

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

An ASTM

ADDITIVE MANUFACTURING CENTER OF EXCELLENCE



PROPOSAL DUE: DECEMBER 15, 2017 BY 5:00 P.M. (EASTERN STANDARD TIME)

(Late proposals will not be accepted)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

OVERVIEW INFORMATION

ASTM International (ASTM) is seeking proposals to establish an ASTM Additive Manufacturing (AM) Center of Excellence (CoE) as a partnership to launch a global hub in support of AM standards related activities.

With a goal to solve complex AM problems through systemic approaches in a more synergistic and collaborative environment, industry-university collaborative activities of the ASTM AM CoE include, but are not limited to:

- Increasing and accelerating AM standardization activities;
- Housing and facilitating AM research and development (R&D) generation to support standardization and qualification;
- Creating strong national and international industry-university partnerships;
- Developing education, training, proficiency testing, and certification programs; and
- Hosting ASTM committee related events, workshops, and symposia.

ASTM anticipates up to two awards under this Request for Proposal (RFP) competition. ASTM will consider proposals for a CoE for up to five years with annual reviews, with a three-year base period and a two-year option period. The total anticipated amount for the award is up to \$250K annually for five years, provided from in-kind contributions combined with funds. The award amount may exceed \$250K because of the provided in-kind contributions. The total amount of funding made available to fund a successful proposal may vary, based on the quality, nature, or characteristics of received proposals and the availability of funds or in-kind contributions. Detailed information about funding is available in Section II.

ASTM will evaluate proposals using a combined review process of independent reviews and peer review panel meetings, with evaluation and selection criteria specified in Section V. ASTM reserves the right to select some or none of the proposals.

SUMMARY REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS INFORMATION

Award Organization Name

ASTM International
100 Barr Harbor Drive, PO Box C700
West Conshohocken, PA 19428-2959

Request for Proposals Title

ASTM Additive Manufacturing Center of Excellence

Anticipated Funding Amount

Up to \$250K annually for five years, provided from in-kind contributions combined with funds, with the possibility of exceeding \$250K from provided in-kind contributions

Award Period

Annually by calendar year, up to five years with annual reviews, with a three-year base period and a two-year option period

Key Dates

Applicant Letters of Intent to submit a full proposal must be received electronically by November 27, 2017, at 12:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST).

Proposal inquiries and questions must be received in writing by electronic mail no later than November 27, 2017, at 5:00 p.m. (EST) to be considered.

ASTM will host an informational webinar for potential applicants that have sent a Letter of Intent to submit a proposal to the AM CoE RFP on November 28, 2017, at 1 p.m. (EST). Please note, applicants must send a Letter of Intent in order to attend this webinar.

Proposals must be received electronically by December 15, 2017, at 5:00 p.m. (EST) to be considered.

All applicants will be notified in writing of ASTM's final decision of regarding their application in January 2018.

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I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY

ASTM International (ASTM) is seeking proposals to establish an ASTM Additive Manufacturing (AM) Center of Excellence (CoE) as a partnership to launch a global hub in support of AM standards related activities.

With a goal to solve complex AM problems through systemic approaches in a more synergistic and collaborative environment, industry-university collaborative activities of the ASTM AM CoE include, but are not limited to:

- Increasing and accelerating AM standardization activities;
- Housing and facilitating AM research and development (R&D) generation to support standardization and qualification;
- Creating strong national and international industry-university partnerships;
- Developing education, training, proficiency testing, and certification programs; and
- Hosting ASTM committee related events, workshops, and symposia.

ASTM anticipates up to two awards under this Request for Proposal (RFP) competition. ASTM will consider proposals for a CoE for up to five years with annual reviews, with a three-year base period and a two-year option period. The total anticipated amount for the award is up to \$250K annually for five years, provided from in-kind contributions combined with funds. The award amount may exceed \$250K because of the provided in-kind contributions. The total amount of funding made available to fund a successful proposal may vary, based on the quality, nature, or characteristics of received proposals and the availability of funds or in-kind contributions. Detailed information about funding is available in Section II.

