

Integrated Cognitive-Neuroscience Architectures for Understanding Sensemaking (ICArUS) BAA Questions

#	Question	Answer	Date Posted
001	Can I team with a Federally Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC), e.g., one of the Department of Energy's National Laboratories, on my proposal?	No. See BAA Section 3.A (Eligible Applicants). "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." See also, IARPA's position on managing organizational conflicts of interest (OCI) at http://www.iarpa.gov/IARPA_OCI_081809.pdf .	10/05/10
002	What is the rough order of magnitude of expected contract awards?	See BAA Section 5.A.5 (Cost Realism). There is no predetermined award size for FUSE proposals. Proposers should submit proposals that will result in successful research efforts within the BAA criteria and timeline. Proposals should advance compelling research ideas based on sound science that respond to the stated challenges and identify how much they will cost.	10/05/10
003	When do you expect the program to begin?	See BAA Part 2, Section 1. "The FUSE Program is envisioned to begin in early 2011 and end in early 2016."	10/05/10
004	Will performers be able to store significant volumes of data on FUSEnet hardware for long periods of time (e.g., the life of the project)? If so, what scale of storage will be available to individual projects?	Sufficient storage will be provided to each performer for processing the entire document repository and storing intermediate and final results on FUSEnet. The FUSEnet storage policies for performer generated data will be reviewed periodically to ensure the efficient use of storage. The performer can not assume that all generated data can be retained and available for the life of the FUSE Program. It should be noted that, "the offeror's proposal must identify the preferred configuration of physical resources for the offeror's system" and that "the performer's system must be flexible enough to function effectively on	10/12/10

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		the physical resources that are provided." See BAA Section 1.B.4.c (Hardware Resources on FUSEnet and Virtual Machine Usage).	
005	How do I access FUSEnet hardware? What type of software environment will FUSEnet provide?	See BAA Section 1.B.4.c (Hardware Resources on FUSEnet and Virtual Machine Usage). "Performers will make use of FUSEnet physical resources by executing their systems on Virtual Machine (VM) servers running on FUSEnet computers. Each performer system will be delivered to the T&E Team as a VM or a collection of VMs. These VM(s) will operate and communicate according to the performer's architecture." Remote access to FUSEnet resources will only be available through VMs. Each performer provides the VMs and the software-defined architecture for the operation of those VMs.	10/12/10
006	How will FUSEnet hardware resources be allocated between performer teams?	FUSEnet physical resources will be allocated fairly among all performers. See BAA Section 1.B.4.c (Hardware Resources on FUSEnet and Virtual Machine Usage), which states, "In Phase 1, FUSEnet will be used to demonstrate proof of principle operations. Depending on the results of the initial prototypes, later years of the Program may see increased FUSEnet physical resources." It should be noted that, "the performer's system must be flexible enough to function effectively on the physical resources that are provided" and "the offeror's proposal must identify the preferred configuration of physical resources for the offeror's system."	10/12/10
007	Can I submit an abstract prior to submitting a proposal?	No, there is no provision for abstract submission in IARPA-BAA-10-06.	10/12/10
008	Our organization has never submitted a proposal for an IARPA project; can you provide a point of contact from which we can receive guidance and direction on proposal submission and acquisition processes?	See BAA Section 4. "This notice constitutes the total BAA and contains all information required to submit a proposal. No additional forms, kits, or other materials are required." Questions can only be addressed through the question and answer process outlined in the BAA, see BAA Part 1.	10/25/10

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009	Are there any program-specific limitations that would preclude teaming with foreign nationals or foreign entities?	See BAA Section 3.A. "Foreign participants and/or individuals may participate to the extent that such participants comply with any necessary Non-Disclosure Agreements, Security Regulations, Export Control Laws and other governing statutes applicable under the circumstances." The proposal must be submitted by prime "U.S. organizations or institutions" and "at least twenty percent (20%) of the principals of the team (as measured by FTEs) must be from U.S. organization(s) or institution(s)."	10/25/10
010	Will remote access to FUSEnet be provided to all members of the team, including non-US team members?	Yes, remote access to FUSEnet can be provided to all members of the team. There are no special restrictions for foreign team members regarding access to FUSEnet.	10/25/10
011	Will the FUSE Program provide the untagged source documents (e.g., in PDF format) in addition to the FUSE XML format mentioned in the BAA, Section 1.B.4.a. (Document Repository)?	It is expected that untagged source material, if available, will be accessible within FUSEnet.	10/25/10
012	Will the performer be able to upload and install Virtual Machines (VMs) implementing prototypes to FUSEnet through the remote access?	Performers will be able to upload, install, manage, and use VMs to FUSEnet. However, "the performer system must not be designed to connect to any external resource from within FUSEnet." See BAA Section 1.B.4.c.	10/25/10
013	Will performers be permitted to export data files generated within the performer's Virtual Machines (VMs) for use in development and self-evaluation analysis on a local system outside of FUSEnet?	Currently, there is no mechanism for exporting data from FUSEnet. This position will be re-evaluated at kickoff and throughout the program. See BAA Section 1.B.4.c. "The performer system must not be designed to connect to any external resource from within FUSEnet." Additionally, see BAA Section 1.B.4.b. "No DR data will be allowed to be exported from FUSEnet without the explicit approval of the FUSE Program Manager. ... Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA) access to the DR is restricted to the Government computers on FUSEnet." Also, see BAA Section 1.B.4.a. (Document	10/25/10

