

Frequently Asked Questions concerning INFUSE

FAQ's added for FY2023 (February 2023)

Will the PIER Plan be just one per company, or might divisions within a company have different plans?

It will most likely be the same PIER Plan for the entire company. Some companies might be large enough that different organizations could have different plans, but this is not necessary. The primary point is that the PIER Plan should not be the plan of the specific PI and INFUSE project, but of the larger organization.

What criteria or limit is there for the 2-year \$750k funding option?

There is technically no limit other than the 5 application limit per company. However, per the RFA, the work must be "deemed to be of critical value to the company." And given that the total funds for the program are limited, the number of large awards will necessarily be limited.

If your company has not identified a PI at the lab, will one be assigned?

The company needs to have communication with the lab PI and needs to provide a record of discussion that the company has spoken with them and that they agreed to do this collaboration. INFUSE will not assign lab PIs, the company has to identify one.

If we have identified the university that has the capabilities we want to access, are we still encouraged to contact a national lab?

A single application will have a partner that is either a university or a national lab. A company can submit up to five applications, and so several of these may be with universities and several with national labs.

Is it okay to submit smaller-scale projects into INFUSE if we have applied for other funding (such as the milestone program)?

Anything you submit to INFUSE must be within the scope of one of the topical areas listed in the RFA. You cannot receive funding for the same work from two different sources. The key is to be complimentary, but distinct. Teams may submit applications for INFUSE topics that overlap with pending funding applications, but if the applicant is selected for both INFUSE and another solicitation (e.g. the Milestone program), the applicant must decline one award.

If the applicant's company has also submitted a Milestone program proposal, it is suggested that the applicant include, within the technical narrative, a brief description of how the INFUSE application differs in scope from the proposed Milestone work. (UPDATED on 2/28/2023)

FAQ's added for FY2022b (August 2022)

Can Institutions of Higher Education be partners for INFUSE2022b?

No, only national laboratories are eligible to be partners for this round of applications. The national laboratory can subcontract up to 25% of the work, and a university would be an eligible subcontractor. It is expected that Institutions of Higher Education will be eligible partners for the next round (INFUSE 2023a).

Will there be an extension to the noon (EDT) September 2 deadline?

There is no expectation to extend the deadline. Applicants are recommended to submit well in advance of this time.

The company has an existing connection with the laboratory PI. Is it still necessary to work through the laboratory POC?

It is fine to work directly with the laboratory PI. However, it would be prudent to keep the laboratory POC informed, as they have experience working in the program, and developing the subsequent FWP and CRADAs.

Can a postdoctoral student serve as the laboratory PI?

Because post-docs are not permanent staff and are not guaranteed to be present through the award, they are not suited to serve as PI's.

If the company is in the process of being incorporated and does not yet have a DUNS number, can an application still be submitted?

No. A valid DUNS numbers is required at the time of submission.

FAQ's prior to 2022b (March 2022)

Is a doctorate degree required for Company Principal Investigator eligibility?

No, must be >50% "permanent" technical employee capable and authorized to manage projects for the company. Cannot be short term contractor, consultant or visitor.

Are specific new eligibility requirements envisioned for future INFUSE grant applications?

Yes, Things are always subject to change.

Will universities be required to sign a CRADA-style agreement with the DOE in order to receive funds under an INFUSE award? Is there guidance for our university co-applicants on the government rights they'll need to agree to under the award.

The universities resubmit the RFA SOW to the open FOA (download Clark's talk from FY22 workshop). As part of the FOA they enter a direct agreement with DOE for the funds. Please

see the references and links described. It's also described in the FY22 INFUSE Opportunity Announcement. The rights and requirements are similar to other DOE contracts at the universities.

Does INFUSE still provide some amount of computing/HPC support to award winners? If yes, is this support in the form of a certain number of hours, or simply in enabling access to the appropriate facility?

Yes. Under the meetings..workshop tab on the INFUSE webpage under FY2021 there are talks about HPC resources... At NERSC (cpu) and OLCF (gpu). Allocations are based on cpu hours. We can help organize this, but INFUSE cannot guarantee the allocation. The HPC centers have their own process as described that we can coordinate with. If proprietary, the private company has to pay the total cost. If it's open literature and you publish, DOE will pick up the cost.

