

**DARPA-RA-16-63 Young Faculty Award (YFA)**  
**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**  
**as of 10/19/16**

47Q: How do I confirm if I have an account with <https://baa.darpa.mil>?

47A: An account with <https://baa.darpa.mil> will have an associated email and username. If you have the email address and have forgotten the username, you may click on the "username recovery" link on the bottom right hand side of the <https://baa.darpa.mil> web page. If you do not have a username or associated email, it is best to create a new account.

46Q: How are we to anonymize sections ii-vii of the Executive Summary (page 2 of the Executive Summary template provided as Attachment 1 to the BAA)? The argument of why the research will be successful often hinges on previous work performed by the PI.

46A: Proposers should be able to discuss sections ii-vii without naming specific personnel or organizations involved. Proposers are expected to exercise good common sense to ensure the idea expressed in their submission stands alone. Executive Summaries will be undergo a "blind" review - a common practice at many conferences and journals. If desired, a proposer could provide any references related to sections ii-vii that includes specific names and organizations in the bibliography.

45Q: How are we to anonymize the Executive Summary bibliography?

45A: The Executive Summary's optional bibliography should not be anonymized, only sections ii-vii.

44Q: How do I submit my Executive Summary for consideration?

44A: Please review Section IV.E.1.a of the RA. Executive Summaries must be submitted via <https://baa.darpa.mil>.

43Q: The RA states, "Proposers must provide a listing of federal support (past, current, and pending). This list must include the sponsor, amount, and performance dates of all federally-funded research efforts and should be present on the submission cover sheet as indicated in Section IV." Does this mean that past awards (that are no longer active) should be included? Should we include proposals that were declined by the sponsor?

43A: Past awards, including those that are no longer active should be included. Proposals that were declined do not need to be included.

42Q: Are early career staff scientists at FFRDCs eligible to apply for the award?

42A: Yes, as long as they meet the 8 year eligibility window.

▲▲▲New Q/A▲▲▲

41Q: How can I edit the attachments?

41A: The RA posting to [www.fbo.gov](http://www.fbo.gov) has been amended. The attachments provided on Amendments 2 and 3 of this FBO listing provide the word and PPT versions of the required template files, so they may be downloaded and edited.

40Q: On page 2 of the Executive Summary Template, what parts of the text should I keep and what parts should I delete?

40A: If desired, you may delete all of the red text. Red text is instructional. You may also delete all text save for the outline letters ("A, B, C, a, b, c...etc.).

39Q: May I delete the red text in the template?

39A: Yes, this is instructional text.

38Q: Does the Executive Summary submission require a budget?

38A: The total proposed cost should be provided on the cover sheet; no additional budget backup is necessary for the executive summary phase.

37Q: On the Executive Summary template cover sheet (page 1), the required information does not fit into a single page. How should I expand this table? Should I go to a new page?

37A: The Cover page may be expanded to 2 or more pages in order to accommodate all of the requested information. There should however, be a page break between all cover pages and items A through F of the Executive Summary Outline. Similarly, there should be a page break between item F and the optional bibliography.

36Q: The Executive Summary submission is requested as a .zip file. Should I fill out the template as a single pdf file and then convert it to a .zip file?

36A: The elements of the complete Executive Summary (cover page, items A-F, and optional bibliography) may be provided as a .zip containing one file, or a .zip containing multiple, separate files. Document files may be in .pdf, .ppt, .pptx, .odx, .doc, .docx, .xls, or .xlsx formats.

35Q: Is YFA still soliciting ideas for TA 15, "Reprogramming Larval Behavior in the Sea"?

35A: No. Amendment 1 to DARPA-RA-16-63 has removed Topic Area 15 from consideration. DARPA is no longer soliciting YFA executive summaries or full proposals in this TA.

34Q: My idea fits into multiple topic areas. May I submit to multiple topic areas and/or submit multiple applications?

