

IARPA-BAA-15-08 Mercury Program – Questions and Answers – Round 2

(Questions 1-4 included in Q&A Round 1)

Question 5. Will input data include foreign languages?

Answer 5. Yes. Details are provided in the Mercury BAA Classified Annex (release pending).

Question 6. If the focus of Mercury is on fusion, then what is the medium of the input?

Answer 6. Various types of classified SIGINT data. Details are provided in the Mercury BAA Classified Annex (release pending).

Question 7. How are site visits conducted?

Answer 7. The government team will visit the office of the performer team to receive an overview of respective research plans and to engage with all members of the performing team.

Question 8. Site visit, waypoints, and milestones are not together on the schedule. Will that change?

Answer: No, they will not be together. Waypoints will closely align to milestones as waypoints are a pre-measurement for the milestones. Site visits will not align with either as they follow a different schedule.

Question 9. The BAA clearly states that the option periods are 6 and 12 months, respectively, but the schedule has 12 months in option period 1 followed by 6 in option period 2. Which is correct?

Answer 9. The Mercury Program will have an 18 month Base Period anticipated to begin in January 2016. This will be followed by Option Period One for 12 months, which will then be followed by Option Period Two for 6 months. The estimated program completion is January 2019. The BAA will be updated to correct and clarify the base and option periods.

Question 10. Should Appendix F be filled out for every subcontractor, for every applicable period (Base, Option Year 1, Option Year 2)?

Answer 10: Yes, a separate Cost Element Sheet should be used for each subcontractor, for each period.

Question 11. What data will be provided by the program?

Answer 11. Classified SIGINT data. Details are provided in the Mercury BAA Classified Annex (release pending).

Question 12. Is the “Gold Standard Report” always a public report of an event? Or can an event be confirmed if it is detected by non-public means?

Answer 12: The Gold Standard Report will usually be based on open source data, but may occasionally be based on classified data.

Question 13: Is lead time “time until event occurs” or “time until event is reported”?

Answer: 13: Per the Mercury BAA, Section 1.B., lead time is measured until the event is reported in the GSR.

Answer 14: Section 8B of the BAA specifies that IARPA will release Appendix 1 to proposers following approval of their co-use and joint-use requests. Can you provide any information about the expected timeline and procedure following submission of the information specified in Section 8B?

Answer 14: IARPA is currently working to secure co-use/joint use authorization for offerors that submitted their security information by the requested date of 30 June 2015, as amended. It is estimated that the classified Appendix will be released to a majority of these parties **NLT 20 July 2015**. IARPA will notify offerors individually regarding procedures for release.

For offerors that submitted security information after the requested timeline or for offerors for which IARPA has not yet obtained co-use/joint use authorization, the classified Appendix will be released as soon as possible after co-use/joint use authorization is obtained. These offerors may be contacted by IARPA for additional information to aid in obtaining co-use/joint use authorization.

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Answer 15: I would like to inquire regarding the method of proposal submission to this BAA. Is it by email to this email address?

Answer 15: Per the Mercury BAA, Section 8.D., “The Government will provide instructions for delivery of classified proposals upon Co-Use/Joint-use approvals.” It is anticipated that delivery methods will include secure email or hand-carry delivery to specified location.

Question 16: Will the WMA classified lab still have external connectivity?

Answer 16: Yes.

Question 17: Will we be able to access the lab remotely?

Answer 17: No.

Question 18: Will the data be pre-translated or will it be delivered in its native language?

Answer 18: Native language and English.

Question 19: During the Mercury Industry Day briefing, it was stated that an Accumulo (Hadoop) stack would be available. Is this still the case?

Answer 19: The Mercury BAA Classified Annex (release pending) contains more detail on the type of platforms available to performers.

Question 20: Will we have access to the government’s translator?

Answer 20: Yes, there will be a common core translator available for all teams.

Question 21: How will the data be delivered?

Answer 21: Appropriately cleared performers will have direct access to relevant data repositories.

Question 22: Is the data already time-stamped, geotagged?

Answer 22: Some data are time-stamped and geotagged.

Question 23: Are we allowed to include additional event data not included in the Gold Standard Report to train our models?

Answer 23: Yes.

Question 24: May we have team members who are employees of a UARC?

Answer 24: Per “IARPA’s Approach to Managing Organizational Conflicts of Interest (OCI)” http://www.iarpa.gov/images/files/IARPA_OCI_081809.pdf, cited in Mercury BAA Section 3.A.1., “Individuals who are currently employed by an FFRDC or UARC are prohibited from proposing or serving as members of a proposal team to an IARPA solicitation.