Would it be possible to send copies of our IP Management Plans for review prior to the submission of the applications to make sure they would be acceptable?

INFUSE does not evaluate the IPMPs. We just ensure that one exists and that it is signed by both parties. All responsibility and any liability for shortcomings reside solely with the two parties involved. The IPMP is for their mutual protection. Any future dispute between the parties concerning the IPMP may result in the award being rescinded by DOE and the project terminated. A company's RFA will only get rejected if the IPMP is blank, not signed or simply not attached.

If an RFA is selected for funding, would an award be issued directly to the partner institution(s) or would the award be issued to the lead industry which would then issue subawards to the partners?

Awards are issued either through the FWP process for a national laboratory or as a university agreement in response to the open FES FOA as described in the FY22 DOE INFUSE opportunity announcement. Funding awards are not issued directly to companies.

Does the 5 application limit apply only to the private company? Is there a limit on the number of RFAs on which a university may serve as a partner?

There is no limit to the number of RFAs a university can partner on. Ultimately, companies compete with themselves when they submit many RFAs. Therefore, it's advantageous for a university to have a diversity of company partners.

With National Lab partners, the entire INFUSE DOE budget was sent to the Lab. Is that also the case with university partners, ie, do all DOE dollars necessarily flow to the university? Or can a company choose whether to a) receive DOE dollars internally and then sub-contract out to the university, or b) send DOE dollars to the university directly.

Yes, all federal funding flows directly to the university. In addition, the company may also fund the university from its own cost-share. No funding goes directly to the private company.

For an INFUSE proposal where a company partners with a university, the rules stipulate that the university cannot subcontract to a National Lab. However, can the company provide funds to a National Lab to do some of the work, and use that to fulfill the company's 20% cost-share requirement?

Yes, for example through a separate SPP project. The SPP project cannot be more than 25% of the total project value and of course counts toward the 20% or more cost share by the company. However, none of the funds received by the university can go to the lab. The subcontract to the lab should be shown in the budget estimate under the company column.

Can a university partner use INFUSE funds to buy equipment?

Only small value or expendable pieces of equipment can be purchased with the university award. These items must be itemized in the budget estimate. Any equipment items over \$5k will be scrutinized. INFUSE cannot be used to enhance existing capabilities, only use equipment, facilities and expertise that is already there. INFUSE cannot be used to create new facilities or experiments; however, it can be used to supplement exiting diagnostics or cover the cost of new calibrations.

Who ends up owning purchased equipment?

The university if purchased with INFUSE funds. If purchased with the company cost share, the company retains ownership.

When do INFUSE notifications come out for the 2022a cycle?

Depending on reviews and press releases – the 2022a cycle notifications will likely be made the beginning of May.

When can the research start if the RFA is accepted for award?

Research starts after the DOE Chicago office releases funding for the university's FOA application, and a contract is signed between the company and the university.

Is there a template for the technical narrative?

There is no template. But we do have a suggested format with required sections. It can be found in the Documents folder on the submission sharepoint site or in the library on the public website. Please also consider the merit review criteria at the bottom of the RFA Opportunity Announcement when writing your narrative. This will make it easier for the reviewers to assess your submission.

Could you please confirm that universities will not be permitted to apply for summer INFUSE rounds? Will the same hold for future years?

That is correct. The pilot program for INFUSE university participation is only the first round, the 2022a cycle, that is currently open. There are no plans to involve universities in the 2022b cycle. If successful, we anticipate this will also be true in 2023.

Can a university apply for INFUSE funds without a private company partner?

NO. only a private company can apply for INFUSE assistance. The private company can select a university as the partner to receive direct DOE funding.

Does the company partner still need to serve as the lead proposer?

YES. The private company must always be the lead proposer and lead PI.

Regarding the 20% cost-sharing - would the Universities need to contribute to the cost sharing or can a private partner provide all the cost sharing?

The private company must provide the 20% cost share using non-federal funds. University partners, if any, do not contribute to this.


