QUESTIONS & ANSWERS - THOR IARPA-BAA-16-04		
Round 2 (Final) responses # 6 to 39		
#	**Response**	
6	Q:	Proposals to the Thor BAA are required to address all three modalities of interest, however, IARPA reserves the right to fund only a subset of the proposed modalities based upon an individual assessment of that approach. There are a number of biometrics companies that specialize in a single modality. Given that IARPA is willing to subdivide individual proposals, would IARPA be willing to accept and evaluate a proposal that only addressed a single modality? I believe this might significantly expand IARPA's access to innovative research in this area.
	A:	IARPA requires proposals to this BAA to address all three biometric modalities of face, finger, and iris.
7	Q:	Does the proposal need to address all three questions, or if it is acceptable to only address one? Is there a total budget cap?
	A:	IARPA requires proposals to this BAA to address all three biometric modalities of face, finger, and iris. There is no specific budget limit.
8	Q:	The appendices include template pages but only in the PDF file itself. Can the actual templates in Excel, etc. be provided?
	A:	Appendices available in non-pdf format have been recently posted to FedBizOpps.
9	Q:	Previous IARPA Q&A responses indicate that providing FWA documentation prior to award will suffice rather than having the documentation finalized at time of submission. Is that the case with the Thor effort as well?
	A:	Offerors that propose human subject research (HSR) must provide documentation of a current Assurance of Compliance with Federal regulations, such as a Federal-wide Assurance (FWA), prior to contract award. Per BAA section 6.B.4, offerors proposing HSR must include evidence of or a plan for review by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) listed in the performing institution's Assurance in their final proposal submission as outlined in the management plan.
10	Q:	With respect to the IRB, previous IARPA Q&A responses have indicated that a letter from the Institutional Official indicating that an IRB review is pending was sufficient for proposal submission. Is that the case with the Thor effort as well?
	A:	Yes. Offerors are advised that they should submit evidence of the IRB approval as soon as the approval is obtained. No IARPA funding may be used towards HSR until the IRB grants approval and IARPA reviews and accepts the IRB approval and associated documentation.
11	Q:	To clarify section 1.A.8, performers under this contract must get government permission to create known presentation attacks for our self-testing and may invoice for the cost of the material necessary to create the presentation attacks (printable contact lenses, latex prints, etc., as long as it is for a known PA). Is this correct?
	A:	This is correct. What presentation attacks will be explored/tested under this BAA must be approved by IARPA. You may include in your proposal presentation attacks that you would like to utilize. IARPA anticipates approving known presentation attacks, but the Thor BAA does not support the development of new presentation attacks.

12	Q:	On p.21 of the BAA, IARPA states that "At a minimum, after the first USG test (G1), offeror must have a complete system to leave with the government for testing. This prototype system can be updated periodically at each USG-led test." In table 6, for Phase 1, there is a prototype deliverable in month 13 and a final prototype deliverable in month 16.5. Are these to be considered two separate units delivered to the government or is the final prototype delivered in month 16.5 an update to the month 13 prototype if needed?
	A:	After the first test G1 (in month 13/14) a single unit must be kept with the government T&E team at all time throughout all phases. If there is no change to the software or hardware between G1 and the end of the phase no update need be provided. There does not need to be two units in the government's possession at the end of phase 1. It is up to the proposer to determine how to best achieve or ensure that the government T&E team has an up to date version. It is acceptable to provide an entirely new unit for each new version. However, as this may not be the most cost effective, the performer may choose to update or swap out the unit left with the T&E team.
13	Q:	On p.21 of the BAA, IARPA states that "At a minimum, after the first USG test (G1), offeror must have a complete system to leave with the government for testing. This prototype system can be updated periodically at each USG-led test." In table 6, for Phase 1, there is a prototype deliverable in month 13 and a final prototype deliverable in month 16.5. Will the government return the prototypes to the performer for either the self-reported tests or for any needed upgrades?
	A:	The government will return the prototype, but at all times past G1 there must be a unit left with the government. For example, assume prototype technology progressed from 1.0 to 2.0. If the government had a 1.0 unit and the performer provided a 2.0 unit the government will return the 1.0 unit for upgrade if requested (potentially returned later as the 3.0 unit). However, as the government must at all times have a unit for testing, it cannot return the 1.0 unit for upgrading and be without a unit pending the upgrade. If the upgrade is purely software, it is acceptable to do an onsite update.
14	Q:	On p.21 of the BAA, IARPA states that "At a minimum, after the first USG test (G1), offeror must have a complete system to leave with the government for testing. This prototype system can be updated periodically at each USG-led test." In table 6, for Phase 1, there is a prototype deliverable in month 13 and a final prototype deliverable in month 16.5. What access will the performer have to the delivered prototypes to install any needed updates? Similar question for the deliverables in phases 2 and 3.
	A:	The government is willing to provide access to a previous generation prototype to 'upgrade' an existing unit during the government controlled tests. However, performers are cautioned that on site upgrades immediately before an official test carry risks. Failure to successfully upgrade the unit before a test is not an acceptable reason to fail a test.
15	Q:	Are the prototype deliverables distinct from the initial prototype delivered in month 13? What level of modification will be allowed?
	A:	Any level of modification between tests/deliverables is allowed. It is up to the performer to determine what to do.
16	Q:	What are the packaging and user requirements for the delivered prototypes?

