Finder BAA Questions

#	Question	Answer	Date Posted
001	Will institutions other than those attending Proposers' Day be allowed to submit proposals?	Yes. See BAA Section 3.A. Eligible Applicants: "All responsible sources capable of satisfying the Government's needs may submit a proposal."	06/23/11
002	"Are teams expected to include a mix of academic and industrial partners? Should there be more than one "	See BAA Section 3.D.1. Collaboration Efforts: "...team formations are the sole responsibility of the participants." There are no expectations of the compositionof teams.	06/23/11
003	Is the expected start date January 1, 2012? Is Phase 1 18 months long?	See BAA Section 1: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION: "The Finder Program is expected to begin by January 2012 and end by April 2016" and Section 1.A. Program Overview: "Phase 1 will last for a period of 27 months."	06/23/11
004	What is the anticipated size of funded projects? Will both large and small projects be considered for funding?	See IARPA Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) B1.: "There is no predetermined award size." FAQs are found at www.iarpa.gov/index.php/faqs.	06/23/11
005	Will Optical Character Recognition (OCR) research to analyze text in the image and video be supported?	No. OCR technologies may be used, but the Finder Program will not support new research in this area.	06/23/11
006	Can speech or audio events in video be used for Finder? Will research in these areas be supported by Finder?	Offerors can use speech and other audio events in video. However, the Finder Program will not fund new language identification or speech recognition research. (See BAA Section 1.A.5.) Research in other audio events may be supported.	06/23/11
007	What is the maximal and minimal geographic area of a candidate?	Section 1.A.1.a of the BAA defines Region of Interest (ROI) as a set of geographic areas in which the query is to be geolocated. Thus, the largest candidate area would be the ROI area, which is specified	06/23/11

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		for each period in Table 1. The BAA does not specify a minimal candidate area.	
008	Will the Base Period contain 20,000 km^2 of desert and coast together or two World Regions, one of each?	See BAA Section 1.A.1.a. Prototypes: "Each World Region will be defined by a bounding polygon." Therefore, in the Base Period, both of these options are possible.	06/23/11
009	Will any query be out of the Region of Interest (ROI)? Is the system required to determine whether or not a query is within the ROI?	From BAA Section 1.A.1.a, "The ROI represents the analyst's a priori knowledge of the geolocation of the query image/video." Within the program's test and evaluation activities there may be a small number of queries for which the location is outside the ROI, although within the World Region. The system is not required to explicitly determine whether or not the query is within the ROI.	06/23/11
010	Can offerors propose to make use of the same type of data as the GFI reference data, but with different specifications? For instance,higher resolution DEMs?	No. Offerors may not propose to make use of any data of the same type of the GFI reference data, but with different specifications.	06/23/11
011	The "Always provided" GFI data does not include ortho-rectified aerial imagery. Will ortho-rectified aerial imagery be included in the GFI for all the areas covered?	Since ortho-rectified aerial imagery is included in the GFI "In many locations" data list, offerors should not propose data of this type. This data will be provided in many locations but offerors should not assume complete coverage of the World Regions. (See BAA Section 1.A.2.a)	06/23/11
012	Can performers use data such as from FlickR-like sources, assuming all rules are followed? Or does the crowd-sourced prohibition include only new collections?	See BAA Section 1.A.1.a. Prototypes: "Offerors must not propose new collections such as those from "The prohibition includes only new collections.	06/23/11

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013	Do teams need to propose a solution to the entire Finder Problem? For example, can a team work only on video geolocation?	No. Proposals must address all research and capabilities outlined in the BAA. (See BAA Sections 1.A. and 3.D.1)	06/23/11
014	During Proposers' Day you mentioned fusion times between five and three days. I don't see fusion times mentioned in the BAA. Are these times still valid?	The BAA does not include a requirement for fusion times. As was noted during the Proposers' Day brief, the BAA supersedes anything presented or said at Proposers' Day.	06/30/11
015	Is crowd sourcing allowed during fusion?	No. See BAA Section 1.A.5. Topics Not in Scope: "The program is not interested in solutions that crowd source any part of the fusion or query handling processes."	06/30/11
016	Is operator interaction allowed during fusion?	It is up to offerors whether or not operator interaction is used in the fuse process as it is not specified in BAA Section 1.A.1.a or in the notional system described in Figure 1. However, crowd sourcing of the fuse process is forbidden (see BAA Section 1.A.5).	06/30/11
017	When will Development Queries, World Regions, and Reference Data be made available?	See BAA Section 1.A.4. Test and Evaluation: "At the beginning of each program period, GFI Reference Data and development queries, with the ground truth geolocations, will be provided for that period's World Regions."	06/30/11
018	Can Candidate List entries have holes?	It is up to the performers to determine the candidate list shapes, and rationale for the shape. See BAA Section 1.A.1 Program Description: "Each entry in the Candidate List contains the following: - a geo-referenced shape that defines its geographic area, […] - a description (for the analyst) of the rationale for the entry's shape and likelihood score."	06/30/11

