

Coastal Virginia Center for Cyber Innovation
(COVA CCI)
Cybersecurity Research and Innovation Funding
FY 2022
RFP #: COVACCI-21-02*

DEADLINE DATES:

RFP ISSUE DATE: March 19, 2021

RFP Information Workshop: April 15, 2021

Last day for questions and answers about this RFP: May 10, 2021

Proposals due: May 15, 2021

Supported by:

Coastal Virginia Center for Cyber Innovation and the
Commonwealth Cyber Initiative

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* The RFP is contingent on anticipated funding from CCI.

I. Introduction

Virginia's Commonwealth Cyber Initiative (CCI) aims to create a Commonwealth-wide ecosystem of innovation excellence in cyber-physical systems (CPS) with an emphasis on trust and security. Certified as a node of CCI, the Coastal Virginia Center for Cyber Innovation (CoVA) seeks to:

- Conduct fundamental research that will lead to breakthroughs in CPS security (CPSS), contributing to the CCI mission of establishing Virginia as a global leader in secure CPS and in the digital economy,
- Foster and accelerate commercialization of CPSS innovation in order to grow and diversify the Virginia cyber economy, and
- Expand and diversify the cybersecurity talent pipeline through investments in research capabilities and commercialization efforts.

The CoVA CCI Cybersecurity Research and Innovation Funding program will support diverse and inclusive CPSS research for the development of new technologies and/or demonstration of commercializable prototypes. The interested topics include but not limited to cybersecurity in artificial intelligence (AI), 5G/6G wireless communication, and CPS technologies applied to maritime, transportation, and defense sectors. The program supports two tracks.

- Track 1: Fundamental and Applied Research and Innovation. This track focuses on the development of fundamental and/or applied technologies in COVA CCI strategic areas. Collaboration across CCI nodes is required.
- Track 2: Social Science Approach to Understanding the Cyber Victimization of Businesses and Individuals in Virginia, with a specific focus given to the maritime, defense, and transportation sectors.

The use of the new COVA SHARE facility and involvement of CCI-funded research faculty/scientists are highly encouraged, although the funds cannot be used to pay for research faculty/scientists' time.

II. Eligibility Guidelines

Who May Serve as PI:

Track 1 and Track 2: Individual who holds a regular tenured or tenure-track or research professor position at any COVA CCI member institution is eligible to serve as a PI of a proposal.

Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:

There are no restrictions or limits.

Limit on Number of Proposals per PI or Co-PI: 1

An eligible Principal Investigator may submit only one proposal to the program.

III. Award Information

Maximum Award Amount:

- Track 1 and Track 2: \$150,000, including at least 1/4 of the budget supporting research efforts outside the COVA CCI node.

Matching Requirement:

The awardee must provide a 1:1 matching contribution. Indirect costs (IDC) are not allowable, but unrecovered IDC can be used as a match.

IV. Award Conditions

Selected applicant(s) are expected to participate fully in COVA CCI activities including providing materials needed for reports, participation in COVA CCI meetings, and responding to data collection requests by COVA CCI. All publications and presentations resulting from the grant should acknowledge support from Coastal Virginia Center for Cyber Innovation (COVA), Commonwealth Cyber Initiative (CCI).

V. Schedule

Request for Proposal Released: March 19, 2021

Q&A period: April 1 – May 10, 2021

Q&A Workshop: April 15, 2021

Proposals due: May 15, 2021

Award Notification: June 15, 2021

Project Dates: July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

VI. Proposal Format

Proposal must use 1-inch margins, 11-point font or larger (Arial or Helvetica) and single line spacing.

1. Title Page (one page)

Use the provided Title Page which includes name of RFP, Project Title, Project Abstract (no more than 250 words), total budget amount, and name, institution and contact information of PI and Co-PIs.

2. Proposed Research (up to 6 pages)

- Rationale: Discussion of the technical background and engineering/scientific justification. This should include project objectives and intellectual merit and broader impacts of the proposed work.
- Research Plan: Description of methodologies, outcomes and milestones; discussion of alignment of the project with CCI and COVA CCI objectives. If applicable, provide information on the commercialization plan and collaboration plan.
- Project Assessment: Discussion of key performance indicators and how will success be measured and tracked.

3. Budget (Use included budget worksheets)

Use the provided Budget Summary Worksheet to capture overall project budget. A 1:1 match is required and must be clearly described.

4. Biographies.

Include biographies of PI, Co-PI and other key project personnel. Up to 2 pages each using the NSF format.

5. Letters of Commitment/Support.

If applicable, provide letters of commitment/support.

6. Identification of possible reviewers.

Proposals must include the identification of three reviewers who have agreed to review the proposal. No conflicts of interest can exist with the identified reviewers.

VI. Proposal Submission

Proposals must be submitted via email to jcostanz@odu.edu not later than the close of business on date specified above in Section V. Late submissions will not be considered. Proposals must be submitted as a single PDF file.

VII. Evaluation Criteria

Collaboration across COVA CCI institutions and/or with industrial partners is required.

Priority will be given to the proposals with

- Strong intellectual merit aligned with COVA CCI's mission,
- Strong broader impacts related to COVA CCI's mission,

- Responsiveness to COVA CCI focus areas and relevance to industry/workforce needs,
- Development based on CoVA SHARE and/or contributed by CCI-funded research faculty/scientists,
- Potential for commercialization or relevance to business and economic growth, particularly in the maritime, defense, and transportation sectors.
- Potential to receive sustainable funding support.

All proposals will be independently reviewed by experts identified by COVA CCI and those identified by the PI. Proposals must identify three peers, preferably from the Commonwealth of Virginia, who are able to provide an objective review. Standard conflicts of interest must be avoided in identifying possible reviewers. These include those conflicts identified by the National Science Foundation <https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/forms/nsf1230p.pdf>. Specifically, reviewers peer reviewers shall not:

- Be affiliated with the home institution or agency of the Principal/Co-investigators or other key personnel;
- Be a co-investigator or collaborator of the Principal/Co-investigators or other key personnel on any active or pending grant-funded project or any grant applications in preparation; or
- Be a co-author on any publication or manuscript in preparation, Principal/Co-investigators or other key personnel within the last three years
- Have mentored or trained the Principal/Co-investigators or other key personnel within the last three years.

COVA CCI may contact at least one of the reviewers to participate in the review process. The identity of the selected reviewers and reviews will be confidential and anonymous, with summary feedback provided to PIs.

IX. Questions and Point of Contact

Questions related to this project should be sent to John Costanzo via email (jcostanz@odu.edu). A list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) is provided.