ASTM will evaluate proposals using a combined review process of independent reviews and peer review panel meetings, with evaluation and selection criteria specified in Section V. ASTM reserves the right to select some or none of the proposals.

BACKGROUND

ASTM is an international standards organization that develops technical standards for a wide range of materials, systems, and services. A leading non-profit organization devoted to the development of international standards, ASTM has served society as a leading venue for consumers, industry, and regulators to work collaboratively under a balanced and consensus-based process to craft voluntary standards for more than 100 years. ASTM standards are used globally in research and development, product testing, quality systems, commercial transactions, and more. ASTM also meets the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles for developing international standards.

ASTM is unique among standards organizations for its pioneering role in the technical standards for a wide range of materials and services related to AM. More than 19 ASTM technical committees are currently related to AM technologies. Since the ASTM Committee F42 on AM technologies was formed in 2009, its activities have been expanded through various engagements or partnerships with other organizations—for example, AM Standardization Collaborative (AMSC), American National Standards Institute (ANSI), International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and America Makes.

Given the AM community's increased need to solve complex AM problems, a well-functioning, collaborative R&D environment is an essential asset to the AM community. To meet the larger needs of

the AM industry, ASTM recognizes the need to establish an Industry-University CoE as a global hub for AM, accelerating standardization, leveraging ASTM's existing expertise, resources, and partnerships with other organizations. This AM innovation hub will serve as a consortium platform for ASTM AM sectors involving various technical committees, an important source for standard development, and a base for ASTM proficiency testing as well as education and workforce development. The ASTM AM CoE will facilitate the exchange of ideas and information through structured communications, interaction, and engagement with internal and external experts, and provide easy access to shared information and resources.

OBJECTIVE

Proposals are sought to establish an ASTM AM CoE as a partnership to launch a global hub for AM in support of AM standards related activities.

INDUSTRY-UNIVERSITY AM CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

With an evolving AM industry, ASTM recognizes the need to establish an AM CoE. Using ASTM's existing diverse expertise, resources, technical capabilities, and partnerships with other organizations, ASTM expects the AM CoE to serve as a model for advancing AM technology. The Center will act as an established neutral, synergistic center recognized and approached by industry, academia, and government for support in overcoming AM challenges associated with R&D, standardization, workforce development, and proficiency testing. Acting as a global hub for AM education and training, this AM innovation Center will be naturally defined by its stakeholders and will serve as a consortium platform for AM sectors, a focal point for standards related R&D activities, and a resource to facilitate AM partnerships across the United States and world.

Furthermore, an AM CoE global partnership will create and support R&D to solve complex AM problems. The goal of a global partnership will be to develop an implementation plan by identifying priority project areas through ongoing communications between all stakeholders. By acting as a central group that can mediate, moderate, or benchmark progress and/or expansion into other sectors, the AM CoE will provide a demonstration of leadership in the AM arena.

A direct benefit of a partnership to establish an Industry-University AM CoE, will be the capability to bridge research to new standards development and expand educational programs through technical programs, internships, continued education programs, and more. A partnership is the best positioned and logical area for the first CoE and can also be a case study for future Centers.

ASTM expects the AM CoE as a:

- Focal point for standard-related R&D activities
- Global hub for AM innovation
- Consortium for AM sectors

AM CoE as a Focal Point for Standards-Related R&D Activities

R&D is a key component for AM standardization.¹ AMSC identified 89 existing technology gaps, including 19 gaps as high priority needs that requires R&D. To address these gaps and needs, the AM community should work together to coordinate and accelerate the development of industry-wide AM standards and specifications, consistent with stakeholder needs, to facilitate the growth of the AM industry. A CoE will enable the needed standardization activities for a well-functioning, collaborative R&D environment, which is an essential asset to the AM community.

