DARPA-BAA-13-02
Foundational Cyberwarfare (Plan X)
Frequently Asked Questions

January 3, 2013

Q20. The cover sheet description does not request the technical area to which the proposal is directed. Where should proposers indicate the technical area?

A20. Please place the "technical area" after the "BAA number" and before "Proposal title" on the cover sheet.

Q19. Please confirm that costs associated with the Performers providing off-site facilities and associated hardware/software requirements should be incorporated into proposals?

A19. Yes, they should be included in the proposal.

Q18. Is the mapping of logical to physical information in scope for the program and, if so, will there be data sources available to extract this mapping or should we propose our own data sources?

A18. This is not in scope for the Plan X program.

Q17. On page 20 of the solicitation's PDF, the first paragraph states, "Performers should plan on providing 1-2 full-time expert integration software developers at the CRS." Is this for the duration of the contract award or just the four, week long design checkpoints per phase?

A17. 1-2 integration software developers will work at the Collaborative Research Space for the duration of the project. On-site software developers may be rotated in coordination with the government. This requirement is per team and should be considered when assembling team members as some may be in a better position to provide on-site support than others.

Q16. Regarding distribution of budget scope for the five Plan X TA areas, should we assume an equal 20% of budget per each of the five TA's?

A16. There is no guidance regarding budget scope for the five Plan X TA areas. Proposers should propose what they think is necessary to perform the stated work.

Q15. The BAA states that each performer in TA1 through TA5 must staff 1-2 integration experts at the CRS. Is this staffing mandatory for consideration of our project? What exactly are these individuals expected to do?

A15. Each performer in TA1 through TA5 must staff 1-2 integration experts at the CRS. The CRS will be accredited as a Collateral Secret area and personnel staffing the CRS must possess a Secret security clearance. The on-site facility is considered to be essential for proposers that intend to integrate directly into the Plan X system. On-site engineers are expected to integrate team components into the Plan X system on a daily basis to include supporting and collaborating with the entire Plan X system development. All proposals that do not satisfy this requirement will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Q14. Which TA is most appropriate for performers wishing to bid technology for automated plan generation and refinement?

A14. The most appropriate technical area for this technology is in TA3.

Q13. Which TAs will have access to the capabilities database, and what is the nature of their access? In particular:

- Can we assume that TA2 and TA3 have access to metadata that describe the available capabilities?
- Can we assume that TA2 and TA3 have access to actual capability executable code?
- The TA4 description refers to "construction of capabilities" (page 9), and assembling capability sets according to a TA3-provided specification (page 16). Can you elaborate a bit more as to what this means?

A13. All TA performers will have whatever access to the capability database that is required to build proposed technologies.

Q12. Several examples of support platforms are then given in the bulleted list on page 17. Is it within the program scope for performers to propose developing novel technologies that facilitate these types of support platforms (such as battle effect monitoring or adaptive defenses), or is this topic focused solely on the development of the secure OS/VM substrate on which the support platforms are based?

A12. Both are within scope for TA4.

Q11. Battle Damage Assessment seems to be clearly contained within TA2. Is there a feedback loop where TA4 can send information to TA2 to support BDA? Should we propose BDA-related technologies to TA2, TA4, or both?

A11. BDA is not only contained in TA2. All TAs should address how BDA will be integrated as part of their proposed technology if applicable.

Q10. If proposers plan to submit proposals to multiple TAs, is it permitted to reference across proposals from the same organization? For example, if we describe a technology that we believe is principally applicable to one TA, but may also apply to another TA, can we reference across the proposals for brevity, or should we fully describe the relevant technology in both proposals?

A10. Proposals must be self-contained and should not reference another proposal.

Q9. What attributes will be available in the capabilities set? Is there any publicly available system that is analogous to the capabilities set (i.e., do you consider Metasploit a capabilities set)?

A9. The attributes will describe the effects of the capabilities, allowing operators to mix and match components of capabilities in order to adapt to various mission requirements. Yes, Metasploit, Immunity, CANVAS, and other standard toolkits are examples of analogous technologies. The government and Plan X performers will determine the specific capability attributes during the six-week Plan X ramp-up period.

Q8. Would topology (including uncertainty) estimation based on node/link metadata (such as TTL-values) be considered network mapping and therefore out-of-scope for Plan X and TA2 in particular?

A8. Estimating uncertainty based on existing node/link metadata is within scope for TA2.

Q7. Is the analogy to Control Flow Graphs (CFGs) just to help illustrate points of TA3 in the BAA, or is it expected that the submitted proposals use that terminology and describe how the results will fit into a CFG structure?

A7. It was to help illustrate the points. Any and all approaches that solve the TA3 goals are within scope.

Q6. Are resumes required for graduate students working with university PIs? Will the PI's resume suffice?

A6. For universities, the PI's resume will suffice.

Q5. Are resumes required for technical personnel only - or will functional support roles such as Contracts/Subcontract Administration also require resume submissions?

A5. Resumes should be provided for technical personnel and program security personnel.

Q4. For universities that are potential subcontractors, is the university system (e.g. multiple campuses under the same Board of Regents) as a whole required to conduct an OCI review/disclose an OCI as defined in FAR 9.503? If the requirement does not apply to the entire university system, would either of the following be acceptable: OCI review/disclosure as defined in FAR 9.503 by 1) only the university campus 2) only the principal investigators working on the program?

A4. All parties proposing on the effort should follow the requirement of the BAA in disclosing the relevant facts relating to any potential OCI for both the prime contractor and any subcontractors. This includes the university campus and/or the principal investigator.

Q3. Due to the level of detail requested by the BAA for certain artifacts, will the Government allow the use of 11x17 sheets to accommodate compliant submission of charts such as Microsoft Project Schedules and detailed Design Diagrams?

A3. Proposals should be formatted consistent with the guidance in the BAA.

Q2. Can proposers submit costs for COTS software that will be part of our solution/deliverable to demonstrate a capability that meets the TA requirements?

A2. Yes, proposers can submit costs for COTS software and it will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Q1. For pricing purposes, can you define the anticipated start date for each of the Technical Areas?

A1. For proposal pricing purposes, assume a program starting timeframe 120 days from the closing date.