

Ten hints for writing a successful NE Voucher Request (...or things I wish I knew before I submitted my voucher request)

1. If you have a DOE national laboratory point of contact (POC), identify them in the appropriate section in the electronic application system. Don't include the POC as part of the proposing team in your proposal, since they are part of the resource you are requesting.
2. If you don't have a DOE national laboratory POC, the GAIN team can help identify the right national laboratory and appropriate technical leads to assist you in your research needs.
3. Articulate your objective as clearly as possible. Keep this question in mind: Why do I specifically need the DOE national laboratory or resource?
4. Remember, DOE national laboratories are prohibited by law from competing with the private sector, so a voucher that is asking for general services will not be considered. For example, structural analysis of a reactor building using commercial finite element analysis software is a general service.
5. Vouchers are not intended to assist you with the fundamental design of the technology you are developing. If you need assistance with a specific design aspect or component of your technology, you must be clear about the requirements and constraints that apply to this component.
6. In general, a voucher that asks a DOE national laboratory to complete general design work or make decisions on a design, will not be awarded. The laboratories' role is to provide you with the data necessary to make those decisions on your own.
7. Vouchers are not an appropriate mechanism for tackling large, sustained research and demonstration (R&D) projects or design efforts. A voucher will not generally be awarded for continuation of a previously awarded voucher. It should be clear that the requested assistance will advance a well-defined aspect or component of your overall technology.
8. Make sure that the assistance that you are requesting can reasonably be completed within one year. Seek the advice of the national laboratory POC to determine cost and schedule estimates.
9. Vouchers should not be used as a means to request upgrades or additions to DOE infrastructure. They are intended to help you advance your technology using existing national laboratory capability.
10. Think about how your voucher will enhance or enable development of a technical relationship with the national laboratory, which can be a resource for you all the way to commercialization of your technology.