AM CoE as a Global Hub for AM Innovation

As an AM global hub, ASTM expects the Center to be a place for AM innovation, communication, R&D support, and standardization activities support. The CoE will not only be a source for proficiency testing programs—including benchmarking AM machines, alloys, feedstock, part testing, all tailored to AM-related technologies—but a demonstration facility that will house and facilitate R&D generation. With a focus on training and curriculum development, the Center will function as an education and workforce development training base, providing the use of its facilities with the latest equipment for hands-on and industrial experience, as well as co-ops and internships for the next generation of the AM workforce. Offering workshops, conferences, interlaboratory studies (ILS), and round robins, the CoE could serve as a base for satellite AM Centers outside the United States.

AM CoE as a Consortium for AM sectors

ASTM expects the AM CoE to serve as a consortium platform for AM sectors. As AM technology reaches into, among others, the aerospace, aviation, medical, automotive, machinery, and defense sectors, AM has the potential to expand into other industries and regulatory agencies, government agencies and contractors, and national laboratories. A CoE could connect and convene AM to these areas as well as emerging technologies, such as robotics and automation, Internet of Things, energy efficiency manufacturing, and big data.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

AWARD PERIOD

The award made under this RFP will support the establishment of an ASTM AM CoE. The anticipated period of performance is five years with annual reviews, with a three-year base period and a two-year option period.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY

ASTM anticipates up to two awards under this RFP competition. ASTM will consider proposals for up to five years with annual reviews, with a three-year base period and a two-year option period. The total anticipated amount for the award is up to \$250K annually for five years, provided from in-kind contributions combined with funds. The award amount may exceed \$250K because of the provided in-kind contributions. The total amount of funding made available to a successful proposal may vary, based on the quality of received proposals, the availability of funds, and the in-kind support and program

¹

https://share.ansi.org/Shared%20Documents/Standards%20Activities/AMSC/AMSC_Roadmap_February_2017.pdf

development resources from ASTM's related pre-existing activities. These include ASTM education and training, certification and proficiency testing program development, connection with top AM experts through ASTM's more than 19 AM technology-related technical committees, and the offered workshops, meetings, conferences, and more that are designed for ASTM's over 30,000 members.

COST SHARING

ASTM will not accept cost sharing for proposals under this announcement. Cost sharing is not an evaluation or selection criterion. You may propose voluntary committed or uncommitted cost sharing or matching, and any voluntary committed cost sharing amount will be included in the total award value.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

Universities: Universities are accredited educational institutions that offer programs for undergraduate and graduate studies, with a campus located in or outside the United States.

Organizations: Organizations include corporate R&D Centers and commercial entities, such as non-profit and for profit entities.

LIMIT ON NUMBER OF PROPOSAL PER ORGANIZATION

There are no restrictions or limits of the number of principal investigators (PI) or co-PI per proposal. However, ASTM will not consider proposals that contain a sub award(s). In addition, each university or organization is limited to one, single proposal submission.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

PROPOSAL INFORMATIONAL WEBINAR

ASTM will host an informational webinar for potential applicants who have submitted a Letter of Intent to submit a proposal to the ASTM AM CoE RFP on November 28, 2017, at 1 p.m. (EST). This one-hour webinar is designed for applicants interested in learning more about the ASTM AM CoE RFP. ASTM encourages potential applications to participate in the RFP Q&A webinar before submitting a proposal. Please note, a Letter of Intent must be submitted in order to be eligible to attend this webinar. Applicant Letters of Intent to submit a full proposal must be received electronically by November 27, 2017, at 12:00 p.m. (EST). Detailed information about the webinar will be separately provided to potential applicants who have submitted a Letter of Intent. More information is available in the RFP Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), available on [ASTM's website](https://www.astm.org/COMMIT/FINAL%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions.pdf)², which will be continuously updated.

