PROJECT CALL 11.0 FAQ

v 1.0

Original Release Date: March 19, 2026

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q1. Is there a maximum number of collaborators per project?

There is no maximum number of collaborators on a project. NextFlex encourages collaboration to bring the unique capabilities and strengths of partners to bear against the challenges and to distribute the direct participation.

Proposers should factor the coordination of subcontractors including agreement negotiation into their project plans and schedules so that the overall project timing requirements will be met.

Q2. Is there more information on the accompanying file submission for demonstrating MRL? What's required?

As described in the PC 11.0 Guidebook, the entry point into a NextFlex project is TRL 4-7 and MRL 4-7. It is expected that most proposals will demonstrate that the foundational work meets this requirement in the proposal document through references, figures, and discussion. There may, however, be cases where other information that cannot easily be included in a written document would better serve this purpose, for example a video of a manufacturing process, a short demonstration of a functional device, etc. In these cases, a file providing this information can be submitted and referred to within the text. This is not to be used as a means to circumvent the proposal page limit. The information presented by proposers to justify the asserted starting TRL and MRL assertion is to be determined by the proposers based on considerations of their unique proposal.

Q3. When we are describing the need (Proposal Section 1), do we speak to DoD applications or the project requirement?

First and foremost, all proposals should address the project topic requirements. In PC 11.0, many topics are written broadly to allow proposers to develop specific proposals that addresses a range of Hybrid Electronics Roadmap gaps. All projects have the potential for dual-use applications, even though a topic may call out or build from specific DoD application areas. Proposers should directly address all application information presented in the topic description. It is important that proposers flesh-out their vision and make the case for their technology and manufacturing approach. This strengthens both the background and need (Proposal Section 1) and commercialization strategy (Proposal Section 4). Proposals should specifically identify and address gaps in existing manufacturing capabilities as part of the description of need. Proposals should demonstrate that there is pull for the developed technology or capability that will enhance the likelihood of transition to product/manufacturing.

Q4. How do I get access to the NextFlex Hybrid Electronics Technology Roadmaps?

NextFlex members can access the roadmaps through the member portal. If you are a member and need a member portal account or need help accessing your account, contact us at info@nextflex.us. Access to the full version of the roadmaps is a member benefit, however non-members can satisfy the requirement to address gaps in the roadmaps in a number of ways. Non-members can partner with NextFlex members that can help guide the proposal for alignment, they can address example topics that are identified in some

topics, or they can schedule a pre-submission consultation with NextFlex as described in the PC 11.0 Guidebook. A public summary version of the Hybrid Electronics Technology Roadmaps is also available on the Project Call 11.0 website (https://www.nextflex.us/project-call/project-call-11-0/).

Q5. The topics call out several "examples of projects." Does my proposal need to address all of these / Is my proposal limited to only these / If I choose one of these examples, must I address all of the elements described / Can I address elements of more than one of these topics together in a single proposal?

The examples provide specific areas that align with the topic, are of interest to the community, and relate to Hybrid Electronics Roadmap gaps. Proposals do not need to choose from among the listed examples; any proposal that meets the requirements of the topic is allowed. If a proposal addresses one of the examples, it does not need to include all elements of that example, so long as it aligns to the topic, falls into an area of interest to the community, and relates to the roadmap gaps.

Q6. Can clarification be given regarding IP ownership and the NextFlex IP Policy?

The basic framework governing Institute Developed Intellectual Property (IDIP), i.e. IP developed under Institute funding, is set forth in the NextFlex IP Policy. All NextFlex members have signed this policy and can be provided a copy of the policy.

If non-members wish to review the IP Policy to determine their interest to submit a proposal, they may request a copy under NDA.

As a general summary for convenience only, the IP Policy (consistent with 35 USC 200 *et seq.*) permits the developer to elect to retain title of IP developed through the project. All NextFlex members receive a royalty-free internal R&D license to all IDIP and the US Government receives a royalty-free government purpose license; commercial licenses must be available to NextFlex members and are to be negotiated between interested parties and the IP owner. Election of title procedures and other Subject Invention provisions (consistent with 37 CFR 401.14a) are set forth in the Development Agreement.

