



**ACQUISITION  
TECHNOLOGY  
AND LOGISTICS**

**OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3000**

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**MEMORANDUM FOR DOD COOPERATIVE ECOSYSTEM STUDIES UNITS  
REGIONAL COORDINATORS**

**SUBJECT: Guidelines for Competition of Cooperative Projects Funded Under the  
Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units National Network**

The Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESU) National Network provides coordinated research, technical, and educational assistance to federal agencies and their partners through a network of 17 regional partnerships. The Department of Defense has committed to continued participation in the CESU network by signing the revised CESU Memorandum of Understanding (attached). DoD actively participates in nine CESU regions, and has developed the attached fact sheet for use by all DoD representatives.

Recently, questions have arisen concerning the requirement to compete CESU proposals. The following guidelines should be used for all proposed DoD work involving the CESU Network:

- DoD CESU Regional Coordinators shall seek competition within each CESU region through the issuance of a Request for Statement of Interest (SOI) or Request for Proposal (RFP) for each proposed CESU project initiated by the DoD. DoD shall not engage in the practice of limited or restricted notice of SOI or RFP involving the CESU, and instead aim at a reasonable widespread announcement within each CESU unit membership.
- All announcement material (e.g. Statement of Interest, Request for Proposal) shall be available to members of the CESU community for a minimum of two weeks (10 working days)
- There are two accepted methods for announcing funding opportunities through the CESU initiated by DoD; a) Posting of a SOI or RFP on the host university CESU website, and b) Directly emailing all CESU representatives listed on the CESU host university website and other interested parties.
- Decisions in response to a SOI or RFP may not take place prior to the completion of the two week period in which the announcement is made public.
- In the best interest for DoD, an SOI may lead to DoD requesting proposals from more than one institution.
- Under the terms and conditions of all current CESU Cooperative Agreements, the host university and all partner institutions within a CESU region within which DoD is a member may themselves submit a proposal to DoD. In such cases, competition is not required and an SOI is unnecessary.

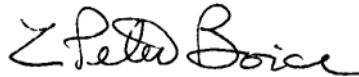


- DoD CESU Regional Coordinators are not required to issue an SOI for projects that are submitted to DoD for consideration as part of competition-based funding programs such as the DoD Legacy Program, the Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program (SERDP), and the Environmental Security Technology Certification Program (ESTCP) and any other competition based program.
- DoD CESU Regional Coordinators are not required to issue an SOI for projects that are submitted by a CESU Partner to DoD under an advertised Broad Agency Announcement (BAA). The BAA is considered a competition based means of announcing research opportunities.

Adherence to these guidelines will ensure that:

- DoD obtains the best project proposals possible for the research requests it initiates;
- Cooperative agreements resulting from SOI's, BAA's, RFP's and through competition-based funding programs are consistent with the DoDGARs requirements for competition;
- Projects comply with 10 U.S.C. 2361; and
- The process will generate a clear and auditable administrative record to support CESU project awards.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Pedro Morales at (703) 604-1933.



L. Peter Boice  
Conservation Team Leader  
ODUSD-ESOH

Attachments  
As stated