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		Repository), “the Government may provide, as Government Furnished Information, very limited local copies of portions of the DR for test and development purposes.”	
014	Should I create and submit a proposal if the scope of the proposal is more limited than the entire phased FUSE program structure depicted in Table 1 of the BAA?	See BAA Section 1.B. “Proposals must address all three of these innovation areas” (see Sections 1.B.1-1.B.3); “those that do not will be considered non-responsive. Sufficient detail should be provided as to how these innovations will be developed and combined over the Program’s phases to deliver a prototype application that achieves the Program’s goals.” Additionally, proposed approaches must address all elements of the evaluation framework specified in Section 1.C. See also Sections 4.B.1 and 5.A.2.	10/25/10
015	Individually I have ideas that could contribute to the FUSE Program, is this solicitation a good one for me?	See BAA Section 3.D.1. Due to the complex, multifaceted requirements of the FUSE Program, “Collaborative efforts and teaming arrangements among potential performers are strongly encouraged.”	10/25/10
016	Do you envision a small number of projects going to large teams or a mixture of large and small projects with large and small teams?	See BAA Section 3.D.1. There is no preference for large or small teams, academic or industry or mixed, or teams led by large organizations or small organizations.	10/25/10
017	It appears that the Test and Evaluation (T&E) Team will judge Evidence Quality in a way that would seem to require a user interface. Who will develop this interface?	A standard template-based interface for performer generated evidence representations will be developed and utilized by the T&E Team, informed by consensus discussions during Standards Meetings. See BAA Section 1.C.4. “Standards meetings will address open issues that would benefit from performer discussion or consensus (e.g., SOA details, data representation for evidence, data cleaning and tagging in DR, etc.).”	10/25/10
018	The BAA indicates that research in graphical user interfaces is out of scope and that innovations in the underlying evidential representation are	See BAA Section 1.B.3. “I nnovations in the underlying evidential representation are of interest.” “Challenges that must be addressed by the proposal include ... developing and representing evidence that comes in multiple forms (e.g., univariate and multivariate time-series data, text snippets,	10/25/10

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	of interest , do you imagine that evidence will be presented graphically or as text?	etc.)” Graphical representations of evidence are within scope; however, the integration of evidence for a user interface experience is outside the scope of the FUSE Program.	
019	Is an organization precluded from serving as a subcontractor to multiple (meaning more than one) prime(s) bidding on this BAA?	No. Per Section 6.B.8 of the BAA, "IARPA neither promotes, nor discourages the establishment of exclusive teaming agreements within offeror teams. Individuals or organizations associated with multiple teams must take care not to over-commit those resources being applied."	10/25/10
020	Will you provide dictionaries or taxonomies for various technical areas or must performers acquire/develop them?	No, dictionaries/taxonomies will not be provided. The FUSE Program seeks approaches “that generalize across language, culture and technical area.” See Section 1.B.5. “The FUSE Program will not invest in approaches that are tailored to specific scientific or technical domains (e.g., development of ontological resources; e.g., biomedical research).”	10/25/10
021	Can data sets be uploaded and used as part of the delivered system on FUSEnet?	Yes, provided that the original and/or derived content that is to be uploaded has been legally-acquired and appropriately licensed for use within FUSEnet.	10/29/10
022	What is the minimum time commitment required for personnel contributing to the FUSE project?	See BAA Section 4.B.1. While the BAA does not specify a minimum time commitment, Sub-section 2.F (Project contributors) specifies "If any participant is scheduled for less than 20% of his/her time, the proposer will provide a clear and compelling justification as to how benefit can be gained from that person's participation at the specified level of effort." Sub-section 3.I (Detailed Management Plan) notes "Participation by key personnel and significant contributors is expected to exceed 30% of their time," and notes that "A compelling explanation of any variation from this figure is required."	10/29/10
023	Can we propose only for Phase 1 (18 months)?	No. See BAA Section 1.A "The Program is divided into three phases (See Table 1). This BAA solicits proposals that address all phases of the Program."	10/29/10

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024	Our approach is not specific to a scientific or technical domain; rather, we can automatically generate domain-specific models. Is this within scope?	Yes. See Section 1.B.5 (Out of Scope) "The FUSE Program will not invest in approaches that are tailored to specific scientific or technical domains (e.g., development of ontological resources; e.g., biomedical research)." Approaches that do not require a priori domain assumptions are not domain specific.	10/29/10
025	Can you clarify the meaning of a table of contents that is "linked to sections" within each volume as noted in the BAA?	See BAA Section 4.B. (Proposal Content Specifics). Volume 1 and 2 each require a separate table of contents. The term "linked to sections" simply addresses the logical connection between the elements of the table of contents and corresponding sections within each volume. The version delivered on the CDROM could also employ hyperlinks.	10/29/10