I would appreciate confirmation on whether a legal US subsidiary with a U.S. address and a valid US DUNS number registered in the U.S is required to execute a separate DOE CRADA to participate in a University partnership.

No. The university should enter into a contract with the U.S. registered subsidiary only. The company PI must be a >50% employee of that U.S. company. No CRADA is required, and the U.S. company does not need to have one when partnered with a U.S. university. The university should not make an agreement with the foreign parent company. In any event, all export control laws apply, and the intellectual property will be governed by the agreement between the university and the U.S. company.

Can you tell me where the previous awards and abstracts are listed?

Please go to the library on the public website: [https:// infuse@ornl.gov](https://infuse@ornl.gov) for the Cumulative Awards List with Abstracts.

I can't locate the INFUSE Corporate Information form on the INFUSE website?

It's not on the public site. It can be found in the documents folder on the sharepoint submission site:  INFUSE Corporate Information Form_v4.pdf . Or you can click the link on the RFA submission form "supporting documents" right where it asks to upload the corporate information form.

Where is the call or FOA for the 2022 INFUSE solicitation?

The current announcement can be found in the library on the public website:

<https://infuse.ornl.gov> . The direct link is: <https://infuse.ornl.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/FY2022-INFUSE-RFA-final.pdf>

What are the INFUSE eligibility requirements?

Eligibility requirements are described in the current opportunity announcement mentioned above.

How can my company establish a contact with an institutional partner in fusion research?

If you know a laboratory PI or university faculty member that you wish to collaborate with, please start a dialog directly with them. If you need help in identifying a laboratory PI, please reach out to the Point-of-Contact (POC) at the specific laboratory. A list is available in the library on the INFUSE website. A contact list is also available for faculty at several interested universities. Also, you are more than welcome to contact the INFUSE director or deputy director. They should be able to identify an appropriate individual and institution with the expertise and resources you require.

Where can we find the workshop presentations and those on laboratory capabilities?

The workshop presentations and recordings if available can be found under the “Meetings” menu of the INFUSE website. Lab capabilities presentations are also included.

Can foreign companies participate in INFUSE?

No. However, foreign-controlled U.S. subsidiaries are eligible for INFUSE. They must be registered in the U.S. and the company PI must be a majority employee of the U.S. company. Only accredited U.S. universities and the 17 DOE National Laboratories can participate as partners. For details, please see the opportunity announcement mentioned above.

Does INFUSE plan to provide an IPMP template for applications with university partners? If not, would the attached ARPA-E IPMP template be a good starting point?

You are free to use whatever the company and the university partner(s) can agree to and whatever format you deem sufficient. We do not endorse any templates or make value judgements concerning their content or completeness. The liability resides solely with the parties. It is only required that you have a plan.

What is the preferred acknowledgment for use in journal articles for DOE INFUSE projects?

This work was funded under the INFUSE program – a DOE SC FES public-private partnership - under CRADA No. XXXX between (name) National Laboratory and (name) company. Or,

This work was funded under the INFUSE program – a DOE SC FES public-private partnership - under contract no. XXXX between (name) university and (name) company.

Two private companies have expressed their interest in writing an RFA proposal to INFUSE on the same subject. Can they be co-authors, co-submitters, of a single RFA proposal?

No. However, they can and should each submit separate RFAs. You can do the same exact scope of work for each separate company. That is permissible. However, each needs to make the case that the work helps them meet a milestone or overcome a technical hurdle specific to their concept.

If the RFA proposal is approved and a lab's subsequent FWP is approved, can paid work be done by the companies, i.e., could a fraction of the funding go to them and not through the lab?

No. Under INFUSE, funding is never provided directly to the company. In fact, they must contribute 20% in-kind support for the project.

If it were not possible for them both to be the submitters of the INFUSE proposal and the other was hired as a subcontractor, would the money to the subcontractor have to go through the lab and hence incur two "overheads?"

Yes and no. If they subcontract to the lab that indeed is true. However, the other company is free to subcontract with the primary awardee directly using their costshare to support the contract.

What format is required for the final report?

