QUESTIONS & ANSWERS - (PROTEOS) IARPA-BAA-17-03		
Responses # 1 to 31		
#		**Response**
1	Q:	Does the Combined Synopsis/Solicitation under solicitation number IARPABAA1703 contain requirements similar to a current contract?
	A:	This is a new IARPA-BAA-17-03 solicitation.
2	Q:	If possible, please provide the current contract number. Or, is this a new requirement for the government?
	A:	This is a new IARPA-BAA-17-03 solicitation.
3	Q:	Section 3.A.1. of IARPA-BAA-17-03 addresses "Organizational Conflicts of Interest" with a particular focus on offerors or subcontractors who may be providing SETA or technical consultation for IARPA. Our question is whether the scope of this section covers other situations, such as where an offeror (the PI) has an outside ownership interest in a private company that may have an interest in the outcome of the research.
	A:	Although a common source of conflict issues, Organizational Conflicts of Interest (OCI) issues are not limited to who may be providing SETA or technical consultation for IARPA. Instead, per FAR section 9.505, the Government's OCI requirements are based more broadly on two underlying principles: (1) Preventing the existence of conflicting roles that might bias a contractor's judgment; and (2) Preventing unfair competitive advantage. Therefore, the BAA on page 22 directs offerors to promptly raise with IARPA all facts relevant to the existence of potential conflict of interests, real or perceived, where because of other activities or relationships with other persons, a person is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the Government, or the person's objectivity in performing the contract work is or might be otherwise impaired, or a person has an unfair competitive advantage.
4	Q:	Is there a limitation on the number of dollars requested for this project in our proposal, per year?
	A:	No budgetary information is provided in this BAA. Offerors should clearly define costs associated with tasks, personnel, and equipment required for their proposed research plans as described in the BAA.
5	Q:	What technical approach would have a reasonable chance of being funded?
	A:	The goal of the program is to develop approaches to discover GVPs in proteins associated with touch samples and methods for protein and DNA extraction and purification. The proposer should describe their technical approach and solutions to achieve the milestones and metrics outlined in the BAA. Proposals should clearly explain their research plans to achieve the goals of the program. IARPA is interested in innovative, novel, and relevant approaches that would meet the technical requirements and performance metrics as outlined in the BAA.
6	Q:	Can you describe "operational scenarios" a bit more? Will you be providing performers with samples using the sampling protocol of the performer's choice (e.g., wet cotton swab)?
	A:	"Operational scenarios" refer to more realistic and challenging samples. Concentration of material deposited, surface material (substrate for touch evidence), environmental exposure, and potential interferents will be varied to challenge the developed protocols. Samples will be provided (rather than processed samples). The samples provided to the performers will then be processed by the performers using the performers' preferred method.

7	Q:	On Page 10 of the BAA, “touch samples deposited on glass slides” will be provided for Thrust 2. How will protein concentrations be determined by the Government for these samples? In other words, how will we know what 100% recovery is? Will the Government provide non-deposited protein material as a control?
	A:	Material will be deposited in a controlled and characterized fashion so that the total amount of material applied is known. This quantity will determine the 100% recovery amount. The Government is not planning to provide non-deposited protein material as a control.
8	Q:	On page 10 of the BAA, “skin cell samples” will be provided? Can you provide more information on what these samples will be (e.g., fingerprint samples?)
	A:	The “skin cell samples” are the same as the “25 skin cell suspension samples” described at the top of page 10. Skin cells obtained from the palms of individuals using adhesive disks will be extracted, characterized, and provided to the performers.
9	Q:	Can the Government define “unique GVP”? For example, if a GVP is found in another protein that is not expressed in skin cells, can this still be considered unique?
	A:	To be useful for identification purposes, a GVP must correspond to a unique location in the human genome. Consequently, GVPs found in proteins outside of the skin proteome would not be considered unique.
10	Q:	What about GVPs with allele frequencies in the range of 0.1% to 1%? Can these be included in our panels?
	A:	No. Please reference IARPA-BAA-17-03 for ranges in allele frequencies are listed throughout.
11	Q:	Samples will be provided by the Government for Phase 3, correct? If so, how many samples?
	A:	It is anticipated that the government will provide 150-200 samples.
12	Q:	Which population frequency databases should performers use to calculate RMPs? Will this be standardized across performers?
