



**SPECIAL CALL:
ROBOTIC ENHANCEMENTS FOR
ARMAMENTS MANUFACTURING
(REARM)**

GUIDEBOOK

Proposal Submission Deadline: September 10, 2026

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v1.0

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The **Robotic Enhancements for Armaments Manufacturing (REARM)** Special Call is a competitive funding opportunity administered by NextFlex on behalf of the Department of War (DoW) to accelerate the modernization of the Munitions Industrial Base (MIB) through the development and demonstration of advanced manufacturing capabilities.

This Special Call seeks projects that leverage robotics, automation, digital manufacturing, advanced manufacturing processes, and advanced electronics manufacturing technologies to strengthen domestic manufacturing capabilities and accelerate the transition of innovative manufacturing solutions into operational defense production environments.

The Special Call is organized around three topic areas:

- **Topic Area 1: Workforce Development and Operationalized Prototyping Ecosystems**
- **Topic Area 2: Advanced Munitions Circuitry and Novel Energetics Engineering**
- **Topic Area 3: Advanced Manufacturing of Microelectronics**

Organizations meeting the geographic eligibility requirements described in this Guidebook (*Section 1.3*) are invited to submit proposals addressing one or more of these topic areas. Projects selected under this Special Call will contribute to the development of advanced manufacturing technologies, processes, and capabilities that improve the readiness, resiliency, and long-term competitiveness of the MIB.

1.1 Background & Rationale

The DoW is actively modernizing the MIB to address increasing demand for advanced weapons systems while strengthening domestic manufacturing capacity, resilience, and readiness. Much of the existing infrastructure continues to rely on aging equipment, labor-intensive manufacturing processes, and fragmented production workflows that limit scalability, reduce manufacturing agility, and slow the transition of emerging technologies into operational use.

Advances in robotics, automation, digital manufacturing, additive manufacturing, and advanced electronics manufacturing present significant opportunities to transform defense manufacturing. These technologies enable more flexible, efficient, and data-driven production environments that improve product quality, reduce manufacturing cycle times, enhance worker safety, and increase the ability to rapidly respond to evolving mission requirements. As the MIB evolves to support next-generation defense systems, integrating these advanced manufacturing capabilities into production environments has become a strategic priority and directly supports the objectives of DoW Instruction 5000.94, which promotes the adoption of advanced manufacturing and automation across the defense manufacturing enterprise.

REARM was established to accelerate this modernization by leveraging regional advanced manufacturing capabilities to develop, demonstrate, and operationalize advanced manufacturing pilot-line technologies. Through this Special Call, the DoW seeks innovative manufacturing solutions that strengthen the defense industrial base, establish best practices for advanced manufacturing implementation, and accelerate the transition of new manufacturing technologies into operational defense production environments.

1.2 Objectives

The objective of this Special Call is to accelerate the modernization of the MIB by identifying, developing, demonstrating, and transitioning advanced manufacturing capabilities that improve manufacturing agility, scalability, resilience, and readiness. Through REARM, the DoW seeks to

establish advanced manufacturing best practices and prototype pilot-line capabilities that enable the rapid adoption of innovative manufacturing technologies across the defense industrial base.

Projects selected under this Special Call should contribute to one or more of the following objectives:

- Mature Advanced Manufacturing Pilot Lines by developing and demonstrating manufacturing processes, equipment, and technologies that can be integrated into operational prototyping and production environments.
- Accelerate Technology Transition by maturing innovative manufacturing technologies and reducing barriers to adoption within the MIB.
- Integrate Advanced Manufacturing Technologies including robotics, automation, digital manufacturing, advanced electronics manufacturing, additive manufacturing, and multi-material manufacturing processes to improve manufacturing efficiency, flexibility, and quality.
- Strengthen Regional Manufacturing Capabilities by leveraging the specialized expertise, facilities, and infrastructure within the eligible regions to support defense manufacturing modernization.
- Develop and Demonstrate Manufacturing Best Practices that improve process repeatability, manufacturing readiness, workforce effectiveness, and production scalability.
- Enhance Manufacturing Workforce Readiness by developing the technical capabilities, training approaches, and operational expertise necessary to support advanced manufacturing technologies.
- Improve Defense Manufacturing Resilience by advancing manufacturing capabilities that strengthen the domestic industrial base and support the long-term production needs of the DoW.

Successful projects are expected to demonstrate measurable technical progress, produce tangible manufacturing outcomes, and provide a clear pathway for transitioning developed capabilities into operational defense manufacturing environments.

