

2026-09-08 Grid Innovations Facility and Testing Provider Informational Webinar 2 Transcript

Carla Heron 0:06

Welcome, everyone. This will be the second webinar for Voucher 12, which is the Grid Innovations Facility and Testing Opportunity. This one is focused on providers during this application window. We'll get started in just a moment. We're going to give everyone a chance to get in and get settled instead of having the disrupting pings. So if you just sit tight for another minute, we'll get started. Thanks.

While people are still joining, just a quick reminder, this is an AI bot free zone. As this slide says, and as was mentioned in previous correspondence, there are no AI note takers or other tools that should be signed in for this. If we identify them, we will remove them, but we do ask that you be cognizant of that for these webinars with DOE and not have your AI bots turned on.

Additionally, information will be provided in the chat today, and we ask that you only use that Teams chat if you are having technical issues. All questions will be asked in a different format.

Let's go ahead and get started today. Welcome, everyone. I am Carla Heron. I'm Director of EnergyWerx, and we are facilitating this webinar for the Department of Energy. This particular webinar focuses on Voucher 12, which is the Grid Innovations Facility and Testing Opportunity. This application window and the discussion today is focused on providers.

As previously mentioned, there are no AI tools allowed in this. In case you want to go back and review anything discussed or share with other interested stakeholders, the recording of this webinar as well as the transcript will be available on our [opportunity page](#). Again, EnergyWerx will be providing links to various pieces of information or access to elements that you may need inside the Teams chat. But we will not be answering questions from the Teams chat. Instead, we will be using Slido.

Slido is a crowdsourcing tool. It will allow you to see the questions asked by other participants, and you can upvote what is of interest to you as well, instead of redundantly asking the same question. You can ask, and can use this, you can go through the QR code to get there. You can use the link and there is a code. It is VO12IW2, meaning this is the Voucher 12 informational webinar #2 for this opportunity.

Again, if you do see a question of interest, we encourage you to upvote it. The questions with the most thumbs up are the ones that will be asked first. If we have a plethora of questions and we don't get through all of them, we will still be providing those questions to the Department of Energy for them to review and to answer them and return so we can add those to the web page as well. They won't be captured in the transcript, but the transcript will capture all the questions and answers that are brought up in this session today, so it is right there to help you.

Again, the focus of this primarily is a brief overview of this opportunity and then moving into a Q&A session, hopefully to help you get ready to hone your applications. As a quick reminder, your applications are due on September 22nd, 2026, at 3:00 PM EST. That is in a couple of Tuesdays. And we do that because we work with a tool called Submittable, and they are on the East Coast. So, if you are experiencing technical difficulties, we need them still available to help to troubleshoot that so that you can get your application in if you are experiencing technical difficulties or some type of unforeseen event, please reach out to the EnergyWerx team at info@energywerx.org soonest and we will help to coordinate that.

So, without further ado, we are going to move forward into the summary. We have several representatives from the Department of Energy here with us today. We're going to have this overview by Caria Evans, and then we have two of her colleagues who are also here providing answers to any questions you might have. and that will be Kerry Cheung and Fernando Palma. So, without further delay, Caria, I'm going to hand the mic to you. And everyone, I hope that we have a good session. Thanks.

Evans, Caria (CONTR) 5:39

Thank you. So just to reiterate, a grid innovations facility and testing voucher opportunity, or VO 12, this is the office hours. Next slide. The objective of this opportunity is to basically connect potential innovative grid technologies with testing facilities that can support, test, validate, and evaluate technologies that can improve the reliability, resilience, security, and affordability of the nation's electricity delivery infrastructure.

Next slide, please.

A brief overview of how the network process goes. So, providers here in the meeting will define your capabilities that you can provide along with your associated price. After that, we will review, select set providers and capabilities and create a catalog. Below you can see the potential capabilities that you could provide, whether it be grid simulations and control testing, electrical performance testing, material characterization and failure analysis, to name a few. Once that happens, our recipients will be notified of the capabilities that providers can provide, and they can apply for specific capabilities. Upon reviewing and making selections, we will then match providers with recipients. And after that, the voucher will be executed with the match provider supporting the set of recipients, and pretty much you get paid to perform those capabilities for said recipients. Next slide.

Here are a few examples of technologies. Power electronics converters, solid-state transformers, and advanced transformers, to name a few. And I want to iterate that energy storage technologies are not eligible for this voucher opportunity. Next slide.

So, testing and evaluations. Here are a few of our subcategory for capabilities. The capabilities must involve physical testing in a purpose-built laboratory environment, but it may include modeling, simulations, and analysis. So here are a few examples of our subcategories that your testing facilities may provide. Next slide.