If an applicant has proposal inquiries and questions, please contact ASTM's primary point of contact by email:

² Full html of FAQs: <https://www.astm.org/COMMIT/FINAL%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions.pdf>

Nexight Group
Dr. Changwon Suh
Email: csuh@nexightgroup.com
Phone: +1.240.667.7634

All questions should be submitted in writing by email. Include “Proposal Inquires: ASTM AM CoE” in the subject line. If submitting a question by telephone, you may not receive a response. Proposal inquiries and questions must be received in writing by electronic mail no later than November 27, 2017, at 5:00 p.m. (EST) to be considered. Proposal inquiries and questions may not be able to be answered if received later than that date.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Applicant Letters of Intent to submit a full proposal MUST be submitted via email as follows:

- **Email Instruction:** Email with subject header “ASTM AM CoE Letter of Intent: Name of applicant/organization” to Dr. Mohsen Seifi at mseifi@astm.org. A Letter of Intent should NOT contain any proprietary information. For further information, please contact:

ASTM International AM Programs
Dr. Mohsen Seifi
Email: mseifi@astm.org
Phone: +1.216.755.4434

- **Letters of Intent Due Dates and Time:** ASTM must receive Letters no later than November 27, 2017, at 12:00 p.m. (EST) to be considered.
- **Electronic Form:** A Letter of Intent should be one page as a Portable Document Format (PDF) document.

Applicant proposals MUST be submitted via email as follows:

- **Email Instruction:** Email with subject header “ASTM AM CoE Proposal: name of applicant/organization” to Dr. Mohsen Seifi at mseifi@astm.org. A technical proposal should NOT contain any proprietary information. For further information please contact:

ASTM International AM Programs
Dr. Mohsen Seifi
Email: mseifi@astm.org
Phone: +1.216.755.4434

ASTM International Programs and Services
Christine DeJong
Email: cdejong@astm.org
Phone: +1.610.832.9736

- **Application Due Dates and Time:** ASTM must receive proposals no later than December 15, 2017, at 5:00 p.m. (EST) to be considered. ASTM highly recommends submitting applications early.
- **Electronic Form and Proposal Attachment:** All required forms should be combined as a single PDF document for attachments.

Applicant Letters of Intent and proposal applications delivered to a different address may be rejected. Applicant Letters of Intent and proposal applications that are delivered in a different format than prescribed in this RFP, that do not follow the required confidentiality requirements, or are received after the designated time and date, may be rejected. Due to the nature of this RFP, there will be no public opening of letters of intent and proposals.

REQUIRED FORMS OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

ASTM aims to make the proposal submission procedures simple for applicants. The following is a summary of required forms:

Required Forms

- **Cover Sheet** (1-page limit)
 - Title of proposed CoE: Note that this should be publicly releasable
 - Applicant information
- **Summary** (up to 300 words)
 - Proposed CoE overview: This should be a concise abstract of 300 words or less, and should be publically releasable for the technical and nontechnical communities
- **Table of Contents** (no page limit)
- **CoE Narrative** (17-page limit including 2-page budget justification)
 - Statement of objectives
 - Statement of proposed structure/work
 - Impact and significance of proposed work
 - Detailed plan of work: Apart from a detailed plan of work, it would be desirable to include a brief 2-page budget justification, including a plan to leverage ASTM's available resources. A more detailed explanation of ASTM's possible in-kind support is described in the ASTM AM RFP [FAQs](#).
- **Description of PI, Collaborators, and Other Affiliations** (2-page limit)
 - Description of CoE team
 - Description of previous experience
 - Explanation of roles and responsibilities
- **Biographical Sketch of PI(s)**
- **References Cited** (no page limit)
- **Description of Facilities, Equipment, and Other Resources** (2-page limit)
- **Budget Sheet** (1-page for each year)
 - Each proposal should include an annual budget plan for each year of support requested.
 - ASTM follows the National Science Foundation (NSF)'s budget sheet format because quite a few potential applicants are already familiar with it. For further information on

budget and budget justification, consult NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide.³

- **Other Attachments** (optional)

Applicants must not include confidential or proprietary information in the proposal. ASTM will not consider a proposal if applicants include confidential or proprietary information in any part of the proposal.

Additional Forms

- **Letter(s) of Support** (no limit on number of letters, and no page limit)
 - Letters of Support from various AM stakeholders indicating why the proposed CoE is essential for its success.

