

Q 21: BAA Section 6.B.5 stipulates that "pre-publication approval of certain information may be required if it is determined that its release may result in the disclosure of sensitive intelligence information." Can you stipulate specific conditions for categorical exclusion from pre-publication review approval?

A: In general, performers conducting unclassified research are only required to provide the IARPA Program Manager and the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) with a courtesy soft copy of any work intended for publication at least two weeks prior to submission, and to provide a final copy upon publication.

Q 22: Will performers who have determined that no export control license is required have a way to determine if collaborators are operating under such a license? In other words, does IARPA envision a firewall between export control licensed performers and un-licensed performers?

A: It is the responsibility of each performer (prime contractors and subcontractors) to comply with all applicable U.S. export control laws and regulations. IARPA encourages collaborators to work together to ensure export compliance, including identifying the export restrictions that may apply to their collaborative efforts and technical exchanges.

Q 23: Could machine-learning algorithms fall under the Commerce Department's U.S. Munitions List (USML)?

A: We do not anticipate that the algorithms developed under MICrONS would fall under the USML, but it is the responsibility of each performer to make a determination about its deliverables on a case-by-case basis.

Q 24: Is there a link to the anticipated contract clauses planned for this proposal?

A: The BAA is flexible with regard to contract type, therefore we have not included a standard clause set. Offerors should expect that the standard FAR clauses pertinent to the negotiated contract type will be included in the finalized contract document, with appropriate alternates for educational institutions and non-profit organizations. DFAR clauses will not be applicable.

Q 25: The Cost Element Sheet in Appendix E specifies a "G&A Rate." Our F&A rate includes G&A and science indirect (R&D costs that cannot be traceable and reconcilable to specific cost objective/project). For purposes of this proposal is the G&A Rate the same as the F&A Rate?

A: Yes, offerors may provide their F&A rate in the block marked G&A in the Cost Element Sheet (Appendix E), but they must indicate in the block that this is an F&A rate.

Q 26: What does "Material Overhead" mean in the Cost Element Sheet in Appendix E?

A: Some organizations have a separate overhead rate applied to materials, equipment, subcontracts, and consultants. If your organization does not have a separate material overhead rate, you should mark that field as "Not Applicable".

Q 27: What flexibility do we have with respect to the periodic reporting described in BAA Section 6.B.8?

A: There may be some flexibility with respect to the format of the reports and the date on which the report is due each month. Offerors whose proposals are selected for negotiations may discuss their preferences with the Contracting Officer and reach a mutually agreeable solution prior to award.

Q 28: BAA Section 6.B.8 states that all performers will provide monthly financial reports. Is there an example of the financial report format which shows all the required information?

A: Monthly financial status reports will generally include a summary of the funded, expended, and remaining amounts allocated to labor, travel, and other direct costs (each reported separately). Plans versus actuals are computed for each of these categories on a month-by-month basis, and performers must describe the source of any significant variances.

Q 29: BAA Section 6.B.8 states that all performers will provide monthly technical reports. Is there an example of the technical report format which shows all the required information?

A: Monthly technical status reports will generally include a description of progress during the reporting period; a description and justification of any change in approach reported previously; planned activities and deliverables for the next reporting period; a description of any major items of equipment purchased or constructed during the reporting period; a notification of any changes in key personnel associated with the contract during the reporting period; a summary of substantive information derived from noteworthy trips, meetings, and special conferences held in connection with the contract during the reporting period; a summary of all problems or areas of concern; notable accomplishments since the last report; and a list of all commercial/proprietary/third party hardware, software or technical data integrated into any deliverable.

Q 30: Will the contract be awarded as a cost reimbursement R&D contract?

A: The specific contract type will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Contracting Officer and the prospective performer prior to award. Cost-type arrangements are typically the most appropriate for research and development work, and have historically been the most common contract type awarded.

Q 31: The program metrics will be applied to deliverables, milestones, and waypoints to evaluate the effectiveness of the program objectives. For periodic reports, are we required to provide financial performance at deliverable, milestone, and waypoint level?

A: No. In the monthly financial reports costs are typically provided for the overall effort and broken down by category (labor, material, travel, other direct costs, etc.).

Q 32: What flexibility do we have with respect to the budget details? BAA Section 4.B.1c(v) states that performers must provide the overall cost, cost per share, and estimates of the cost for each deliverable and each task described in the SOW. Besides the budget justification, is there any other budget estimation support we need to provide?

