

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

Notice of Intent to Establish an Air Transportation Center of Excellence:

Establishment of the FAA Center of Excellence (COE) for Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS).

SUMMARY: In accordance with Public Law 101-508, the FAA plans to competitively select a Center of Excellence for UAS within the next year. The COE will be a geographically disbursed consortium of the FAA, university partners and their affiliates selected by the FAA Administrator to conduct UAS related research, education and training while working jointly on issues of mutual interest and concern. The FAA will initially issue cooperative agreements to the selected university team members and specific projects will be defined and funded through matching grants over the life of the COE. In accordance with Public Law 101-508, the COE is responsible for matching all funds granted to *establish, operate and conduct related research, and may contract with others as appropriate*. Following the COE competitive process, the FAA sponsor may also generate requirements that would be supported through contract tasks awarded for FAA purpose by the FAA to the COE member universities.

SELECTION CRITERIA: The FAA Administrator will select the COE team on the ability of the applicant to meet the following criteria mandated by Congress:

--The extent to which the needs of the State in which the applicant is located are representative of the needs of the region for improved air transportation services and facilities.

--The demonstrated research and extension resources available to the applicant for carrying out the intent of the legislation.

--The capability of the applicant to provide leadership in making national and regional contributions to the solution of both long-range and immediate air transportation problems.

--The extent to which the applicant has an established air transportation program.

--The demonstrated ability of the applicant to disseminate results of air transportation research and educational programs through a statewide or region-wide continuing education program.

--The research projects that the applicant proposes to carry out under the grant.

Please Note:

- All criteria are weighted equally.
- A page limit will be specified in the Draft and Final Solicitations.
- The actual projects supported through the COE will be defined and further evaluated following selection of the COE members. A research agenda will be developed during the first year of operation, and additional topic related tasks will be funded throughout the life of the Center.

RESEARCH AREAS: The FAA intends for the Center members to support a broad range of research areas. Topics will include, but will not be limited to, the following:

1. Air Traffic Control Interoperability
2. Airport Ground Operations
3. Command and Control (C2)
4. Detect and Avoid (DAA)
5. Human Factors
6. System Performance
7. Privacy Practices for UAS Operations
8. System Engineering
9. Unmanned Aircraft Pilot Training and Pilot Certification Including Other
UA Crew Members.

The FAA anticipates the COE will attract organizations such as industrial groups and other public and private entities interested in collaborating with and coordinating the research and related activities that will generate solutions to immediate and long-term UAS related issues. These organizations may be considered as affiliate members by the COE core universities and may provide matching contributions and receive funding from the COE.

The FAA will issue a Draft Solicitation, allow for a period of public comment, and discuss the COE and UAS technical requirements at a public meeting that will be conducted in the Washington, DC area in May. For additional UAS information and public meeting registration details, visit the COE UAS website: <https://faa-uas-coe.net>.

This meeting is a condition of the procurement process and potential applicants are encouraged to attend but are not required to do so. However, registration prior to the meeting is mandatory.

Contact: Patricia.Watts@FAA.gov to be placed on the COE mailing list for future notifications, and see the FAA website www.faa.gov/go/coe for COE Program information.

AWARD DATE: The FAA Administrator expects to announce the final selection of the COE for UAS core team within the next year.

Issued in Atlantic County, New Jersey on March 28, 2014.

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