

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
OFFICE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY
NEPA DETERMINATION**



RECIPIENT: Stanford University

STATE: CA

PROJECT TITLE : Towards Scalable Manufacture of Low Iridium Loading Catalyst for Durable PEM Water Electrolyzers (PEMWE)

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA-0002922	DE-EE0011327	GFO-0011327-001	GO11327

Based on my review of the information concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (authorized under DOE Policy 451.1), I have made the following determination:

CX, EA, EIS APPENDIX AND NUMBER:

Description:

A9 Information gathering, analysis, and dissemination

Information gathering (including, but not limited to, literature surveys, inventories, site visits, and audits), data analysis (including, but not limited to, computer modeling), document preparation (including, but not limited to, conceptual design, feasibility studies, and analytical energy supply and demand studies), and information dissemination (including, but not limited to, document publication and distribution, and classroom training and informational programs), but not including site characterization or environmental monitoring. (See also B3.1 of appendix B to this subpart.)

B3.6 Small-scale research and development, laboratory operations, and pilot projects

Siting, construction, modification, operation, and decommissioning of facilities for smallscale research and development projects; conventional laboratory operations (such as preparation of chemical standards and sample analysis); and small-scale pilot projects (generally less than 2 years) frequently conducted to verify a concept before demonstration actions, provided that construction or modification would be within or contiguous to a previously disturbed or developed area (where active utilities and currently used roads are readily accessible). Not included in this category are demonstration actions, meaning actions that are undertaken at a scale to show whether a technology would be viable on a larger scale and suitable for commercial deployment.

B3.15 Small-scale indoor research and development projects using nanoscale materials

Siting, construction, modification, operation, and decommissioning of facilities for indoor small-scale research and development projects and small-scale pilot projects using nanoscale materials in accordance with applicable requirements (such as engineering, worker safety, procedural, and administrative regulations) necessary to ensure the containment of any hazardous materials. Construction and modification activities would be within or contiguous to a previously disturbed or developed area (where active utilities and currently used roads are readily accessible).

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide federal funding to Stanford University (Stanford) to model, calculate, synthesize, and test low iridium (Ir) loading catalysts. Additionally, electrolyzers for hydrogen production from water electrolysis would be fabricated and tested.

Award activities would be completed over three Budget Periods (BPs) with a Go/No-Go decision point between the BPs. All award activities would occur entirely within existing research and development facilities purpose-built for the type and scale of activities being proposed. Catalyst synthesis and testing would occur within Stanford Laboratories (Stanford, CA). Catalyst modeling and calculations would take place at the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory (Menlo Park, CA). Electrolyzer fabrication, modeling, and testing would occur within Carnegie Mellon laboratories (Pittsburgh, PA). Electrolyzer testing would occur at Plug Power Inc., a private commercial facility (Concord, MA). No facility modifications would be required. No changes in the use, mission, or operation of existing facilities would arise out of this effort.

Award activities would not result in increased air emissions. Laboratories and facilities would continue to comply with all existing facility operating permits. Award activities would involve hazards such as the use and handling of flammable precious metal nanopowders and organic solvents. Hazardous materials and hazardous waste would be handled, managed, stored, and disposed of in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local environmental regulations. All nanoscale materials would be handled using proper engineering controls until adhered to surface materials or dissolved in solvents. Hazards would be mitigated via existing university, government, and corporate health and safety policies and procedures, including employee training, proper protective equipment, engineering controls, monitoring, and internal assessments.

DOE does not anticipate any impacts to resources of concern due to the proposed award activities.

Any work proposed to be conducted at a federal facility may be subject to additional NEPA review by the cognizant federal official and must meet the applicable health and safety requirements of the facility.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination.

Notes:

Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technologies Office (HFTO)
NEPA review completed by Amy Lukens, 6/12/2024.

FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATIONS


The proposed action (or the part of the proposal defined in the Rationale above) fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D. To fit within the classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, a proposal must be one that would not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders; (2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities; (3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph B(4) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B; (5) involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B.

There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

The proposed action has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. This proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature:  Electronically Signed By: Melissa Parker
NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: 6/18/2024

FIELD OFFICE MANAGER DETERMINATION

- ☒ Field Office Manager review not required
☐ Field Office Manager review required

BASED ON MY REVIEW I CONCUR WITH THE DETERMINATION OF THE NCO :

Field Office Manager's Signature: _____
Field Office Manager

Date: _____