A: Offerors are required to include in their Detailed Proposal (Section III of proposal Volume 1) the budget information specified in BAA Section 4.B.1.c(v). Offerors must also provide a cost summary in their Executive Summary (Section II of proposal Volume 1), as described in BAA Section 4.B.1.b(vi). Additional information is requested as part of the Detailed Estimated Cost Breakdown (Section II of proposal Volume 2), to include supporting cost and pricing information "...in sufficient detail to substantiate the summary cost estimates in Volume 1" (BAA Section 4.B.2.b).

Q 33: Can we state milestones and waypoints in a separate document from the Research Proposal? In other words should milestone/waypoints be addressed within the Research proposal or will the table only format be sufficient?

A: As described in BAA Section 4.B.1.c(iii), offerors shall use a table such as Table 9 to summarize their expected performance at designated waypoints and milestones. This information, as well as any supporting information (such as explanations of the offeror-defined metrics, motivations for the proposed performance targets, etc.) must be included in the main body of the Detailed Proposal. Note that BAA Section 1.B.4 specifies additional information that must be provided regarding certain waypoints and milestones; there is no suggested format for this information.

Q 34: Are there page limits for each of the Technical Areas of the proposal?

A: BAA Section 4.B.1.c defines a page limit for the Detailed Proposal in its entirety, but there are no page limits for specific Technical Areas within the Detailed Proposal.

Q 35: Under which appropriations code(s) will contracts be funded?

A: R&D contracts will be funded with research and development appropriations.

Q 36: Are offerors required to submit a draft Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) protocol or will a letter from the IACUC chair or Institutional Official suffice?

A: As specified in BAA Sections 4.B.1.c(iv) and 4.B.1.d(v), if the proposed research involves laboratory animals, the offeror must include a complete draft of any IACUC research protocol applications (including any appendices and addenda) required to conduct the proposed research in Phase 1.

Q 37: BAA Section 6.B.4 states that institutions must register with the Secretary of Agriculture according to 7 USC 2136 and 9 CFR 2.30. According to 7 USC 2132 and 9 CFR 1.1, the definition of animals excludes purpose-bred rats and mice. Does the requirement to register our research facility with the USDA extend to research conducted with mice (a non-regulated species)?

A: No. As specified in a footnote (32) to the first paragraph of BAA Section 6.B.4, “The term ‘animal’ shall have the meaning provided in 9 C.F.R. § 1.1.” Consequently, the requirement provided in the second paragraph of BAA Section 6.B.4 for institutions to register with the Secretary of Agriculture for research involving animals only pertains to animals as defined in 9 C.F.R. § 1.1.

Q 38: BAA Section 4.B.1.c(viii) states that participation by key personnel is expected to exceed 20% of their time. Are key personnel selected and identified at the discretion of the prime institution?

A: Yes, key personnel are selected and identified at the discretion of the prime institution. Note, however, that proposals will be evaluated in part based on the qualifications, capabilities, and experience of key personnel and significant contributors such as the principal investigator and team leader (BAA Section 5.A, “Relevant Experience and Expertise”).

Q 39: Are offerors required to submit biosketches and/or CVs of the key personnel?

A: Yes, as specified in BAA Section 4.B.1.c(viii), offerors shall provide brief biographical sketches of key personnel and significant contributors.

Q 40: Do you anticipate any contracting issues with potential subcontractors to the prime institution that will make a major contribution in one of the technical areas, but plan to request no funding?

A: A “contract”, as defined by the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) Part 2.101, is a “...mutually binding legal relationship obligating the seller to furnish the supplies or services (including construction) and the buyer to pay for them.” Arrangements such as cost-sharing contracts (see FAR 16.303) allow for the contractor to be reimbursed for only an agreed upon portion of its allowable costs. If selected for negotiations, the contract type, intellectual property considerations (see BAA Section 4.B.1.c(iii)), and subcontract approval requirements (reference FAR 35.009 and FAR clause 52.244-2) will need to be discussed with the Contracting Officer and mutually agreed upon prior to award.

Q 41: Are the technical and cost proposal cover sheets to be uploaded as separate documents, or will IDEAS generate these automatically?

A: The technical and cost proposal cover sheets (provided in BAA Appendices B and C, respectively) must be completed by the offeror and uploaded as separate documents.

Q 42: Will we be able make the research results from this project widely available to the public?