When it comes to technology readiness, we are looking for innovations that fall between 6-8. So, as you can see here, these are outlined TRL levels, 6 to 8. Next slide.

Activities should be completed in less than one year from the start of the contract. And the scope looks at \$50,000 to \$250,000. You must complete the four milestones

to receive the voucher money. Providers will only get paid after the completion of each milestone, and voucher funds cannot be used to establish new testing capabilities or significantly modify existing capabilities. Activities should not include manufacturing for commercial production. Next slide.

These are some frequently asked questions that we received from our previous webinar. So just to give you more information regarding matchmaking, we will start with one. We review the capabilities provided by providers. After we review that, we select the recipients will be able to look at the capabilities once they are applying for their portion of the voucher. So, after we finalize that, we see that the recipients that are selected get to submit for the prioritized list of the capabilities that they want to work with.

Following that, we will evaluate applications and see which providers and recipient's match. We will have an initial matching process, and we then will reach out to the provider and the recipient to confirm match. If it is yes, we will develop the agreements necessary to conduct work. If not, we will proceed to another facility or potentially discontinue the application if there's not a good match for a provider or recipient. Next slide.

These are the type of agreements that are needed for the voucher program. We're going to look at the first half here for the voucher providers. If you're a national lab, we're looking at traditional AOP, annual operating plan. If you are a private lab or university, this is going to be a Business-to-Business agreement with the provider. And if you're a federal lab, OE, DOE will establish an interagency agreement with the federal lab. These are the types of agreements needed for the voucher for the provider's side. Next slide.

Some information regarding funding and invoicing. All projects must complete the requisite milestones to receive funding. The method and timing of the funding depend on the project agreement and the type of project agreement. Whether you are a national lab, it will be based on the AOP, and if you are a federal lab, it will be dispersed based on the IP, the interagency agreement process. And if you are a private or university lab Business-to-Business agreement, it would be dispersed on an invoice basis. So, each milestone must be completed for the funding to be received.

Next slide.

Here are some other FAQs that we received during the first webinar. So, **can providers get matched more than once?** Yes, this is based on the throughput of the provider, and they can be matched with multiple recipients.

As a national lab, can we have many facility and capabilities that they will be able to provide? Can they submit more than one application for one lab? An application must be submitted for each capability. So, if a lab has multiple capabilities, they should have multiple submissions. Now, how many applications can a provider submit? We do want thorough and complete and great applications. So, we're going to limit this and say that providers should submit one application per capability. and can submit a max of five applications of five capabilities.

And lastly, **can recipient select the provider for their testing?** And we just went over how basically we would match them. You could submit up to three requests for provider capability matching, and we will go through that process following the recipient applications.

And I think those are all the FAQs from the last webinar. Next slide, please.

Just a brief overview. Again, this opportunity is connecting innovators and small business and entrepreneurs to testing facilities to basically target and support the testing, validation, and evaluation of those technologies at a TRL level of 6 to 8. Providers, we're looking at our national labs, private labs, university labs, federal labs, nonprofit labs, and testing centers. And your recipients that you'll be working with will most likely be vendors, technology developers, and manufacturers. And the range of vouchers is from \$50,000 to \$250,000. And we estimate of giving out 16-20 vouchers for this round. The next slide, please.

Here's the timeline. As you can see here, it is September 8th, so we are currently in office hours, and the submission deadline for the providers will be September 22nd. Next slide.

Okay, so about your provider submissions, you will be using [Submittable form](#), and it will include your overview and the value of the capability. Sample works optional, and you must demonstrate you have a specific, cost-effective, and relevant capability

that the voucher recipient needs for advancement. Next slide.

That is pretty much the end of the slide deck. And now we will move on to questions.

Grace Zona 14:03

Thank you, Caria. Just give me one moment while I pull these up.

Carla Heron 14:07

Perfect. Quick reminder, all questions are asked through Slido. Again, that is a crowdsourcing tool that allows you to see all the questions being asked and to upvote those of most interest to you. I would like to tack on one reminder related to Submittable, and I will say this again at the end.

Submittable does have a constraint that you can submit, you can work on one application at a time. So, since you are having the ability to submit up to five different capabilities, those would be 5 separate applications. So, they will be done in succession. There is an economy of scale where you can copy and paste a lot of your information from one into another. As you move forward, we encourage you to leverage other tools to not have to reinvent the wheel, but you will only be able to work on one application at a time. Alrighty, Grace, back to you.

Grace Zona 15:06

Thank you, Carla. The first question here I am going to highlight, and I can answer it, but I'm going to read for transcription purposes.

The application has no subcategory field. Where should applicants enter their applicable subcategories?

There is a subcategory field in the form itself. You must click on the specific primary testing category that you would like to fill out an application for. Once you select that, that's when the testing subcategory dropdown will come down and you have a variety of different selections that you can make, but you do have to click one of these first.

