

Questions & Answers – Amon-Hen IARPA-BAA-17-02

Responses to Questions #1 to #6

Q1: Has a contractor performed similar work to this for the government in the past? If available, please provide the incumbent contract number. If you are unable to provide a contract number, is it safe to assume this is a new requirement for the government?

A1: No, there is no incumbent contractor; this is a new requirement.

Q2: We are concerned that, as a fundamental research institution with an openness to research policy, there may be requirements of this program that would not allow us to participate. Although Attachment #9 of IARPA-BAA-17-02, the Data Management Plan of the application must include, “A plan for making the research data that underlie Publications digitally accessible to the public before, at the time of publication/conference or within a reasonable time after publication.” Section 6.B.5 then adds a restriction on all publications, “Any work intended for publication must be approved by the IARPA Program Manager, Chief of Security, and the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) before dissemination to any non-Government entity.” This appears to be a result of the “For Official Use Only” designation that is applied to the results of the research. Request clarification as to whether this classification may be waived if only fundamental research is being conducted – or if the publication approval may be waived if only fundamental research is proposed and conducted under this BAA.

A2: Because of the "For Official Use Only" designation of the program there can be no blanket waiver for fundamental research. This is the case for both academic and non-academic entities. It is likely that most research materials, both fundamental and applied, will be approved for public release, but that determination can only be made on a case-by-case basis upon review. Materials that are approved for public release and which are then published must meet the Data Management Plan requirements for Publications.

Q3: The System Hardware Cost Milestone in Table 1 states, "Total projected hardware-only costs of <\$25M (not including pre-existing infrastructure, see Section 1.E Period of Performance)". Please clarify if the \$25M value is for the hardware prior to any assembly, integration, and testing; or if it is the total dollar value for the full functional system including AI&T? The System Hardware Cost Milestone also directs bidders to Section 1.E Period of Performance; should the milestone reference be 1.F Place of Performance?

A3: The <\$25M System Hardware Cost Milestone is for hardware only, not including the existing infrastructure cost of a large telescope, assuming the notional Government approach outlined in the BAA. Costs for assembly, integration, and testing are separate and not part of the hardware only costs. The reference to Section 1.E in the System Hardware Cost Milestone in Table 1 is a mistake and should refer to Section 1.F as suggested.

Q4: At proposers' day, the reference to a 4 meter GFE, AO-enabled telescope was made as an existing and available large telescope facility. While the 4 meters was stated at the proposer's day, it was not mentioned in the BAA. Can we assume a 4 meter telescope for radiometric purposes, or do we have to document all existing telescope USG facilities that could be available?

A4: Assume a 3.5m telescope for radiometric purposes for the System Design requirement. It is unlikely, however, that an aperture this large would be required for the smaller Open Sky Measurement planned for Phase 2.

Q5: Does the Government prefer an approach that requires a large central telescope? Will technical approaches that do not require a large, expensive central telescope be considered for award?

A5: Technical approaches that do not require a large central telescope will be considered. Proposals will be evaluated as specified in the BAA; offerors are encouraged to highlight all direct and indirect advantages of their technical approach.

Q6: If the anticipated hardware cost of a particular technical approach is significantly less than \$25 million (by more than an order of magnitude), will this be considered an advantage during proposal evaluation?

A6: "System Hardware Cost" is a Program Design Metric (see Section 1.B.1 of the BAA). All technical approaches will be carefully evaluated against all Program Metrics; technical approaches that improve upon the quantitative Program Milestones listed in Section 1.B.1 are encouraged. When predicting the anticipated System Hardware Cost of an approach, offerors should consider ALL non-pre-existing-infrastructure hardware costs (including but not limited to the costs for all optics of the required sizes and tolerances, all necessary stabilization hardware and electronics, all necessary systems for routing and combining light, all detectors and/or detector arrays, all computational resources, etc.).