A: In general, IARPA strongly encourages publication of data and results. Performers conducting unclassified research are required to provide the IARPA Program Manager and the Contracting Officer Representative with a courtesy draft copy of any work products intended for public release two weeks in advance of their scheduled release, and to provide a final copy upon final release, but are typically otherwise free to disseminate research results as desired.

Q 43: Assuming we can make the research results from this project widely available to the public, would we describe this approach in Attachment 2, as described in BAA Section 4.B.1.c(iii)?

A: The guidance in BAA Section 4.B.1.c(iii) pertains to program deliverables. Offerors are not required to describe the terms under which they might make their intellectual property available to other parties. If the offeror intends to provide program deliverables to IARPA in the form of publicly available resources, they should use Attachment 2 to describe their proposed approach to intellectual property in this context *as it pertains to the Government*.

Q 44: Does IARPA require a detailed list of any software or tools (including any open source materials) used to collect data or results in MICrONS?

A: As described in BAA Section 4.B.1.d(ii), IARPA requires offerors to identify in Attachment 2 any data and/or software (including open source software and freeware) that restricts the Government's ability to use, modify, reproduce, release, perform, display, or disclose deliverables produced in the program. Software or tools that are used by the offeror to generate data or results but that do not impose any limitations on the Government's ability to use, modify, reproduce, release, perform, display, or disclose those data or results do not need to be listed.

Q 45: Our understanding is that performers will retain title to the intellectual property (IP) created under this contract. Are there any restrictions on our use of the IP or deliverables in the future?

A: Performers will retain title to the IP created under their contract. In general, IARPA does not impose restrictions on those ownership rights.

Q 46: How and when does the government decide if a proposed publication contains sensitive intelligence information that requires approval to release?

A: Any determination of the need for pre-publication review would be made after the courtesy soft copy is provided to the Program Manager and Contracting Officer Representative (at least two weeks prior to submission). However, as described in BAA Section 6.B.5, it is very unlikely that publications describing research funded under this program will require pre-publication review.

Q 47: Are there any items or technical data that are expected to be ITAR- or EAR-controlled as part of this project?

A: No, but it is the responsibility of each performer to make a determination about their items and technical data on a case-by-case basis.

Q 48: Do the page limits specified for the Detailed Proposal include the Statement of Work?

A: Yes, the page limits specified in BAA Section 4.B.1.c include all of the elements described in BAA Sections 4.B.1.c(i) through 4.B.1.c(viii).

Q 49: What are the elements to be included in the “brief” biosketch described in BAA Section 4.B.1.c(viii)? Should we include all of the information required by the NIH biosketch format?

A: Biographical sketches should support each individual’s ability to perform his or her assigned role in the program. The formatting and length of each biosketch are entirely at the discretion of the offeror. Note that biographical sketches count toward the overall page limit of the Detailed Proposal.

Q 50: Is there a preferred format for the organizational chart required by BAA Section 4.B.1.c(viii)?

A: The format of the organizational chart is at the offeror’s discretion. Note that the organizational chart counts towards the overall page limit of the Detailed Proposal.

Q 51: Does the IDEAS proposal submission system accept any file type, or should all documents be converted to PDF format prior to uploading?

A: Each of the required and optional documents for proposal submission specifies an enumerated list of acceptable file types. In general, the following formats are acceptable for upload: .pdf, .doc, .docx, .xls, .xlsx, .ppt, .pptx, .rtf, and .txt; however, .pdf is preferred. Do not encrypt, password protect, or include security layers to files. All files must be self-contained; please do not add attachments or embed other files. Offerors who plan to submit proposals are strongly encouraged to register in IDEAS (at <https://iarpa-ideas.gov>) at least one week prior to the due date for the initial round of selections to view these and other details of the submission process.

Q 52: Our group focuses specifically on the functional architecture of the hippocampal formation (including entorhinal cortex), as opposed to primary or generic neocortex. Will proposals focused on the hippocampus be given full consideration?

A: BAA Section 1.C.1.b(i) states that offerors must specify “which region(s) of *sensory cortex*” (emphasis added) they will interrogate as the focus of their proposal. Offerors may propose to study the hippocampal formation (or any other brain region) as a supplementary data collection exercise, provided appropriate justification is given, as described in BAA Section 1.C.1.b(iii). Note that project ideas which fall outside the scope of MICrONS, but that are fundamentally synergistic with IARPA’s goals, may consider submitting a seedling proposal to one of the four General Solicitations listed on IARPA’s website (<http://www.iarpa.gov/index.php/working-with-iarpa/open-solicitations>).