1.3 Eligibility Requirements

Organizations submitting proposals under this Special Call must satisfy the eligibility requirements described in this section. Failure to meet these requirements may result in a proposal being deemed ineligible for award.

1.3.1 Geographic Eligibility

To support regional manufacturing initiatives and strengthen advanced manufacturing capabilities within the MIB, work performed under this Special Call is expected to be conducted within one or more of the following states:

- Illinois (IL)
- Maine (ME)
- New Hampshire (NH)
- New Jersey (NJ)

Proposers shall identify the facilities where project work will be performed and describe the work to be conducted at each location by each participating organization.

Recognizing that specialized capabilities may not be available within the eligible states, proposers may include a limited amount of project work performed outside the eligible states when such work is clearly justified as necessary to successful execution of the proposed project. Proposals should maximize the amount of project work performed within the eligible states whenever practical.

During proposal evaluation, NextFlex and DoW will consider the location where project work will be performed, the distribution of work among participating organizations, and the extent to which the proposed project supports the regional objectives of the REARM program.

1.3.2 NextFlex Membership

NextFlex membership is not required to submit a proposal under this Special Call.

However, to receive funding under this award, organizations will be required to become NextFlex members at a minimum of the Tier 3 level prior to execution of a subaward agreement. Membership information is available at www.nextflex.us or by contacting proposal@nextflex.us.

1.4 Proposal Scope

Proposals shall address one or more of the Topic Areas described in Section 1.5. Projects should present a clearly defined scope of work, measurable technical objectives, and an executable plan that advances the objectives of the REARM Special Call.

Projects should be appropriately scoped for the proposed period of performance and requested funding and should clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of participating organizations.

1.4.1 Topic Areas

Proposers may elect to:

- Submit a proposal addressing a single Topic Area;
- Submit a single proposal addressing multiple Topic Areas; or
- Submit multiple independent proposals, each addressing a single Topic Area.

For proposals addressing multiple Topic Areas, the Proposal shall clearly distinguish the scope of work supporting each Topic Area. The corresponding Cost Proposal shall separately identify the requested funding associated with each Topic Area to facilitate independent evaluation and funding consideration.

Alternatively, proposers may submit separate proposals for different Topic Areas. Each proposal shall be complete and include a separate Technical Proposal and Cost Proposal.

1.4.2 Optional Tasks

Proposers may, but are not required to, include one or more optional tasks that provide logical extensions of the proposed base effort or additional capabilities supporting the objectives of the REARM Special Call.

Optional tasks shall be included as an appendix to the Technical Proposal and will not count toward the Technical Proposal page limit. Each optional task should include a brief description of the proposed work, identify the applicable Topic Area(s), describe the anticipated benefit, and provide a Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) budget estimate. A detailed cost proposal is not required for optional tasks at the time of proposal submission.

DoW may elect to fund none, one, or multiple optional tasks in conjunction with the proposed base effort. If selected for award, the scope and budget of optional tasks may be refined during award negotiations.

1.4.3 Project Expectations

Projects should present a well-defined technical approach, measurable technical milestones and deliverables, and a realistic execution plan. Proposals should identify any significant technical or programmatic risks together with appropriate mitigation strategies and, where applicable, describe anticipated transition opportunities or manufacturing implementation plans.

For proposals addressing multiple Topic Areas, the scope of work and requested funding associated with each Topic Area should be clearly distinguishable throughout the proposal.

1.5 Topic Areas

The REARM Special Call is organized around three Topic Areas that collectively support the advancement of manufacturing capabilities for the MIB. DoW intends to prioritize these Topic Areas equally to ensure balanced investment across the objectives of the REARM program.

Proposals may address one or more Topic Areas, as described in Section 1.4. Proposals addressing multiple Topic Areas shall clearly distinguish the scope of work and requested funding associated with each Topic Area.

The expected maximum funding request for work proposed under a single Topic Area is approximately **\$466,000**. Proposals addressing multiple Topic Areas may request additional funding, provided the technical scope and requested budget for each Topic Area are clearly segregated in the Technical Proposal and Cost Proposal. Additional information regarding funding is provided in Section 2.1.

The Topic Areas included in this Special Call are:

1.5.1 Topic Area 1: Workforce Development and Operationalized Prototyping Ecosystems

This topic area seeks to establish and strengthen advanced manufacturing ecosystems capable of accelerating the transition of emerging manufacturing technologies from laboratory development to operational implementation. Projects should leverage existing manufacturing infrastructure, technical expertise, and workforce capabilities to develop operational prototyping environments that support manufacturing innovation, process maturation, and technology transition.