	A:	The government recognizes that these will be alpha/beta prototypes. As such, there are no specific packaging requirements. However, the prototype must survive the shipping/handling process and should be able to operate in a standard office environment. There must be a user manual to enable to the T&E team to utilize the device. Further, it is anticipated that a standard 'GUI' interface/API will be provided and the prototype must conform to in order to simplify cross compatibility/usability.
17	Q:	If the system incorporates a laser, in order to deliver the system to the government, is the performer expected to obtain the proper laser safety approval documentation from the FDA under the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA), Title 21 Code of Federal Regulations (Subchapter J, Radiological Health) Parts 1000 through 1005?
	A:	IARPA requires that performers comply with all regulations if applicable.
18	Q:	Is IARPA included in "Guidance on the Department of Defense Exemption from the FDA Performance Standard for Laser Products (Laser Notice No. 52)".
	A:	IARPA is not a part of the Department of Defense and as such not covered by this exemption.
19	Q:	Can the government provide clarification on the location and duration of the Government T&E that the performers need to support (BAA page 17, Government Controlled Tests) for costing purposes?
	A:	For the purposes of costing, assume it will take place in the Washington DC metro area.
20	Q:	Is the government responsible for the IRB needed to conduct the government controlled tests, where the performer is operating the PAD system and the "Odin T&E team will provide the PA and subjects to test it along with subjects not utilizing PAs"?
	A:	Exact specifics of which IRB (possibly more than one) will have authority during the government tests are still being determined. It is expected that the performer will have to support the government T&E team in getting their own IRB to facilitate testing of the prototype. Specific PA's being tested will be continuously updated. The first list will be provided at Kickoff.
21	Q:	When will information on the "known" attacks be provided to the performers to include in the IRB plan?
	A:	An initial PA list is anticipated to be released at kickoff.
22	Q:	Will the government take responsibility for the "unknown" attacks as well as responsibility for the government provided test subjects since neither can be directly included in the performer's IRB plan for testing the system?
	A:	The government will be responsible for 'unknown' attack HSR compliance.

23	Q:	Our institution is planning to submit a proposal to this BAA, with a proposed subcontractor who does not have a federally approved F&A rate. Under the Uniform Guidance, we have the option of a 10% di minimus rate or negotiating an F&A rate with the subrecipient. We would like to prepare this proposal with the subrecipient using an estimated F&A rate that is estimated in accordance with the requirements of the Uniform Guidance. If this project is approved for funding by IARPA, the University would then work with the subrecipient to obtain appropriate support and documentation to allow negotiation of an F&A rate. If the subrecipient negotiates an F&A proposal with a rate higher than the rate that was used for budgetary purposes to secure the award, the University will only compensate the subrecipient at the rate that went into the budget of the prime award. Conversely, if the subrecipient negotiates an F&A rate that is lower than the rate used in the subrecipient's proposal budget, the University will only reimburse the subrecipient at the negotiated rate. In such cases where the difference between the subrecipient's proposed and negotiated F&A rate is at least 5 percentage points or where the difference in F&A rate reduces the subrecipient's total costs by more than $5,000, we would address the disposition of any resulting balance directly with the IARPA. Could you please let us know if this approach would be acceptable to IARPA? We believe it would be the best use of resources to negotiate an F&A rate with this potential subrecipient only in the event of an award.
	A:	The government cannot direct you on any particular approach; however, you may follow either option presented in the question. If selected for negotiations, proposed rates will be addressed during negotiations.
24	Q:	Volume I - Technical & Management Proposal; pg. 32. 4.B.1.c.F - Cost, Schedule, Milestones. This requirement asks for "estimates of cost by task, total cost, and company cost share, if any." Please clarify; is the Government asking for cost information to be included in the Technical Volume?
	A:	Yes, the government is asking for some high level cost information to be included in the Technical Volume. Section 4.B.1 outlines the requirements for the Technical and Management Volume, and Section 4.B.2 describes the requirements for the Cost Proposal. Section 4.B.1.c.F specifically addresses cost, schedule, and milestones, and should include estimates of cost for each task, total cost, and company cost share (if any).
25	Q:	Volume I - Technical & Management Proposal; pg. 27. 4.b.1 Volume 1, Technical and Management Proposal. This requirement asks for "estimates of cost by task, total cost, and company cost share, if any." Please clarify; is the Government asking for cost information to be included in the Technical Volume?
	A:	See answer to Q&A #24.
26	Q:	Volume I - Technical & Management Proposal; pg. 38. 4.C, Submission Details. Are there any restrictions to the file size of proposal documents being uploaded to the IDEAS site?
	A:	Yes. IDEAS has a 20MB file size limitation imposed for uploads per file. There is no limitation on the overall proposal package size as long as each file falls under the 20MB max. As far as file types, the following are the only file types that are acceptable at the moment: pdf, .doc, .docx, .xls, .xlsx, .ppt, .pptx, .rtf, .txt. The system also warns users not to encrypt, password protect, or include security layers for files. All files must be self-contained, and not to add attachments or embed other files.