If you do not click on one of these options, this testing subcategory dropdown will not be there.

Next question, **may an applicant use a leased or shared purpose-built facility and subcontracted calibrated equipment if it retains responsibility for the work?**

Carla Heron 16:13

I'm not sure if Kerry or Fernando would like to jump in on this. From an EnergyWerx perspective, this should be addressed in your application, how the work is going to be performed and any constraints. And that would also disclose use of equipment, subcontractors, et cetera, when you are devising the expected cost.

We do understand that there are established subcontractor agreements that are in place to facilitate elements of capabilities, but those would need to be clearly defined to be part of the consideration.

And then I will give Kerry or Fernando or Karia a chance to elaborate.

Cheung, Kerry 17:03

Yeah, I agree with Carla. I think the details of these specifics should be laid out in your application for determination. I think the initial intent is to identify facilities that have sort of that consistent level of throughput. And so, if this is a piece of equipment that is enduring business model. And I think that would fit, but we need those details in the application.

Grace Zona 17:34

Thank you, Kerry.

If an applicant uses a leased or shared purpose-built facility and subcontracted equipment, what documented site and equipment access or control is required?

Carla Heron 17:56

I will go back to; I think this is part of your description of how you're fulfilling this capability. If this is a standard SOP that you have been employing already and it is a demonstrated relationship, that needs to be explained. If this is something that you're hoping to establish to support this, that wouldn't be in the spirit of a

demonstrated capability that you already have. Kerry, if you would like to elaborate beyond that, I will pass it to you. I think we have addressed that already though, that needs to be fully explained.

Grace Zona 18:32

I can go on to the next question.

Can a single facility submit multiple capability applications that share the same underlying testing hardware?

Cheung, Kerry 18:55

I think it should be okay so long as you factor in how that might impact your throughput.

Cheung, Kerry 19:04

And I think it is a factor, I guess, when we do the matching process.

If one of your planning capabilities sort of tie up the same underlying hardware, then that would be for consideration.

Grace Zona 19:24

Thank you.

Can one national lab submit separate applications for each subcategory?

Cheung, Kerry 19:40

I think each application is really targeted at the subcategory level, as that's the testing service. So as mentioned previously, national labs can submit multiple applications (but no more than 5) if there are different capabilities.

Grace Zona 19:55

Thank you.

If calibration records are incomplete at application, may they be completed before testing begins?

Cheung, Kerry 20:17

I think this may be something you can note in your application in terms of the timing for when equipment would be calibrated for consideration. But I think preference

would be it already has been calibrated so that it is something that's been regularly used.

Grace Zona 20:39

Thank you.

Would answering no at submission make the capability ineligible or adversely affect selection?

Cheung, Kerry 20:56

I assume this is tied to the previous question. I'm assuming it is that if you're saying that the equipment has not been calibrated, I think it's something that would be factored in the sort of provider selection process. As I mentioned, we want to have identify facilities that have consistent throughput and experience, and so if the equipment has not been calibrated, that might adversely affect some of the considerations, but if it is a unique capability that hasn't been sort of broadly utilized, then it's sort of something we can evaluate once we have that information.

Grace Zona 21:49

As I understand it, energy storage technologies are not accepted. Is testing of power generation technologies included in the voucher? Can you be specific?

Cheung, Kerry 22:00

So this funding opportunity is funded through the Office of Electricity. Our mission space is sort of downstream of a generator, upstream of a customer meter. In that regard, power generation technologies are not in scope.

Grace Zona 22:16

Thank you. It looks like right now we have one more question. **Can 2 adjacently located labs owned by two separate parties submit single application for a joint capability?**

Cheung, Kerry 22:42

And this, I think, may need to defer to EnergyWerx, how if you guys have experience with these situations, but usually the B2B would be single, right?

Carla Heron 22:53

Correct. For any application / capability that is selected, there is only a direct business-to-business agreement between the parent organization for EnergyWerx, which is DefenseWorks, and what I will call the lead, the prime, or the sole selectee associated with the down-selected capability. If this is an established collaboration with demonstrated and proven success, that should be part of the application. But ultimately, it will be the responsibility of the awarded selectee to ensure that all work is successfully completed, and all funding would be appropriately disseminated.

This is not to discourage you from continuing a successful partnership. This is just clarifying the existing relationship, roles and responsibilities, and then who would be the, if you will, the applicant for this, that would be part of the business-to-business agreement.

Grace Zona 24:03

Thank you, Carla.

That's all that we have right now.

Carla Heron 24:08

All right, so usually around now people start to let their brains churn and come up with a few more questions. In the meantime, I'll do a little more housekeeping as well, let's go to the next question.