Proposed efforts may include the development or enhancement of advanced manufacturing capabilities supporting rapid prototyping, manufacturing engineering, process development, technology demonstration, and workforce development. Projects should emphasize integrated manufacturing environments capable of supporting multiple manufacturing technologies and material systems while establishing sustainable capabilities that strengthen regional manufacturing readiness.

Representative technical areas include, but are not limited to:

- Advanced manufacturing workforce development and technical training.
- Rapid prototyping and manufacturing process development.
- Multi-material manufacturing and process integration.
- Printed electronics, metals, ceramics, glass, and polymer manufacturing technologies.
- Integrated manufacturing platforms spanning multiple material domains.
- Manufacturing engineering methodologies and technology transition activities.
- Development of advanced manufacturing best practices and pilot-line capabilities.

Projects should demonstrate how the proposed capabilities will improve manufacturing readiness, accelerate technology transition, and establish sustainable manufacturing infrastructure supporting future defense manufacturing needs.

1.5.2 Topic Area 2: Advanced Munitions Circuitry and Novel Energetics Engineering

This topic seeks innovative manufacturing capabilities supporting the design, development, prototyping, integration, and scalable production of advanced electronic and energetic technologies for next-generation munitions systems.

Projects should focus on manufacturing innovations that improve the performance, manufacturability, integration, or scalability of smart munitions and associated electronic or energetic subsystems. Efforts should emphasize practical manufacturing solutions capable of supporting future production environments while reducing development timelines and manufacturing complexity.

Representative technical areas include, but are not limited to:

- Smart munitions electronic circuitry.
 - Advanced electronic design, fabrication, population, and testing.
 - Power generation and power conditioning technologies.
 - Signal conditioning and electronic subsystem integration.
 - Positioning, Navigation, and Timing (PNT) technologies.
 - Novel energetics engineering and manufacturing.
 - Energetic formulation, prototyping, and integration.
 - Advanced manufacturing approaches supporting scalable munitions production.
- Projects should demonstrate clear manufacturing benefits and provide a pathway toward transitioning advanced manufacturing methods into operational munitions production environments.

1.5.3 Topic Area 3: Advanced Manufacturing of Microelectronics

This topic area seeks advanced manufacturing approaches that improve the fabrication, assembly, integration, and scalability of next-generation microelectronics and hybrid electronic systems for defense applications.

Projects should advance manufacturing processes that enable rapid, flexible, and repeatable production of electronic assemblies while supporting integration into Advanced Manufacturing Prototyping Pilot Lines. Particular emphasis is placed on manufacturing innovations that improve process capability, manufacturing efficiency, quality, and production scalability.

Representative technical areas include, but are not limited to:

- Direct-write electronics manufacturing.
- Inkjet printing of electronic materials.
- Automated component placement and assembly.
- Hybrid electronics fabrication and integration.
- Multi-material electronics manufacturing.
- Electronics process development and manufacturing validation.
- Integration of advanced electronics manufacturing into pilot-line environments.

Projects should demonstrate manufacturing approaches that improve the readiness, repeatability, and transition potential of advanced electronics manufacturing technologies while supporting future defense production capabilities.

SECTION 2: PROGRAM INFORMATION

This section provides administrative information regarding funding, award strategy, project duration, and other programmatic requirements applicable to the REARM Special Call.

2.1 Funding Availability

Approximately \$1.4 million is anticipated to be available for this Special Call.

To ensure balanced investment across the objectives of the REARM program, DoW intends to prioritize the three Topic Areas equally. Accordingly, the expected maximum funding request for work proposed under a single Topic Area is approximately \$466,000.

Proposals addressing multiple Topic Areas may request funding above this amount, provided the Technical Proposal clearly distinguishes the scope of work associated with each Topic Area and the Cost Proposal separately identifies the requested funding associated with each Topic Area.

NextFlex and the DoW reserve the right to make no awards, one award, or multiple awards within each Topic Area and may negotiate scope, budget, and deliverables prior to award.

2.2 Award Strategy

NextFlex and DoW anticipate making multiple awards under this Special Call based on proposal quality, available funding, and alignment with the objectives of each Topic Area.