The final report is due at the conclusion of the CRADA. It can be the CRADA final report with CRADA-protected or proprietary information removed using the suggested CRADA report format in the website library. University reports should follow the same general format in compliance with the company contract. The final report will be posted to the public website.

Can two or more laboratories be involved in the same INFUSE project?

Not directly. Only the lead lab can be on the INFUSE CRADA. Other labs can collaborate up to 25% of the total work scope using a Memorandum Purchase Order from the lead lab, or the company can fund the other lab(s) directly from their own 20% cost share using an SPP contract or separate 100% funds-in CRADA.

What are the labor requirements on the institution lead PI?

At a national laboratory the lead PI must be a senior research staff member, a laboratory employee, and contribute a minimum 25% of the labor for the laboratory's scope of work. At a

university, any faculty member or research employee who is qualified by university rules to participate as a PI must provide project oversight at a minimum 5% level.

Are companies expected to meet the exact amount listed in our budget estimate, or is any amount at or above 20% of the total project cost acceptable?

The cost share of 20% in the budget estimate is the minimum you must reach by the end of the project. You are welcome to exceed the value at the company's discretion if that is necessary to be successful.

Upon completion of an INFUSE program, do we need to submit any documentation to prove that we have met our cost-share requirement? If so, do you know the reporting requirements?

Yes. You may be audited by DOE. Please retain any purchase records, time sheets, invoice or expense payments made that can satisfy the cost share. There is no reporting requirement, but you can be audited for up to 3 years and disbarred from contracting with the US government in the future. The audit will ask for justification of the cost share; so you need to preserve the documentation. If it appears you can't reach the 20% cost share by project end, we must notify DOE.

Our company is planning to resubmit one of the proposals that was rejected from the previous round as the proposed program is highly critical to our company's mission. We have revised the proposal extensively to address the reviewers' concerns. Should we submit a "Response to reviewers' comments" document, along with the proposal?

There is no need to submit a separate response to the reviewers. However, please be sure to fold the responses into the proposal where appropriate. It is unlikely that the same reviewer(s) will see the new RFA; however, there is a chance it will occur.

Is it a good idea to include the National Lab PI's resume in our INFUSE application? Our company has traditionally included resumes of our team members, but it seems from the reviewers' feedback that they would like to see the Lab PI's resume too.

You can append up to three CVs with the RFA. One can be the lab PI CV if available or you can include it in the technical narrative, but it is not required.

Is a report due to INFUSE or DOE that is separate from the "CRADA Final Report?"

The final CRADA report is the INFUSE report.

What are the procedures for any final reports due? (There are guidelines for the CRADA final report in the library, but if any other reports are expected, what are the guidelines for those?)

Please follow the Prochaska memo in the INFUSE library if possible. If the CRADA report format is acceptable to the lab's SPP office, it is fine for us. However, please note, the INFUSE reports

will be posted publicly. Please remove any IP or EC controlled info from the report if necessary. This is where two reports would likely be produced – one for lab and a more sanitized version for INFUSE. Some lab CRADA reports are routinely stamped “CRADA proprietary” for that reason. We would like the open “public” version for INFUSE.

Can an INFUSE CRADA receive a no-cost-extension?

Yes, a no-cost-extension amendment to the CRADA must be processed through the lab SPP office and approved by DOE. Amendments are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Multiple or serial extension requests are discouraged.

Can a blanket CRADA with our company be initiated for multiple INFUSE projects over multiple years?

In theory, yes, if the lab SPP office and the lab DOE site office approve it. In practice, this is very difficult, and none currently exist.

Is there a deadline for executing the INFUSE CRADA?

No. There is no hard deadline. However, we expect the CRADAs to be executed within one year of the award notification. Most CRADAs require 3-6 months to process at the lab DOE site office. However, some do extend beyond a year. Failure to reach agreement on the CRADA T&Cs after one year will likely result in the award being rescinded.

Is it permissible to do a portion of the INFUSE project at a foreign facility?

Yes. The fraction of the overseas work must be entered on the corporate information form. Amounts over 30% will require special DOE approval and should be justified in the RFA.