27	Q:	Section 6.B.4. Human Use states “IARPA will review and approve the HSR documentation before HSR may begin”. How long does IARPA estimate their review and approval will take after HSR documentation is submitted to IARPA?
	A:	We estimate it will take approximately 7 business day to review and approve HSR documentation. IARPA is only verifying that you have the appropriate paperwork to authorize the activity to proceed.
28	Q:	In 4.B.1.c. Section 3: Detailed Proposal Information the portion I. Detailed Management Plan states “A table such as the following (Table 7) is recommended”. The table is labeled “Table 7 Key personnel” but from the provided examples (e.g. Contributor) it appears that all personnel should be included. Can we receive clarification if the intent is truly to identify only the key personnel or should it cover all personnel providing technical support to the work?
	A:	Key personnel is required, but you are free to include others you feel make significant contributions.
29	Q:	The Thor RFP states: "Proposals to the Thor BAA are required to address all three modalities of interest, however, IARPA reserves the right to fund only a subset of the proposed modalities based upon an individual assessment of that approach." There are a number of biometrics companies that specialize in a single modality. Given that IARPA is willing to subdivide individual proposals, would IARPA be willing to accept and evaluate a proposal that only addressed a single modality? I believe this might significantly expand IARPA's access to innovative research in this area.
	A:	Please note Thor is a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA), not an RFP (Request for Proposals). IARPA requires proposals to this BAA to address all three biometric modalities of face, finger, and iris.
30	Q:	For PA self-testing, may the vendor submit results of previously conducted internal tests? This may reduce costs to the Government.
	A:	Assuming the tests and PA’s conducted in the previous tests are consistent with those in the USG testing and the equipment is identical you could use the previous test results.
31	Q:	May the vendor conduct additional testing (monitored or not) outside the United States?
	A:	There is no inherent restriction on testing being performed inside or outside of the United States. However, you are cautioned that co-mingling Thor test equipment owned by the US government or funds provided as a part of this BAA with other efforts may or may not be allowed.
32	Q:	Will vendors be permitted to share test results generally, with other clients or potential clients?
	A:	IARPA generally encourages the open publication and sharing of test results. Provided the results are not classified, and it is not anticipated that any results generated by the performers of the Thor program will be, you are free to share the results.
33	Q:	Can you clarify the scope of the program with regards to the physiological factors? For example, if physiological data can be obtained from a video (e.g. heart-rate to indicate deception) without additional sensors, is this within or outside the scope?
	A:	Offerors are free to utilize whatever physiological factors they want to achieve the stated goals of this BAA. This includes the example of determining heart rate from video. However per 1.A.1 it is unlikely that deception detection alone will help as the testing scenarios are not designed to accommodate deception.

34	Q:	Do you anticipate any export controlled data or software will be involved in this program?
	A:	IARPA does not anticipate that the Thor program will involve software subject to the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (22 C.F.R. Parts 120-130) (ITAR). Performers are free to utilize any sensor or algorithm technology they want, regardless of the export control classification of the sensor or technology. Offerors must comply with all applicable export control regulations, including the ITAR and the Export Administration Regulations (EAR) (15 C.F.R. Part 730 et seq.).
35	Q:	Since the BAA says the government will provide PAs and the performer will not be allowed to develop their own PA technologies, can we expect the PAs be made available to us during phase I?
	A:	Yes, the government T&E team intends to release an initial list of PA's during phase 1. Performers may also request specific PA's or permission to manufacture specific PAs themselves.
36	Q:	What is the anticipated number of awards and the amount of funding for each award?
	A:	There is no specific number of awards or amount of funding anticipated per award.
37	Q:	Will proposed solutions be allowed to require an authentic enrollment quality biometric sample prior to having to make a presentation attack determination during a live test?
	A:	No, proposed solutions must be capable of identifying a presentation attack during an enrollment phase. As such, there may not be a prior sample to reference. However, if a prior sample exists it is acceptable to utilize it to improve performance.
38	Q:	May key personnel or principal investigator/researcher be located outside the United States?
	A:	Yes, key personnel and principal investigators may be outside the US.
39	Q:	I am wondering if you might be able to provide a list of the Proposer Day participants?
	A:	Yes; if requested, a list will be provided of those participants who have authorized the sharing of their information.