Insight Phase 2 BAA
DARPA-BAA-13-07
Questions & Answers
As of January 9, 2013

The BAA posted at FBO takes precedence over any information contained herein.

Q16: For Phase 2, assuming all field tests take place at the NTC again, will NASA DAOF be funded by DARPA via the MIPR process as was done for Phase 1? And what does this cover/include?

A16: NASA will be funded Government-to-Government for each field test to cover hangar space, flight line and flight operations support, to include fuel. It is the responsibility of the performer to provide: aircraft, tow bars, and all associated support equipment and vehicles; IT equipment to handle test data; pilots, mechanics, and technicians to operate and maintain aircraft; PPRs/DoD forms; and shipping of all equipment and hardware to and from the facility for each field test.

Q15: This Phase 2 program intends to integrate capabilities into transition partner systems. Does that require a team with different skills than for a program that is purely research-focused?

A15: Your proposal should reflect the Phase 2 program focus as described in the BAA. This includes demonstrating an ability to deliver a "product," not just "research results," in alignment with the BAA's emphasis on maturation and transition.

Q14: Will there be a contractual requirement to have a formal Earned Value Management System (EVMS) on Insight Phase 2? Has a waiver been approved for DARPA to do away with that requirement? For the budget presented in the BAA, we estimate this requirement will divert as much as $10M of funding from technical and transition tasks to EVMS-mandated management oversight tasks.

A14: The current Insight R&D effort does not qualify as a Major Defense Acquisition Program and it is not a capital asset (as defined under OMB Circular A-11, Part 7) that requires special management attention. Therefore, DARPA will not require the use of an EVM system under a resultant award.

Q13: Can a proposer provide options (not a part of the base offering) for transition?

A13: DARPA's expectation is that the costs of all transition partner integration work will be included in the anticipated individual award amount of $80M.

This means that the *total* proposed costs (base plus any proposed options for transition work) should not exceed $80M.

Q12: How does DARPA, a technology developer, plan to transition many of the more innovative ideas that also involve novel changes to CONOPs and operational trade craft?

A12: It's important to emphasize that while we are developing revolutionary capabilities, they must meet the needs of our customers. We see this as a collaborative process that we seek to work hand in hand with our transition partners. The services see the advance of technology and they also see their changing mission focus. We are working with the services as they go through the process of determining what an analyst does, how s/he does their job, what s/he has to learn and know, etc.

Q11: If a proposer has deep familiarity with a sensor that might add to Insight, but all assets are government owned and operated by a different government program office, can these be proposed? What is the mechanism for getting DARPA to interact with its government counterparts to get the asset released as GFE under Insight? Would DARPA fund the other government program to get the asset for field tests, or is the other government program responsible?

A11: Per the BAA, proposals must clearly state any assumptions concerning what sensors (and associated services such as ground stations, data links, etc.) will be provided by DARPA and what sensors will be provided by the RDT&E/SI Team for each of the Phase 2 field tests. All sensors in the latter category shall be proposed as separately-priced options and must be applicable and adaptable to the venues and scenarios of each field test.

Per the BAA, if you are proposing the use of government furnished property, you must identify the property, the government POC that controls the asset (including contact information), the date(s) the asset is needed, and the anticipated cost for the use of the asset. DARPA will be responsible for providing any agreed upon GFE and will coordinate directly with the other Government agencies. Cost proposals should also include costing for a commercial alternative (if available) should the government asset be unavailable and the necessary lead time to acquire a contractor-provided asset.

It is not uncommon for other government assets to participate in our field tests as they provide an opportunity for other government programs to achieve their goals, whether or not directly related to Insight. If you know of any sensor (or algorithmic) candidates, we're interested.

Q10: In the Proposers' Day briefing slides (9-12), you described how Insight is Joint and applies to all echelons. However, there is also an Ops (the "3") vs. an Intel (the "2") split, where Ops wants information to "fight the fight" however they get it, and Intel might be more focused on tools to advance analyst work flow. Which is the highest priority Insight customer?

A10: As directed by Army G2 and Air Force A2, we are focused on the service DCGS enterprises, however, we interact with the "3s" in the services as well. It is generally understood that the purpose of intelligence is to support operations. We are well socialized, not just with the 2s, but also with the 3s in the services, but if there are people or organizations that you think we should be talking to, we're very interested. A view proffered to us by a "3" was that Insight could provide the intelligence layer of his service's COP (which includes many other layers such as transportation, fires, etc.).

Q9: The transition target was stated to be Army and Air Force, but many problems are Navy-specific. Is the Navy a transition partner candidate?