Proposals addressing multiple Topic Areas will be evaluated based on the work proposed under each Topic Area. DoW may elect to fund all, some, or none of the work proposed within a multi-topic proposal.

DoW reserves the right to make no awards, one award, or multiple awards within each Topic Area. The DoW and NextFlex may negotiate scope, budget, and deliverables prior to award.

Awards are not guaranteed within any Topic Area and will be made only for proposals determined to provide the greatest value in support of the REARM program objectives.

Awards will be made as cost reimbursable subawards under a cooperative agreement between NextFlex and the Air Force Research Laboratory, which is governed by 2 CFR 200. Any award and lower-tier agreement made as a result of this Special Call must therefore comply with 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 200, “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards,” as modified and supplemented by the Department of Defense’s (DoD) interim implementation found at 2 CFR part 1103, “Interim Grants and Cooperative Agreements Implementation of Guidance in 2 CFR part 200” (79 F.R. 76047, December 19, 2014). Applicable cost principles are contained in CFR 200, Subpart E, Cost Principles.

2.3 Period of Performance

Projects shall propose a period of performance appropriate for the scope of work. Unless otherwise specified, the anticipated project duration is **up to 12 months**.

Proposers should develop realistic schedules that include clearly defined technical milestones, measurable deliverables, and transition activities supporting successful project completion.

2.4 Cost Share

Cost share is **not required** under this Special Call. Organizations may identify voluntary cost share or in-kind contributions within the proposal.

SECTION 3: PROPOSAL PREPARATION & SUBMISSION

This section provides the schedule and instructions for preparing and submitting proposals under the REARM Special Call. Proposers are encouraged to review this Guidebook in its entirety prior to preparing a proposal.

3.1 Proposal Schedule

The anticipated schedule for the REARM Special Call is provided in Table 3-1. NextFlex reserves the right to revise these dates as necessary. Any updates will be communicated to prospective proposers.

Table 3-1 – Summary of key dates for Special Call: REARM.

Milestone	Date
Special Call Release	July 31, 2026
Informational Webinar (optional)	August 19, 2026
Proposal Due Date	September 10, 2026
Anticipated Award Notification	Late October 2026
Anticipated Project Start	January 1, 2027

3.2 Submission Instructions

Proposal package must be emailed to proposal@nextflex.us **no later than 5:00 PM Pacific Time (PT) on September 10, 2026.** Late submissions may not be considered unless otherwise authorized by NextFlex.

Proposers are responsible for ensuring that all required proposal documents are successfully received prior to the submission deadline. It is recommended that proposals be submitted sufficiently in advance of the deadline to avoid delays resulting from technical issues or network interruptions.

If the proposal package exceeds typical email size limitations (approximately 20 MB), proposers should contact proposal@nextflex.us well in advance of the submission deadline to obtain instructions for secure large file transfer.

At a minimum, each proposal package shall include:

- **Technical Proposal** submitted in PDF format.
- **Project Summary Quad Chart** – Submitted as a single PowerPoint slide using the provided template. The Quad Chart shall provide a concise overview of the proposed effort, including the project objective, technical approach, anticipated outcomes, transition targets, project team, requested funding, period of performance, and a representative graphic or illustration. The Quad Chart is provided to facilitate proposal review and is not included in the Technical Proposal page limit.
- **Cost Proposal** submitted in Microsoft Excel (.xlsx) format using the provided budget template. For proposals addressing multiple Topic Areas, the Cost Proposal shall clearly segregate the requested funding associated with each Topic Area.

Proposals may include Export Controlled information (including subject to the International Traffic in Arms Regulations) if deemed necessary by the proposer to support the strength of the proposed effort provided that proposals **MUST NOT** include U.S. Government Classified information. Any proposal including Export Controlled content must be appropriately marked.

3.3 Proposal Format Requirements

To facilitate a consistent and efficient review process, Technical Proposals shall comply with the following formatting requirements.

Organization. The Technical Proposal shall follow the organization and section numbering specified in Section 3.4. Proposers may use their own formatting and styles; however, all required sections shall be included and clearly identified.

Page Layout. The Technical Proposal shall be prepared on 8.5 × 11-inch pages in portrait orientation. Landscape orientation may be used for figures, tables, schedules, and graphics. Margins shall be no less than one inch on all sides.

Font. The proposal shall use an easily readable font, such as Arial or Times New Roman, with a minimum font size of 10 points. Smaller fonts may be used within figures and tables provided they remain legible.