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019	Can offerors propose to make use of commercially purchased data like Google Street View imagery? What if this type of commercially available data is made available to the proposer legally through a research collaboration (e.g. provided by a team member)?	Offerors may propose to use data that is publicly available and meets the other data requirements and constraints specified in the BAA (See Sections 1.A.1.a, 4.B.1, and 6.B).	06/30/11
020	Who decides whether the camera or a point on an object in the scene should be geolocated? Is this chosen by the analyst when submitting the query or is the system able to select which point should be used?	See BAA Section 1.A.1.a. Prototypes: "The prototype should be able to geolocate either the camera or a point on an object in the scene (that will be specified with the query)." The Government team will specify whether the camera or which object point should be geolocated.	06/30/11
021	Should we assume that we have unrestricted access to the internet during evaluations?	No. See BAA Amendment 01 Section 1.A.4 Test and Evaluation. "During evaluations, internet access will be solely limited to interactions with the analyst."	07/13/11
022	Do you expect the user to be involved in triage mode?	No. See BAA Amendment 01 Section 1.A.1.c Research Challenges and Analyses. "Offerors must propose a fully-automated triage methodology that will quickly (at 1 minute per query image or 3 minutes per query video) estimate the expected Geolocation Area for the query image/video."	07/13/11
023	In the BAA you say that "The use of additional Reference Data of the same types as the GFI Reference Data is not permitted". May offerors propose other openly available geographic information system (GIS) data that may be complementary or more complete than the GFI GIS dataset?	Yes. The BAA was amended to allow use of additional GIS data. See BAA Amendment 01 Section 1.A.2.a GFI Reference Data. "The use of additional Reference Data of the same types as the GFI Reference Data is not permitted with the exception of GIS data."	07/13/11

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024	Can a proposer join multiple teams to submit to the Finder program?	See IARPA FAQ T1. "May a subcontractor be a member of more than one offering team? Yes. However, an individual or organization associated with multiple teams must take care not to commit more resources than can be effectively applied to the program under the BAA to which they are proposing"	07/13/11
025	Are the query images and videos expected to be ground level or aerial?	Ground-level. See BAA Amendment 01 Section 1 Funding Opportunity Description. "The Finder Program aims to develop technology that, with the aid of an analyst, geolocates an outdoor image or video taken from anywhere on the land surface of the world, via the use of publicly available information."	07/13/11
026	Are military educational institutions and/or its' employees eligible to compete for funding under an IARPA solicitation?	Military educational institutions and employees of military educational institutions are not eligible to compete for funding under an IARPA solicitation. See IARPA's approach to managing organizational conflicts of interest at www.iarpa.gov/index.php/working-with-iarpa/iarpas-approach-to-oci: "Other Government agencies may not compete with the private sector for funding under an IARPA solicitation. However, other Government agencies may be funded directly by IARPA to conduct work that is considered important to IARPA's mission if that work is not otherwise available from the private sector." See also BAA Section 3.A. Eligible Applicants, which provides: "Other Government Agencies, Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs), University Affiliated Research Centers (UARCs), and any other similar type of organization that has a special relationship with the Government, that gives them access to privileged and/or proprietary information or access to Government equipment or real property, are not eligible to submit proposals under this BAA or participate as team members under proposals submitted by eligible entities."	07/19/11

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027	The BAA, p. 27, indicates "Travel should be limited to at most two conferences per year". Is it acceptable to include international conferences in our estimates?	Yes, but any conferences proposed must have a direct benefit to the FINDER program. Your proposal must make a strong case for the value of the international conference to the work to be performed.	07/20/11
028	Will a query image or video be directly input into the triage system or will the features extracted from a query be input into the triage system?	The query image/video is input to the triage system. See BAA Amendment 01 Section 1.A.1.c. Research Challenges and Analyses. "Offerors must propose a triage methodology that will quickly (at 1 minute per query image or 3 minutes per query video) estimate the expected Geolocation Area for the query image/video."	07/20/11
029	Are there any limits on the field of view and area coverage for the query images -- e.g., landscape shot, someone's front yard, close-up of a tree?	There are no limits specified in the BAA.	07/20/11
030	Will all metadata be removed from the query images or just location metadata? Can we propose methods that leverage non-GPS metadata, if available, such as the date/time the photo was taken, lens type, shutter speed, aperture, etc.?	Yes, all metadata will be removed. See BAA Section 1.A.2.b. GFI Query Data. "Offerors should assume that the metadata will be removed from all queries."	07/20/11
031	Can proposers download and use existing publicly available geo-tagged ground-level images (with appropriate licenses) as part of the Reference Data?	Yes. Since ground-level imagery is not the same type as GFI Reference Data, performers may use this as part of their Reference Data. See BAA Amendment 01 Section 1.A.1.a. Prototypes. "The Government will provide some Reference Data (see Section 1.A.2), but offerors should propose additional reference data types to be included in their Knowledge Base." and Section 1.A.2.a GFI Reference Data. "The use of additional Reference Data of the same types as the GFI Reference Data is not permitted with the exception of GIS data."	07/20/11

