

IARPA-BAA-16-10

Questions and Answers Round 2

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MOSAIC BAA Questions 7 through 18 – Round 2

Q7: *The solicitation does not call out any restrictions, recommendations, or out of scope populations with respect to candidate participant populations for the human subjects studies.*

Question: Do all populations need to be subcontractors of/or prime bidders? If we were able to find independent organizations that would participate for free, with participant populations that can be justified and approved by requisite IRBs, is that acceptable? Assuming populations can be justified and approved by requisite IRBs, are there any candidate populations that should be avoided based on IARPA preferences or program vision beyond those that focus on a narrow skill or single job?

A7: There are no restrictions on where a performer recruits the participant population. The only limitation is that the recruitment strategies, enrollment, and any corresponding compensation is reviewed, approved by the relevant IRB, and complies with all applicable federal regulations, policies, or laws (e.g. 45 CFR 46; see BAA section 6.B.3). An offeror must also delineate any potential risks and risk mitigation strategies associated with their recruitment approach.

As noted in the BAA, study participants should be employed (p.13) and proposed approaches should, “Focus on solutions that generalize across job types, with a broad interest in jobs that involve individual and collaborative work, occurring in fast-paced, information-rich environments.” (p.7)

Q8: Is the goal of the effort specifically aimed at predicting future job/career performance, or is there also envisioned to be a component that focuses on real-time performance sensing and monitoring?

A8: The program is focused on measuring an individual to make near real time assessments of dimensions of job performance. However, approaches that are aimed at predicting future job performance are not out of scope, but would need to be accompanied by the appropriate analytic methods (e.g., avoiding models that are fit to past data).

Q9: Is the expectation that ground truth performance will only be based off of the Government provided methodology, or are teams allowed to supplement those methods with their own (given appropriate justifications)?

A9: As stated on page 8 of the BAA, “Performers may propose to use additional assessments of the variables or dimensions listed [on pages 7-8].” The proposed use of additional assessments

should be accompanied by a strong technical justification and ultimately need to be approved by the performer's IRB.

Q10: Is there an envisioned time-frame for performance predictions? For example, would the priority be to predict performance over the next hour, over the next day, over the next week, over the next year, or over a multi-year career?

A10: Performance should be able to be evaluated over a range of time intervals. Ultimate applications will require solutions that are useful at varying periods of time and this may vary by job type.

While the research will likely not be able to demonstrate validity over multiple years, performers will need to demonstrate validity over various intervals up to at least 8 weeks, which is the maximum amount of time the T&E team will collect data.

Q11: The solicitation calls out that sensors must be available for the FFRDC T&E teams to acquire at a volume of at least 200 units. Is there a limit on the costs associated with these sensors? Is it safe to assume that the per-unit or total cost of acquiring these sensors is a criterion for selecting awardees, in addition to the costs included in cost proposals?

A11: There are no stated limits on the cost to acquire a sensor. Per unit or total cost of sensors is not a specific criterion for selecting awardees. The technical and programmatic evaluation criteria are listed in Section 5 of the BAA. Awards will be made to offerors on the basis of these criteria, program balance and the availability of funds.

Q12: Is there any specific intended end-user group(s) for the technologies being developed under the MOSAIC program? For example, would the final MOSAIC system most likely be used by a human resource department to determine hiring or termination decisions, or would you envision this being used by a commanding officers and managers to determine the right person for the right job, or both?

A12: There is no specific intended end-user group for technical solutions that would result from the MOSAIC program. As stated on p. 11, offerors should consider, "Solutions that are useful and understood by non-experts following a limited training period."

Q13: Should consideration be given to create a solution that is not susceptible to gamesmanship? For example, if an employee knows that this system could potentially result in a promotion, or termination for that matter, they may be motivated to manipulate the outcome to actively influence otherwise passive sensing methods.

A13: This is not a stated goal of the program, but if an offeror chooses to propose such an approach, it is not explicitly out of scope.

Q14: *It is clear from the BAA that obtrusive sensor measures for the data inputted into the final model are out-of-scope of this project.* **Question:** However, are more obtrusive measures allowed for assessment and validation of the model as it is developed? For example, could MRI

and/or EEG data be collected to assess individual baseline capabilities? There is data suggesting a clear relationship between brain activity and connectivity at rest and cognitive and mental abilities. These data would have to be collected on each individual in order to relate these measures to the unobtrusive measures ultimately collected.

A14: The use of MRI and/or EEG data collected to assess individual baseline capabilities is not considered out of scope.

Q15: Are sensors developed under related or unrelated Government-funded programs, that are available with Government Purpose rights, candidates for inclusion? Or is IARPA seeking only COTS sensing solutions?

A15: Offerors are allowed to propose sensors developed under related or unrelated Government-funded programs with Government Purpose Rights or COTS sensing solutions, as well as other sensors. Any restrictions or existing intellectual property on proposed sensors should be documented in Attachment 2. Please see BAA section 6.B.2 for more information. In particular, note that BAA section 6.B.2 states: “For all technical data and computer software that the offeror intends to deliver with other than unlimited rights that are identical or substantially similar to technical data and computer software that the offeror has produced for, delivered to, or is obligated to deliver to the Government under any contract or subcontract, the offeror shall identify the contract number under which the data, software, or documentation were produced; the contract number under which, and the name and address of the organization to whom, the data and software were most recently delivered or will be delivered; and any limitations on the Government’s rights to use or disclose the data and software, including, when applicable, identification of the earliest date the limitations expire.”

Q16: *The RFP specifies that development of novel sensors is out of scope.* **Question:** Is this targeted exclusively at hardware-based sensors, or does IARPA feel that development of novel software to sense relevant characteristics (e.g., developing a tool to monitor the volume / frequency of emails being sent) is also out of scope given the program’s vision?

A16: (Please note that this is not an RFP but a BAA issued under FAR Part 35 procedures.)

The use of funding to develop or refine new hardware- and software-based sensors are both considered out of scope. As noted in the BAA, “Offerors may leverage such developments where feasible, but funding will not be specifically provided for such efforts.” However, as stated on p. 10 of the BAA, sensors that do not meet the defined requirements to be included in Phase 1, may be proposed for Phase 2, “If they are able to demonstrate how the sensor would meet program requirements.”

Q17: We are investigating the MOSAIC (IARPA-BAA-16-10) and we would like to know if the data-group of employee comes from IARPA (as opposed to using our own employees as a data-group for the program)?

A17: No, study participants will not come from IARPA and IARPA will not provide study participants or access to participant populations. This is the responsibility of a performer.

Q18: Clarification requested on experimental use case: The BAA discourages use of undergraduate students as the subjects of study. We are considering studying a cohort of graduate students in their capacity as professionals in training, investigating their rich cognitive and affective experiences as trainees, teachers and researchers. Would that be of interest and encouraged?

A18: The requirements are set forth in the BAA. As stated on p.7 of the BAA, “The research will focus on solutions that generalize across job types, with a broad interest in jobs that involve individual and collaborative work, occurring in fast-paced, information-rich environments.”