

PMC-ND

(1.08.09.13)

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

**RECIPIENT:**Ajeet Rohatgi/Georgia Institute of Technology**STATE:** GA

PROJECT TITLE Pushing the efficiency limit of low-cost, industrially-relevant Si solar cells to > 22.5% by advancing cell structures and technology innovations

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
DE-FOA- 0001387	DE-EE-0007554	GFO-0007554-001	

Based on my review of the information concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (authorized under DOE Order 451.1A), 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.

Rationale for determination:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is proposing to provide federal funding to Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) to carry out office and laboratory efforts to achieve increased solar photovoltaic cell efficiency.

Proposed activities would include the design, development, fabrication and testing of advanced and novel solar cells in the labs. Eighty percent of the design, development, and fabrication activities would occur at Georgia Tech in Atlanta Georgia. The remaining 20% of the work would occur at the University of Konstanz & Fraunhofer-Institut für Solare Energiesysteme ISE in Germany. Work in Germany includes design, development, fabrication and testing of advanced and novel solar cells in the labs. The facilities in which this lab work would occur are purpose-built for the type of activities being proposed; therefore, no new or modified permits, construction of new facilities or physical modifications to existing facilities would occur as a result of the proposed project.

The proposed project would require the use of potentially hazardous acids, bases, solid precursors, and process gases. All hazardous materials would be managed in accordance with federal, state, and Georgia Tech environmental regulations. Both facilities have established health and safety policies that all faculty, staff, and students must adhere to.

The work carried out at the University of Konstanz & Fraunhofer-Institut für Solare Energiesysteme ISE are exempt from further review under Executive Order 12114 per Section 5.1.1 of the DOE Implementation of Executive Order 12114 Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions Final Guideline.

Based on the review of the proposal, DOE has determined the proposal fits within the class of action(s) and the integral elements of 10 CFR 1021 subpart B outlined in the DOE categorical exclusion(s) selected above. DOE has also determined that: (1) there are no extraordinary circumstances (as defined by 10 CFR 1021.410(2)) related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; (2) the proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion; and (3) the proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts, related to other proposals with cumulatively significant actions, or an improper interim action. This proposal is categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

NEPA PROVISION

DOE has made a final NEPA determination for this award

Insert the following language in the award:

If the Recipient intends to make changes to the scope or objective of this project, the Recipient is required to contact the Project Officer, identified in Block 15 of the Assistance Agreement before proceeding. The Recipient must receive notification of approval from the DOE Contracting Officer prior to commencing with work beyond that currently approved. If the Recipient moves forward with activities that are not authorized for Federal funding by the DOE Contracting Officer in advance of a final NEPA decision, the Recipient is doing so at risk of not receiving Federal funding and such costs may not be recognized as allowable cost share.

Note to Specialist :

Solar Energy Technology Office

This NEPA determination does not require a tailored NEPA provision.

Review completed by Chris Rowe 07/27/2016

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: _____



Electronically Signed By: Kristin Kerwin

Date: 8/3/2016

NEPA Compliance Officer

FIELD OFFICE MANAGER DETERMINATION

Field Office Manager review required

NCO REQUESTS THE FIELD OFFICE MANAGER REVIEW FOR THE FOLLOWING REASON:

- Proposed action fits within a categorical exclusion but involves a high profile or controversial issue that warrants Field Office Manager's attention.
- Proposed action falls within an EA or EIS category and therefore requires Field Office Manager's review and determination.

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

Field Office Manager's Signature: _____

Field Office Manager

Date: _____