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032	Could you please clarify the term "procurement" contract?	A procurement contract is a contract governed by the Federal Acquisition Regulations.	07/25/11
033	The recent BAA amendment states that we cannot use additional Reference Data of the same types as the GFI Reference Data, with the exception of GIS data. However, it is unclear to us whether this covers development data that we use just in the development phase and not in the evaluations. Could you please clarify?	See BAA Amendment 01 Section 1.A.2.a GFI Reference Data: "The use of additional Reference Data of the same types as the GFI Reference Data is not permitted with the exception of GIS data." This provision applies to all data used in the research whether it is used for development or evaluation.	07/25/11
034	Are we permitted to access publicly available datasets of the same type as the GFI Reference Data but for areas outside the World Region.	No. See BAA Amendment 01 Section 1.A.2.a GFI Reference Data: "The use of additional Reference Data of the same types as the GFI Reference Data is not permitted with the exception of GIS data." This provision applies to all data used in the research whether it is inside or outside the World Regions.	07/25/11
035	Is the maximum Analyst Interaction Time in Table 2 specified on a per-query basis?	BAA Section 1.B Program Metrics and Milestones: "Analyst Interaction Time is the total time that the analyst is permitted to spend helping the prototype. Query Response Time is the total wall clock time from when the query is presented to the prototype until the prototype generates its final Candidate List." The Analyst Interaction Time (and Query Response time) are measured on a per-query basis.	07/25/11
036	Is commercially purchased data considered publicly available for the Finder Program?	Yes. Publicly available information includes information available by purchase or subscription. This also includes information that is provided free of cost, upon submission of contact information, such as an email address. In all such cases, the key is whether the information is provided to any member of the public who provides the requested fee and/or subscription/ registration information, without further selection/vetting by the provider.	07/25/11

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037	Is the use of DigitalGlobe satellite and aerial photography imagery allowed for the Finder Program?	No. See BAA Amendment 01 Section 1.A.2.a GFI Reference Data: "The use of additional Reference Data of the same types as the GFI Reference Data is not permitted with the exception of GIS data." However, "Performers will be able to propose changes to the GFI Reference Data during the course of the program."	07/25/11
038	Would you please provide a point of contact for Booz Allen Hamilton and the MITRE Corporation for the purpose of creating individual non-disclosure agreements (NDAs), relating to IARPA's intention to use these organizations for expert advice and logistical support?	No. Contractor and FFRDC employees are already bound by non-disclosure agreements. Offerors may submit a notice of objection to the arrangement. See BAA Section 4.A.1 Proposal Information: "These personnel will have signed and be subject to the terms and conditions of non-disclosure agreements. By submission of its proposal, an offeror agrees that its proposal information may be disclosed to employees of these organizations for the limited purpose stated above. If offerors do not send notice of objection to this arrangement, the Government will assume consent to the use of contractor support personnel in assisting the review of submittal(s) under this BAA."	07/25/11
039	Section 4.C.2 of the BAA says "The full proposal (one original hard copy with original signatures; one hard copy with original or copied signatures; and 1 electronic copy with Volume 1, Volume 2 and any permitted additional information (.pdf format preferred) on a CD-ROM must be delivered." Does the Technical Proposal itself need to be signed, and if so, where? The Technical Proposal and Cost Proposal Cover Sheets do not have signature lines. We will provide a signed Transmittal Letter and OCI letter, but please clarify if and how the Technical Proposal itself must be signed.	When original signatures are required, the BAA is referring to signatures on any signed document within the proposal, such as the Transmittal Letter, Academic Institution Acknowledge Letter, and OCI Waiver/Certification.	07/28/11

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040	What is the approximate size (area) of the initial World Region(s)?	The total area of the World Region(s) is given in the center column of Table 1 in BAA Section 1.A.3. Program Phases. The total area of the initial World Regions of the Base Period is 20,000 sq km.	07/28/11
041	What file format will photos and video clips be provided in?	The BAA does not specify a specific format, but the GFI will be provided in formats that are widely available. See BAA Section 1.A.2.b. GFI Query Data. "The queries will be provided in a file format that is widely available."	07/28/11
042	Will any of the provided photos or video clips be black-and-white?	This is not specified in the BAA. You should assume that black-and-white photos or video clips are possible.	07/28/11
043	Will there be additional rounds of participant selections?	All complete and responsive proposals, submitted after the initial closing date, will be evaluated. See BAA Section 4.A.1. Proposal Information. "Proposals must be received by the time and date specified in section 4.C.1. in order to be considered during the initial round of selections. IARPA may evaluate proposals received after this date for a period of up to one year from the date of initial posting on FedBizOpps. Selection remains contingent on availability of funds."	07/28/11