	A:	The population frequency database will be standardized across performers so that results may be compared without bias from choice of frequency values. For example, public databases like 1000 Genome Project. The recommended databases will be provided by the Government team at Kick-off.
13	Q:	Do performers have to do any quantitative proteomics or are rough estimates of the amount of proteins good enough? If we have to do quantitative proteomics, is there a special technique that is preferable?
	A:	We do not expect quantitative proteomics to play a role in the program.
14	Q:	Can you elaborate, with examples if possible, on the meaning of "Commercial off-the-shelf technology or other off-the-shelf tools that require a proprietary system architecture?" This statement refers to technologies that would be non-responsive to this BAA, and is mentioned on page 8, section 1.A.3.
	A:	Per FAR 2.1: Commercially available off-the-shelf (COTS) item means any item of supply (including construction material) that is - (i) A commercial item (as defined in paragraph (1) of the definition in this section); (ii) Sold in substantial quantities in the commercial marketplace. The FAR further defines commercial item as (1) Any item, other than real property, that is of a type customarily used by the general public or by non-governmental entities for the purposes other than governmental purposes, and - (i) Has been sold, leased, or licensed to the general public; or (ii) Has been offered for sale, lease, or license to the general public.

15	Q:	What are the proposed concentrations that will be used for the 3 proposed tests describe on page 10, Phase 1B of the BAA?
	A:	The concentrations will correspond to the range of proteinaceous material associated with touch samples as determined from characterization studies performed by the government.
16	Q:	As a local or state Government, are we eligible to apply to this BAA?
	A:	Yes. See Section 3: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION of IARPA-BAA-17-03.
17	Q:	FOUR DISTINCT AWARDS: As there will be four institutions applying for this grant, is it possible for IARPA to subcontract with each institution individually, i.e. can IARPA sign four distinct contracts?
	A:	IARPA only makes awards to prime contractors. If applying for this potential opportunity and award is made, award will be made directly to the offeror who applied. The subcontractors will not receive an award directly from the government.
18	Q:	Can IARPA state in their funding letter that certain reagents and/or equipment must be from a specific company?
	A:	No, this cannot be stated in IARPA's funding letter. It is up to the offeror to provide that information in their proposal submission.
19	Q:	SITE VISIT / TRAVEL FUNDS: Are all site visits to the primary performer's institute or will they vary? Must each performer attend all site visits or can they conference call in?
	A:	Generally, site visits will take place at the prime contractor location. The prime may, with agreement from IARPA, hold the site visit at an alternative location. Participation of key personnel is expected, and representation of each subcontractor is encouraged, but is at the discretion of the prime. Performers under contract shall attend all required meetings as specified by the terms and conditions of the contract.
20	Q:	SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS / TRAVEL FUNDS: Are travel funds available to scientific meetings to disseminate results?
	A:	Offerors should include travel estimates in their cost proposal.
21	Q:	BAA-17-03 does not specify a margin size. Should all margins be 1" or is 0.5" acceptable?
	A:	There are no specific requirements regarding margins in the BAA. It is desired that a proposal has 1" margins on each side.
22	Q:	Is it intended that 18 STR loci must be obtained from samples deposited on brass when it is likely that DNA degradation will occur? Are methods to repair or amplify degraded DNA prior to STR analysis within the scope of this program? (1.C.2)
	A:	Standard amplification methods for STR analysis are within scope. There are no restrictions on use of STR protocols.
23	Q:	Does "STR for 18 loci" require a complete profile of a known contributor at 18 individual DNA loci, or is dropout of alleles at some of the 18 loci allowed? (1.C.2)
	A:	The goal is that the samples will yield amplification of 18 STRs. Drop-outs or the amplification of, for example, 13 loci would be considered less robust than 18.
24	Q:	Will the Government provide detail regarding how ">15,000 amino acids" will be calculated for determining protein quantity? Does this specify total amino acids sequenced across all PSMs, total sequence coverage of identified proteins in amino acid unit length, or only GVP containing peptides in amino acid unit length? (1.C.2)
	A:	Yes, total sequence coverage of identified proteins in amino acid unit length.

25	Q:	The due dates for some deliverables in Table 3 are due outside of the period of performance for the Phase associated with the deliverable (i.e., results of the common GVP evaluation, final report, etc.). Please confirm that the due dates indicated are correct for all deliverables. If dates are correct, how should offerors plan to submit deliverables outside of the Phase period of performance? (1.D)
	A:	The stated due dates in the BAA are correct. The due dates were specified as stated to be one month after the end of each specific phase to provide performer(s) sufficient time to close out any remaining experiments for each deliverable.