Not Required

For a facilitated proposal submission process, at this RFP stage ASTM will NOT ask applicants to submit certifications or supporting documents, including:

- Certification regarding conflict of interest
- Certification regarding the drug-free workplace
- Certification regarding debarment and suspension
- Certification regarding nondiscrimination
- Certification regarding organizational support

If a proposal is selected in the first review stage described below, ASTM may request additional reference information or supporting documentation from applicants during the final decision-making process.

Proposal Format

- Paper Size: 8.5 x 11-inch paper
- Margins: One-inch
- Column and Spacing: Single column and single spacing
- Font: Arial 10 or larger or Times New Roman/Calibri 11 or larger
- Page Limitation: as described above
- Content: as described above

ASTM will not consider any applications that do not follow the page limits and proposal format in the evaluation.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Applicants should show strength in as many of the evaluation and selection criteria as possible to demonstrate core competencies.

³ https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=papp

Principal Evaluation and Selection Criteria (100 points)

The selection criteria for ASTM's review and evaluation for the ASTM AM CoE reflect adherence to major AM research and emphasize the merit of the national and international partnership that will be created by a global hub for AM to explore standard-centeredness focusing on synergy with the existing activities for standards within ASTM technical committees, best collaborative AM solutions, AM sector-connectedness that is related to the Center's expandability to cover various AM sectors, and industry-relevant research necessary to create synergy and evolve the AM industry. The five equally important criteria for the selection of an awardee are listed below, with the explanations for each criterion.

- **Adherence to Originality and Innovativeness of AM Research (20 points):** The CoE should be an innovative AM R&D platform through various CoE programs. Adherence to the major topical areas of current AM technologies that the AM community pursues is an important aspect of achieving innovation. This will be used to address the proficiency testing base that will fill critical knowledge gaps for accelerated AM R&D generation.
- **Standard-Centeredness (20 points):** The CoE should be a booster for AM standard development. There needs to be collaboration to lead the rapid development of new and/or improved standards that provide guidance, clarity and confidence for AM stakeholders/users. This will be used to assess the relevance of the AM CoE R&D activities to the standard-related activities and outcomes (e.g., design-for-AM best practices, AM part quality assurance, and others) from the CoE activities that should be beneficial to the AM R&D.
- **AM Impact and Cooperative Linkages (20 points):** The CoE should be a global hub for AM collaboration. The AM industry must become more open to sharing and providing access to data and products if they are to excel in the 21st century. The potential contribution of the AM CoE will be an improved exchange of the ideas and information which are crucial for the structured communications, interaction, and engagement with internal and external experts, and to provide easy access to shared information and resources across the world-wide AM community. This will be used to estimate the applicability of the best communications that should be adopted into the construction of global partnerships for AM stakeholders.
- **AM Sector-Connectedness (20 points):** The CoE should be a consortium for broad AM sectors, with a wide scope covering AM topics from aerospace/aviation and automotive to biomedical areas. This will be used to estimate the Center's potential expandability to other relevant areas of advanced manufacturing such as energy efficiency manufacturing, big data, automation, or Internet of Things.
- **Industry-Relevant Research (20 points):** There is a need for synergy among all AM stakeholders, ranging from manufacturers to small vendors, to ensure R&D efforts are more focused on industry's needs. For example, AM research should have an understanding of the relationships among feedstock materials, AM manufacturing design and process, and performance. By incorporating all aspects of the AM manufacturing spectrum, AM technology developers, industrial stakeholders/customers, government, and academia will be able to collaborate with a level of transparency appropriate for progress. The ASTM AM CoE should provide the necessary leadership and coordination to enable, mediate, and encourage communication for AM industry- and manufacturing-research needs necessary to evolve the AM industry.

Additional Evaluation and Selection Criteria (15 extra points)

ASTM will consider an applicant's qualifications, Center capabilities, facilities, and related experiences as a whole. It should be noted that this criteria is less important than the combined principal evaluation and selection criteria described above.

No further evaluation criteria will be used for proposal selection. The proposed cost and budget plan will be considered, but will not be an evaluation and selection criterion (see below the details of cost review procedures). In addition, the cost sharing responses will not affect the CoE selection process or factor into ASTM's final decision.