Q7. Does the proposing team need to have a demonstrated track record of working with each of the proposed processes? Or is it OK to propose work with an established fabrication / manufacturing process with commercially available equipment that the proposing team has not worked with before?

It is not required that the proposing team have a track record with the process in order to propose. Strength of the team and its expertise associated with the proposed work are likely to be considered by reviewers in evaluation of Proposal Sections 5 (Budget Justification and Cost Share) and 6 (Capability to Meet Technical and Business Goals) as set out in Appendix D (e.g. Criteria 11 and 13). This may be an example for which teaming can help address such considerations, with each partner bringing experience to the part of the work on which they will perform or advise.

Note that work to transition a technology or process from one developer to another (e.g. a research university to a contract manufacturer) may be a valid project activity, and would be viewed as a strength, not a weakness of the proposal.

Q8. The Guidebook says that proposals that include "substantial education or education & workforce development activities" should expand Section 7. Can you give examples of what "substantial activities" might be?

Many projects include basic education or workforce development activities such as participation of undergraduate or graduate research assistants at university partners or skill building by industrial practitioners in the course of carrying out planned program tasks. These are valuable basic elements of a proposal that are easily understood and can be summarized in a brief statement.

Some projects may incorporate elements into the plan that either focus on or contribute to education and workforce training that require additional description. Examples might include:

- A university partner develops a module for a lab course to teach functional printing and has students develop integration approaches to resolve a challenge within the project or conceive novel uses of a component that has been developed.
- A company will transition a process from R&D (either in-house or at a partner organization) to manufacturing and develops training modules for its manufacturing workers to up-skill them with regard to Hybrid Electronics manufacturing.
- A company and university that are partnering on a project arrange an internship program to bring students who have worked on the project at the university to work at the company for a period of time to cross-pollinate ideas and capabilities.

NextFlex encourages creative approaches to Education & Workforce Development to enhance the skill base of the existing industrial base and attract and recruit new talent to the field of additive and hybrid electronics.

Q9. I'm interested to propose collaboration with the NextFlex Technology Hub as part of my project. Where do I get started and what do I need to include in the proposal?

The NextFlex Technology Hub is a single end-to-end facility for hybrid electronics development and fabrication and exists, in part, to support the industrial base. Collaboration with the Technology Hub can take many forms – design, supply of fabricated parts, testing, consultation, transition of a process to/from the Technology Hub, etc. The level of support that can be provided is very limited – requests for larger degrees of support may need to draw on project funds, which will be identified in discussion.

All such collaboration MUST be discussed and agreed upon prior to submission of the proposal, as would any other project partnership arrangement. Discussions should begin as early as possible in the project planning. Proposers can contact NextFlex about Technology Hub collaboration at proposal@nextflex.us to describe the general request an introduction to the responsible individuals. Agreement to support the project should be approved by either the NextFlex Director of Fab Operations or Director of Engineering; such agreement shall depend on the availability of the requested capability and resources. The proposal can then describe the scope of the collaboration / support and the approving NextFlex Director. Please note that NextFlex will not provide written letters of support for any proposals because this could be misinterpreted as an endorsement of one proposal over another. Partnering with the NextFlex Technology Hub is not a review criterion and does not influence the proposal selection process either positively or negatively.

Q11. What is meant by ‘product-like’ when describing the topics focused on development of a platform demonstrator?

Platform demonstrators should showcase the capabilities of novel technology solutions and clearly illustrate the value proposition of utilizing hybrid electronics manufacturing approaches. NextFlex cannot fund product development, however, proposers are encouraged to develop ‘product-like’ functional demonstrators that achieve this goal. This refers to demonstrators that include necessary packaging, software/firmware, support, etc. and are polished and comprehensive exhibits of the technology. Proposers are strongly encouraged to also generate images and videos of demonstrators functioning to showcase their capabilities and provide them to the Institute and government partners.