

Question and Answers for IARPA-BAA-15-09

24 July 2015

24. Question: Will the PM meet with a potential offeror before the source selection?

Answer Q24: No. The Program Manager (PM) will not meet with potential offerors or discuss any aspects of a proposal with any offeror before or during source selection.

25. Question: In Section 4.B.1.3.F of the BAA, the terms Milestones and Deliverables are used interchangeably. Are you looking for a table that shows the costs broken out by deliverables, a table showing costs broken out by milestone, or a table breaking it down by both?

Answer Q25: The relevant statement in Section 4.B.1.3.F is “Where the effort consists of multiple portions that could reasonably be partitioned for purposes of funding, these should be identified as options with separate cost estimates for each. The milestones must not include proprietary information.”

In Section 1 of the BAA, all instances of the word “milestone” are in the context of “metrics and milestones” and refer to technical program objectives. In Section 4 these technical program objectives are referenced as “program milestones” as in Section 4.B.1.2.B or in a context that mentions “metrics and milestones”. Section 4.B also uses the term “milestone” in the context of scheduling milestones. A scheduling milestone is a discrete event that defines the end of an activity or task, the delivery of a product, successful attainment of a formal approval (e.g. Institutional Review Board approval), etc. So for example the delivery of a report summarizing research results could be a scheduling milestone, while research results described within the report would be relevant to assessing whether a performer is making progress toward the program milestones. It should be clear from the context whether each use of the word “milestone” refers to a technical program milestone or a scheduling milestone.

Specifically, the reference to “milestones” in Section 4.B.1.3.F only relates to scheduling milestones. A table showing costs broken out by milestones should only include scheduling milestones. The degree of progress made toward the technical program milestones are not considered scheduling milestones for purposes of scheduling or presentation of costs.

26. Question: How many technical staff from each team are invited to the Kickoff and Principal Investigator meetings?

Answer Q26: Section 6.B.4.A of the BAA states that “The SCITE Program intends to hold a Program-level Kick-Off meeting during the first month of the Program and then yearly Principal Investigator Meetings. These 2-day workshops will focus on technical aspects of the Program and on facilitating open technical exchanges, interaction and sharing among the various Program participants. Program participants will be expected to present the technical status and progress of their projects as well as to demonstrate their technical capabilities to other participants and invited guests at these events.”

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Since these meetings are formatted as technical exchange workshops, there is no predetermined limit on the number of staff from a team that can attend these meetings. Each performer should estimate the number of attendees it deems appropriate.

27. Question: Will SCITE research require two new Active Indicators every six months or could a potential bidder bid 4 new Active Indicators in a proposal in year one, and 4 new Active Indicators each option year?

Answer Q27: The timeline and deliverables table in Section 1.C of the BAA states that two new active indicators are to be delivered to the Government every six months. Section 1.C also states that under certain conditions offerors "... may delay the delivery of the Month 6 active indicators and detectors to as late as Month 10." Offeror proposals should conform to the delivery schedule stated in the BAA. However an offeror may identify four new Active Indicators for each year, but not identify which two will be delivered mid-year and which two will be delivered at the end of the year. In this case the offeror should explain how they plan to meet the delivery schedule without specifying *a priori* the order in which Active Indicators will be delivered.

28. Question: Would IARPA kindly provide a definition of Active Indicators beyond statement in BAA-15-09?

Answer Q28: Section 1.A of the BAA states that "Active indicators introduce stimuli into a user's environment that are designed to evoke responses that are far more characteristic of malicious users than normal users." An active indicator requires that a user be intentionally subjected to a stimulus, where users who are "insider threats" often respond to that stimulus with an indicative response. An "indicative response" is a behavioral response that is more likely to be exhibited by insider threats than by normal users. The stimulus-response reaction of an insider threats should be statistically different from the stimulus-response reaction of normal users.

29. Question: Will SCITE research allow a bidder to convert a Passive Indicator into an Active Indicator? If yes, under what constraints (if any)?

Answer Q29: Yes. The indicative response of an active indicator may be the same behavior that defines a passive indicator; but where a stimulus is presented that increases the chances that an insider threat will exhibit that behavior. There are no restrictions or constraints on converting passive indicators into active indicators.

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30. Question: Will SCITE allow a bidder to use a government cyber range to test Active Indicators?

Answer Q30: Yes. Section 1.B.1 of the BAA states that “Each performer is expected to provide its own test environment in which to test proposed active indicators.” This should not be interpreted as requiring that the performer must own that test environment. Consequently the BAA imposes no restriction against using a government cyber range. However the offeror should explain how they will ensure that they have sufficient access to a government cyber range to support testing.

31. Question: If we use commercial software for parts of the IEM, are we required to provide copies of the commercial software to the government? If so, how many copies?

Answer Q31: The IEM Research Timeline and Deliverables Schedule in Section 1.C lists as annual deliverables “Report summarizing ... activities and results” and a copy of “... all software developed.” If software was developed under the SCITE Program, then one copy of that software must be delivered; if software was not developed under the SCITE Program, but is used during the program, then that software need not be delivered.

32. Question: Will SCITE allow publicly available PCAP data sources to be used for background traffic purposes?

Answer Q32: Yes data from publicly available packet capture (PCAP) data sources may be used.

33. Question: Is the intent for the offeror to propose Cost Type contracts or may bidders propose any type contract (Cost, Firm Fixed Price, Firm Fixed Price – Level of Effort (FFP-LOE) etc.) and modify Appendix E to the requirements of that contract type?

Answer Q33: Appendix C, the Sample Cover Sheet for Volume: 2 Cost Proposal, states “Award Instrument Requested: Cost-Plus-Fixed-Fee (CPFF), Cost-Contract.” The Government anticipates that offerors will propose Cost Type contracts for this research and development effort. Offerors are not restricted from proposing another contract type but such offerors would still need to provide cost details as requested in the BAA to support cost/price analysis. Agreement on the appropriate contract type will be negotiated with the contracting officer after selection.

34. Question: Please provide the applicable NAICS Code reference.

Answer Q34: The NAICS code for this requirement is 541712. Professional/Scientific and Technical Services/Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering and Life Sciences.

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35. Question: Would the Government like to see Attachment 2 in Volume 1, Section 2 (Summary of Proposal – Summary of Products, Transferrable Technology and Deliverables Associated with the Proposed Research Results) or Volume 1, Section 3.E (Detailed Proposal Information – Deliverables)?

Answer Q35: Neither. As stated in Section 4.C.2 of the BAA, “Proposals must be submitted electronically through the IARPA Distribution and Evaluation System (IDEAS).” Using IDEAS the attachments are uploaded as separate items.

36. Question: The BAA states that the proposal due date for the initial round of selections is August 10, 2015. When will proposals submitted after the August 10, 2015 date be evaluated?

Answer Q36: Proposals received after August 10, 2015 are not assured inclusion in the initial round of selections. Proposals submitted before the BAA closes on June 17, 2016 will be evaluated at the earliest opportunity. No matter when they are received, all proposals will be evaluated against the same criteria specified in the BAA.