Grace Zona 24:22

Perfect. **What are some examples of the supporting documents that can be uploaded? What are they trying to ask about?**

Cheung, Kerry 24:34

Supporting documents was an optional category, but I think if you had previous test reports that you have done and published, those are the nature of supporting documents where you are looking for to provide evidence of sort of the capabilities and competencies at your facility for that type of test or support the category that you've applied for.

Grace Zona 24:56

Perfect.

All right, that's all that we have for the moment.

Carla Heron 24:59

One thing to note related to that, in the past, we have had the occasion where there have been follow up clarification questions asked just to resolve any confusion or vagueness of an application to again evaluate its merit. That is something that may happen during the review process, just stating it's a possibility. But again, everything that you can put in there at the forefront in the application will benefit you to allow DOE to review and determine their way forward.

So as I said, we'll give people time to ask a few more questions. This gives us the opportunity to use some housekeeping. I said previously, and I will say again, Submittable is the tool we use for prospective stakeholders to submit applications. But you may only do one application at a time. This allows you to submit 5 separate applications for different capabilities. And we encourage everyone not to wait until the last day to do this. You never know. There could be technical issues. You could run out of time. Something may have taken longer than expected. While you get no bonus points for submitting early, it will ease your stress of trying to get everything in by the deadline.

In the past, barring any catastrophic issue, we have had hurricanes and fires and floods in the past, or barring any technical difficulty that couldn't immediately be resolved, no extension was allowed for applications.

So again, we encourage you to work ahead and not wait until the last minute. In the cases where you are talking about working with subcontractors or a joint opportunity, then again, we ask for clarity of those relationships prior to engaging in this and to being full and upfront with the expectations.

A few other things to remember. We do have an [opportunity page](#) that has a lot of information for you there in case others at your organizations need to have eyes on to exactly what this opportunity is, making the decision to move forward. Please visit

the [opportunity page](#). It was just posted in our Teams chat. There, you can find numerous things that are helpful. There is a whole list of shortcuts on the left-hand side, but in particular, you can hop to [webinar resources](#), and it will allow you to review [transcripts](#), do keyboard searches, to review the [slide decks](#), to review the information, as well as [eligibility and review requirements](#). And those are always critical to ensure that you are self-assured that you know what this opportunity is, you are well qualified for.

We do encourage you to review the [opportunity page](#) as more information becomes available, or perhaps DOE wants to provide clarity to something, we do have [FAQs](#) and we will post a top of the page a banner notification of anything that you should review. So always go and check that page as you are moving forward with your application.

You can reach out to the EnergyWerx team if there are outside questions. That is info@energywerx.org. That is also in the Teams chat. Pretty easy to find us. We are very quick at turning these answers around. If we do need to engage DOE, it may take a little longer. Often, we already have the answers and we're able to give them to you. So, if there are questions, please don't hesitate to reach out and that is also the e-mail you should use if you are experiencing technical difficulties with Submittable. The sooner we know, the sooner we can help.

And with that, I don't see any more questions that have come in. So finally, a couple of more things to note. EnergyWerx is the innovation hub supporting Department of Energy under DefenseWorks. Ultimately, this will be a business-to-business agreement between DefenseWorks and the selectees. And that will be managed within a terms and conditions agreement (TCA) and a statement of effort (SOE), as well as a time frame and a milestone table for what is expected when, as far as milestones and the awarded amount per milestone.

Again, in your capability, you are outlining the service you are offering, so you are dictating what that service is and what your expectations are. So please take that into account when you're doing this. One question I've seen in the past is, **do we have an extra budget for travel?** The answer is no. This is a firm fixed price award. So everything should be considered when you are completing the application you're

putting in for each capability.

And with that, I think we've answered and addressed everything for today. I'm going to hand the mic back over to DOE. Caria, Kerry, Fernando, do you have any final thoughts before we wrap up for the day?

Cheung, Kerry 30:44

No, I just want to thank the folks who joined on for their interest and engagement and look forward to seeing applications come in.

Palma, Fernando 30:55

Same, thank you everybody for joining.

Cheung, Kerry 30:58

Thanks.

Carla Heron 30:58

Thank you, Fernando, and Thank you, Caria, for the overview and Kerry for all the answers to everything that was provided. Again, reach out to EnergyWerx if you have any questions and check the [opportunity page](#).

Final reminder, applications are due Tuesday, the 22nd of September, 3 PM. Eastern Time.

Like I said, you don't get bonus points for submitting applications early, but then you also don't have the stress of maybe running out of time and not getting them in.

So, with that, we thank everybody for their time and the EnergyWerx team for supporting this and DOE for this opportunity for everyone to engage in. And with that, you'll get twenty-eight minutes back in your day.

Everyone have a good week.