Figures and Tables. Figures, tables, graphs, photographs, and other graphics shall be numbered sequentially and referenced within the text. Visual elements should be of sufficient size and quality to remain readable when printed.

Page Numbering. Pages shall be numbered sequentially.

Page Limit. The Technical Proposal is limited to **10 pages**. The following items are **excluded** from the page limit:

- Cover Page
- Table of Contents
- Proposal Quad Chart
- Optional Tasks Appendix
- Other appendices, if necessary

Pages exceeding the prescribed limits or failing to comply with these formatting requirements may not be reviewed.

Proposal Quad Chart. Each proposal shall include a one-slide Proposal Quad Chart submitted as a separate Microsoft PowerPoint file using the template provided with this Special Call. Proposers shall complete the template without altering its overall structure or expanding it beyond one slide. The Quad Chart is intended to provide reviewers with a concise overview of the proposed effort and is not included in the 10-page Technical Proposal page limit.

3.4 Required Proposal Content

The Technical Proposal shall be organized using the section numbering and titles shown in Table 3-2. Each section shall include the expected content identified in the table. Recommended page lengths are provided as guidance; proposers may allocate pages among sections as appropriate, provided the Technical Proposal does not exceed the page limit specified in Section 3.3.

Table 3-2 – Recommended proposal structure, content, and section page length.

Section	Technical Proposal Section	Expected Proposal Content	Recommended Page Length
1.0	Background and Need	Describe the problem, proposed solution, and anticipated operational and manufacturing impact.	1
2.0	Technical Objectives and Approach	Define the technical objectives, approach, major tasks, deliverables, and success metrics.	3

3.0	Project Management and Work Plan	Describe the project team, roles, schedule, risks, and execution plan.	2
4.0	Manufacturing and Transition Strategy	Describe the manufacturing approach, transition strategy, value proposition, and TRL/MRL progression.	2
5.0	Budget Justification	Justify the proposed budget and major cost elements.	1
6.0	Organizational Capability	Summarize the team's qualifications, relevant experience, and available facilities.	1

The following sections describe the required content for each section of the Technical Proposal. Proposers should provide sufficient information to enable reviewers to evaluate the proposed effort against the evaluation criteria described in Section 4.0.

For proposals addressing multiple Topic Areas, the required content shall be addressed for each applicable Topic Area. A single integrated Technical Proposal may be submitted provided the work associated with each Topic Area is clearly identified.

3.4.1 Background and Need

Describe the problem or capability gap the proposed effort is intended to address and explain its relevance to the selected Topic Area(s). Discuss the current state of the technology or manufacturing capability, the limitations of existing approaches, and the anticipated operational, manufacturing, or industrial base benefits of the proposed effort. Clearly articulate why the proposed work is needed and how it supports the objectives of this Special Call.

3.4.2 Technical Objectives and Approach

Define the technical objectives of the proposed effort and describe the proposed technical approach for achieving those objectives. Describe the major technical tasks, project milestones, expected deliverables, and key technical performance metrics, as appropriate. The proposal should present a logical and technically sound plan that demonstrates the feasibility of successfully accomplishing the proposed work within the proposed period of performance.

3.4.3 Project Management and Work Plan

Describe the project organization, including the roles and responsibilities of each participating organization and key personnel. Provide a project schedule identifying the major tasks and milestones, and discuss any significant technical or programmatic risks together with planned mitigation strategies. The work plan should demonstrate that the project can be effectively managed and successfully executed within the proposed schedule and budget.

3.4.4 Manufacturing and Transition Strategy

Describe how the proposed effort will advance manufacturing capability and support transition to DoW applications or the broader defense industrial base. Identify the anticipated transition pathway, target programs, platforms, manufacturing users, or other intended end users, as applicable. Discuss the expected manufacturing impact, value proposition, and anticipated progression in Technology Readiness Level (TRL) and Manufacturing Readiness Level (MRL) over the course of the project.

3.4.5 Budget Justification

Provide a narrative justification for the proposed budget and explain the basis for the major cost elements. The justification should demonstrate that the requested resources are appropriate for the proposed scope of work and identify any significant equipment purchases, subcontracted effort, or other major cost drivers.

3.4.6 Organizational Capability

Describe the qualifications, experience, and capabilities of the project team and participating organizations relevant to the proposed effort. Summarize prior accomplishments, facilities, equipment, and other available resources that demonstrate the team's ability to successfully execute the proposed project and achieve the stated objectives.