26	Q:	The PI and site technical review meetings are listed in Table 3 as occurring in Months 6, 12, 18, 24, and 30. However, Section 1.E.1 indicates that PI meetings will occur every six months after the kick off meeting, suggesting PI meetings would occur in Months 7, 13, 19, and 25. Section 1.E.2 states that site visits will occur twice yearly and between the PI meeting, suggesting site visits would occur in Months 4, 10, 16, 22, and 28. Can the Government clarify the anticipated months during which PI meetings and site visits will occur? (1.D, 1.E.1, 1.E.2)
	A:	The technical meetings are anticipated to occur roughly every 6 months: Month 1 (Kickoff meeting), and 6, 12, 18, 24, and 30 (PI technical meetings). The site visits will occur after the Kick-off meeting and are estimated to occur every 6 months starting at ~Month 3/4 until the duration of the effort.
27	Q:	Can the SOW be excluded from the total of 30 pages for Volume 1 and inserted as an attachment to the volume? (4.B.1.c.A)
	A:	The technical volume is limited to 30 pages (excluding attachments). The SOW will remain included in the BAA page count. As stated in the BAA, all pages beyond 30 pages shall be discarded without review.
28	Q:	If an individual identified as Key Personnel is a salaried instructor at an academic institution, does the 25% time commitment requirement apply? (4.B.1.c.I)
	A:	Per 4.B.1.c.I of the BAA "Participation by key personnel and significant contributors is expected to exceed (25%) of their time."
29	Q:	Can costs associated with IRB approvals incurred prior to the contract start date be proposed to be funded as pre-contract costs? (4.B.1.c.I)
	A:	No. Cost associated with IRB approvals should not be incurred prior to contract award.
30	Q:	IARPA-BAA-17-03 at 6.B.2.c., requires all Offerors to include documentation proving ownership of or possession of appropriate licensing rights to all patented inventions (or inventions for which a patent application has been filed) that shall be utilized under the proposal for the IARPA program. Similarly, at 6.B.2.d., all Offerors are required to provide a good faith representation that they either own or possess appropriate licensing rights to all other intellectual property that shall be utilized under their proposal for the program. It is possible that procedures used in developing certain Deliverables may potentially be covered by existing patents belonging to third parties (e.g., U.S. Patent 8,877,455, entitled Methods for Conducting Genetic Analysis Using Protein Polymorphisms), even though the Deliverables themselves may not be. Are such patents considered to be utilized under the proposal? Further, “appropriate licensing rights” are not defined in the BAA, in FAR 52.227-1 through 52.227-13, or FAR 27-200 through 27.204-2. For such patents, what appropriate licensing rights are required?

	A:	Utilization of a patent, as referenced on page 22 of the BAA, includes making, using, offering to sell, or selling any patented invention or discovery under an IARPA program during the term of that patent, and "appropriate licensing rights" refers to those rights necessary to make, use, offer to sell, or sell a patented invention or discovery in the manner as proposed by the offeror without infringing upon a valid patent.
31	Q:	In the final contract will IARPA expressly authorize and consent to a contractor's use or manufacture of inventions covered by U.S. patents by inserting the clause at FAR 52.227-1? If so, will IARPA require a successful offeror to indemnify it pursuant to FAR 52.227-3 or will it waive indemnification pursuant to FAR 52.227-5?
	A:	FAR section 27.201-1(a) directs the Government to insert the clause at 52.227-1, Authorization and Consent, with its Alternate I in all R&D contracts for which the primary purpose is R&D work. The Authorization and Consent clause states that the Government has authorized and consented to a contractor's use and manufacture, in performing the contract, of any invention or discovery covered by a U.S. Patent, including methods whose use necessarily results from compliance with the contract or written instructions from the Contracting Officer. Under the clause, the Government assumes liability for all infringement to the extent of the authorization and consent provided unless an indemnity clause in the contract directs otherwise. FAR section 27.201-1(c) directs the use of an indemnity clause in certain specified circumstances. A determination as to what clauses will be included in an IARPA procurement contract is fact specific and may be determined only after selection for award and contract negotiation, if applicable.