A9: Yes. We are interested in transition partners beyond Army and Air Force. Per the BAA, proposers shall recommend and work with DARPA and other Government entities to explore opportunities to leverage or establish new venues or environments to exercise the E&RM System. We are also interested in discussing this topic within the context of the RFI, DARPA-SN-13-03, Insight Program Transition Strategies. See http://www.darpa.mil/Opportunities/Solicitations/I2O_Solicitations.aspx for a copy of the RFI.

Q8: Given that the BAA states there will be only one award, is there any way to get a possibly interesting technical idea considered if you can't convince a prime to team?

A8: Under this BAA, no, unless the proposer can demonstrate the capability of achieving the program goals and objectives as described in the BAA. DARPA has many ways that you can present ideas. The best thing to do is go to the page on DARPA's website at http://www.darpa.mil/Opportunities/SBIR_STTR/ and click on the "Doing Business with DARPA" link on the left side of the page). This document describes the appropriate mechanisms for presenting ideas and/or approaching a program manager who may be interested in your research.

Q7: To help determine scope and scale of information system can you describe Phase 1 hardware and software architecture? If current activities are already in process within our organization to develop a similar capability, how much of Phase 1 product shall be used in Phase 2? Algorithms? Computing platform? Etc.?

A7: We've constructed two physical E&RM systems. One in a SIL, and one out at NTC. There is a compute cluster composed of approximately 60 nodes. Each node includes a pair of Intel Xeon hex core processors in the 2-3 GHz range. Each node has a local disk of around 1 TB. We actually subdivide each cluster to allow us to run multiple development "experiments" in parallel. There is also a backing high performance storage system with around 1 PB of disk. If you propose relocating this equipment to your SIL, identify any costing ground rules and assumptions in the cost volume.

There is no requirement to use all Phase 1 materials in your proposal. From the government perspective it's pretty simple: there's cost, there's schedule, and there's capability. We've established the cost and the schedule in the BAA. It's a question of what capability the proposer will provide within those constraints. You may substitute for, modify, add to, or delete Phase 1 materials with alternatives. Certainly if you have something better, we're interested. If you're just substituting your version of some component we've integrated into Insight and it's not better, that's probably not a great choice. Be sure to consider the impact of the added integration cost and risk of making any such changes. Please provide clear evidence of the merit of any such proposed changes.

Q6: Can you provide a list of Phase 1 contractors with POC information (email, phone, and name) for teaming contact and discussions? Some of these companies are very big with many divisions.

A6: This information is available via the teaming website at: https://www.csc-ballston.com/baa/InsightPhase2Teaming.htm.

Q5: Can a portion of the proposal, not the entire technical volume, be submitted separately which contains classified material? This would facilitate preparation of the technical volume in the open with subcontractors that doesn't include classified material.

A5: Yes, per Section IV.D.3 of the BAA, you can submit a portion of your proposal as a classified appendix. Proposers choosing to do so must notify DARPA by sending an email to InsightPhase2BAA@darpa.mil. These notifications must include the technical POC name, organization, and title of the unclassified proposal. Note, the page limit for the technical volume as specified in Section IV.B.1 includes both the unclassified sections and the classified appendix. By the same token, a fully classified technical volume has the same page limit as a fully unclassified technical volume.

Q4: Is non-sensor (e.g., non-imaging) data, such as text, available in structured form? Or will it be available in unstructured form?

A4: Both structured and unstructured text data exist and are made available to analysts today. Unstructured text is clearly relevant to Insight's mission. The program is interested in capabilities that provide a structured representation of unstructured text (e.g., extract entities, times, dates, significance). However, the program is not interested in developing these capabilities to process unstructured text. Kinds of unstructured text data for which the program would like structured analogs include soldier reports, SIGACTs, exploited documents, TACREPs, and human terrain.

Q3: Regarding options, is it okay to put a short description in the technical volume? Put more detail into an appendix? Or supply to DARPA on request? Which is preferred?

A3: All proposed information (base and any proposed options) must conform to the requirements (format, page limits, etc.) outlined in the BAA. Include option information relevant the technical aspects of your proposal in Volume 1 and information relevant to costing information (to include any costing ground rules and assumptions) in Volume 2.

Q2: What are the DARPA C&A requirements for the E&RM System?

A2: Per the BAA, certification and accreditation for collateral Secret shall be in accordance with DoDI 8510.01 requirements and ICD 503 for SCI.

Q1: Will the charts from Proposer's Day be made available?

A1: Yes. The charts presented at Proposers' Day have been posted to the DARPA I2O website at: http://www.darpa.mil/Our_Work/I2O/Programs/Insight.aspx. A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document (to include those asked at Proposers' Day) will be posted to the same site.