3.5 Proposal Cover Page

The Proposal Cover Page shall include:

- Project Title
- Topic Area(s)
- Lead Organization
- Participating Organization(s)
- Principal Investigator/Project Manager
- Primary Administrative Contact
- Total Funding Requested
- Proposed Period of Performance

3.6 Proposal Quad Chart

Each proposal shall include a one-slide Proposal Quad Chart using the template provided with this Special Call. The Quad Chart provides a concise graphical summary of the proposed effort and will be used during the technical evaluation process. Proposers shall complete all fields included in the template and shall not modify the template layout.

3.7 Cost Proposal

The Cost Proposal shall be prepared using the provided Cost Proposal Workbook. The workbook shall identify all proposed costs by organization and cost category. For proposals addressing multiple Topic Areas, requested funding shall be clearly identified for each Topic Area. Cost estimates shall be complete, reasonable, and adequately supported by the accompanying Budget Justification narrative.

3.8 Optional Tasks Appendix

Proposers may include an Optional Tasks Appendix describing logical extensions of the proposed effort that could provide additional value if supplemental funding becomes available. Each optional task shall include a brief technical description, identify the applicable Topic Area(s), describe the anticipated benefit, and provide a rough-order-of-magnitude (ROM) cost estimate. Optional tasks shall be clearly identified as optional and are excluded from the Technical Proposal page limit. NextFlex reserves the right to negotiate and fund any combination of optional tasks independent of the base proposal.

SECTION 4: PROPOSAL EVALUATION

All proposals received in response to this Special Call will undergo a competitive evaluation by DoW and NextFlex subject matter experts and other qualified reviewers. Proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria described in this section. NextFlex reserves the right to request clarifications, conduct discussions

with proposers, negotiate scope and funding, select all or portions of a proposal for award, or make no awards under any Topic Area.

For proposals addressing multiple Topic Areas, each Topic Area will be evaluated independently against the evaluation criteria below. NextFlex may elect to fund all, some, or none of the proposed Topic Area efforts based on technical merit, available funding, portfolio balance, and program priorities.

4.1 Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria. The criteria are listed in no particular order of importance.

Table 4-1 – Summary of reviewer evaluation criteria.

Evaluation Criterion	Description
Technical Merit and Innovation	Evaluates the significance of the problem being addressed, the originality and technical merit of the proposed solution, and the anticipated operational, manufacturing, or industrial base impact.
Technical Approach and Feasibility	Evaluates the clarity of the technical objectives, the soundness of the proposed approach, the work plan, technical deliverables, measurable outcomes, and the likelihood of successful project execution.
Project Management and Execution	Evaluates the project organization, roles and responsibilities, project schedule, risk management approach, and the team's ability to successfully execute the proposed effort.
Manufacturing Impact and Transition Strategy	Evaluates the manufacturing approach, value proposition, transition strategy, anticipated manufacturing impact, technology maturation (TRL/MRL), and potential for transition to DoW applications or the broader defense industrial base.
Organizational Capability	Evaluates the qualifications, experience, facilities, equipment, and organizational resources available to successfully perform the proposed work.
Cost Realism and Value	Evaluates whether the proposed budget is reasonable, adequately justified, and appropriate for the proposed scope of work and anticipated impact.

4.2 Additional Selection Considerations

Following the technical evaluation, NextFlex and DoW may consider additional factors when making final award recommendations, including:

- Alignment with the objectives of the selected Topic Area(s).
- Balance across the three Topic Areas.
- Overall portfolio diversity and complementary technical capabilities.
- Anticipated benefit to the DoW and the U.S. defense industrial base.
- Geographic distribution of project activities within the eligible states, as appropriate.
- Availability of funding.

These considerations are intended to support development of a balanced portfolio and should not be interpreted as additional scored evaluation criteria.

4.3 Award Notification

Following completion of the evaluation process, NextFlex will notify organizations selected to proceed to award negotiations. Selection for negotiations does not constitute a commitment to fund a proposal.

NextFlex and DoW may negotiate the technical scope, schedule, deliverables, funding, optional tasks, or other proposal elements prior to award. Successful completion of negotiations, execution of a subaward agreement, satisfaction of all program requirements, and availability of funding are required prior to initiation of project activities.

Organizations selected for award that are not current NextFlex members will be required to become NextFlex members prior to execution of a subaward agreement.

Award recipients will be required to comply with all reporting, project management, intellectual property, and other requirements specified in the executed subaward agreement.