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESSES

Transparent, Merit-Based Review Procedures

Proposals received in response to this RFP will go through a two-step selection process:

- 1st Independent Review:** During the initial stage of the selection process, ASTM will distribute proposals to an independent panel of AM experts for a first-round peer review. Each proposal will have three to four reviewers selected by the ASTM leadership. Reviewers may include key experts from industry, academia, or government agencies, and will adhere to the process described in this Section and apply the evaluation and selection criteria detailed above. Reviewers will then independently evaluate and assign a preliminary score to their assigned proposals. Each proposal's preliminary scores will then be combined to create an initial average score. ASTM estimates that four or five proposals will be selected for the second review. The proposals and review scores from the selected proposal from the review panel will then be forwarded to the ASTM leadership for the second stage of the selection process.
- 2nd Peer Review Panel Meeting:** ASTM leadership will lead the second review process, working closely with its technical committees and other independent experts, which will be identified and invited by ASTM. The second stage of the selection process will be an in-person (or virtual) review panel meeting, focusing on the potential impact of the proposed CoE as well as ensuring alignment with ASTM's mission and goals.
- Final Decision:** One or two final awardee(s) will be recommended by the panel, and the final decision will be made by ASTM leadership.

Peer Review Disclosure Procedures

For transparent review procedures, all review panels will include nondisclosure agreements that prohibit disclosure of any information submitted to other parties.

- Conflict of Interests:** All reviewers of both selection procedures will not be affiliated with an applicant's organization. However, if a reviewer has an affiliation or financial connection with the institution or the person submitting the proposal that might be construed as creating a conflict of interest, the invited reviewer should inform ASTM immediately.
- Confidentiality of Proposals and Peer Reviews:** ASTM will receive proposals from applicants in confidence. In addition, the identity of reviewers will be kept confidential to the maximum extent possible. All reviewers will sign nondisclosure agreements that prohibit disclosure of any information submitted to other parties. Reviewers will be advised on how to access and handle the proposals being reviewed. When reviewers have completed their review, ASTM will destroy the proposals.

Applicants or their surrogates are prohibited from contacting any ASTM staff to advocate on behalf of a proposal submitted in response to this RFP. Violation of this rule will disqualify an applicant's proposal from the consideration.

Cost Review Procedures

If a proposal is selected for possible award, ASTM will review the budget plan and budget justification in detail. To make sure the proposed costs are realistic and reasonable, ASTM may request additional necessary information before making a final decision.

No Guaranteed Award(s)

ASTM reserves the right to reject any and all proposals. ASTM does not guarantee that any award will be made under this RFP competition.

VI. SELECTION NOTICE INFORMATION

SELECTION NOTICES

All applicants will be notified in writing of ASTM's final decision regarding their application in January 2018. If a proposal is selected for a possible award, an email will be sent to the PI. Please note that ASTM's selection notice is not an authorization to start a proposed work and is not an award guarantee. ASTM will contact applicants further for additional questions, and to negotiate specific award terms including funds and in-kind support, and conditions.

Unselected proposals will not be shared externally, and will be destroyed or returned to the applicants based on the applicant's preference. Any questions about the review may be made to ASTM leadership, but please note that all decisions are final. ASTM cannot offer feedback on unselected proposals.

VII. CONTACT INFORMATION

PROPOSAL INQUIRIES AND QUESTIONS

Submit all proposal questions in writing by email. Include "Proposal Inquires: ASTM AM CoE" in the subject line, addressed to:

Nexight Group
Dr. Changwon Suh
Email: csuh@nexightgroup.com
Phone: +1.240.667.7634

Submit all questions in writing by email. If a question is submitted by telephone, there may not be a response. Proposal inquiries and questions must be received in writing by email no later than November 27, 2017, at 5:00 p.m. (EST) to be considered. Proposal inquiries and questions may not be able to be answered if received later than that date.

GENERAL INQUIRIES AND QUESTIONS

Submit all questions in writing by email. Include "General Inquires: ASTM AM CoE" in the subject line, addressed to:

ASTM International Programs and Services
Christine DeJong
Email: cdejong@astm.org
Phone: +1.610.832.9736