTION VII – CONTACTS

- CAE Cybersecurity Grants Program Manager: Alice Shaffer, aeshaff@nsa.gov, 410-854-6206
- Grants/Contracting Officer: Glenn Ellison, gmellis@nsa.gov, 410-854-7051

SECTION IX – OTHER INFORMATION

The Government is not obligated to make any award as a result of this solicitation.