34A: You may submit only one YFA executive summary per topic area and only one full proposal to the RA (total). Proposers must specify ONE and only one TA for their submission and identify this on the cover page. If your research idea spans multiple topics, then you should choose one, best-suited topic for that idea. Do not submit the same idea to multiple topic areas. DARPA reserves the right to assign proposals to a different topic area than indicated by the proposer. This question and answer (34Q) supersedes 2Q as outlined in Amendment 3 to DARPA-RA-16-63.

33Q: There are 4 templates provided with the RA. Do I have to use these templates?

33A: Yes. The templates listed below are required documents. Failure to use these templates and/or fill them out as per RA guidance will result in an Executive Summary and/or Full Proposal to be determined as non-conforming.

For Executive Summaries:

- Executive Summary Template – Due on November 1, 2016

For Full Proposals:

- Technical and Management Proposal Template – Due on January 18, 2017
- Cost Proposal Template – Due on January 18, 2017
- Executive Summary Slide Template – Due on January 18, 2017

32Q: The RA specifies single-investigator proposal only. Am I allowed to include subcontractors, vendors, or other faculty members, if they are included in a supporting role, and not listed as a Co-PI?

32A: This RA solicits single Principal Investigator (PI) proposals; no co-PIs are allowed. However, investigators will be given the opportunity to propose teaming if the nature of the proposal requires it. Combined, teaming and subcontract awards will be limited to no more than 30% of the total grant value. It is preferred that potential team members be university professors fitting the proposer eligibility requirements in Section III. Specific content, communications, networking, and team formation will be the sole responsibility of the participants.

31Q: I am a young investigator at a non-profit research institute that does not have tenure-track positions. Do I qualify as part of an equivalent non-profit research institution?

31A: If the proposer is from a non-profit science and technology research institution a determination of eligibility must be made using the following guidance:

- The PI is within 8 years of the appointment hire date.
- The employing organization does not offer tenure track appointments.
- The appointment is a continuing appointment (soft-money appointments and/or visiting appointments do not apply and will not be considered).

30Q: Is a Ph.D. required?

30A: No.

29Q: I am considering applying to other Young Investigator programs sponsored by other agencies. Does that disqualify me from proposing to (or being selected for) the DARPA YFA grant?

29A: No. As described in Sec III.A “Eligible Applicants”, submission to other programs by DARPA or other agencies is not restricted. Recipients of non-YFA DARPA awards are eligible to propose. Proposers must provide a listing of federal support (past, current,

and pending). This list must include the sponsor, amount, and performance dates of all federally-funded research efforts and should be present on the cover sheet as indicated in Section IV.B.

28Q: I would like to request a meeting with a specific YFA topic POC. Is this possible?

28A: No. Unfortunately, due to the high volume of responses to this RA, YFA topic POCs are unable to accommodate such meetings. However, if you have specific technical or administrative questions that may be shared with the general public, you may send them to [YFA2017@darpa.mil](mailto:YFA2017@darpa.mil).

27Q: Under what topic area is my research most applicable?

27A: It is up to you to choose the most appropriate topic area for your proposed research. As stated in the RA, please note that "DARPA reserves the right to assign proposals to a different topic area than that which was indicated by the proposer."

26Q: I am [a non-U.S. citizen/a Permanent Resident/Green Card/etc.]; can I apply to YFA? Do I need to be able to obtain a security clearance to be eligible for YFA?

26A: There is no language in the RA prohibiting a non-U.S. citizen/Permanent Resident/Green Card holder/etc. from applying to this RA; all such persons MAY apply to this RA as long as the application comes from a U.S. institution. It is NOT a requirement of the RA that proposers be eligible to obtain a U.S. security clearance.

25Q: I started my assistant professor position in the January of 2009. How is the 8-year time window calculated?

25A: The 8-year time window is calculated from your date of hire for your current tenure-track appointment to assistant or associate professor, to the date that proposals are due (January 18, 2017). If you were appointed to a tenure-track position before January 18, 2009, you are not eligible to apply.

24Q: If I was previously in a tenured position, but have changed universities and am currently in a tenure-track position, am I still eligible to submit a proposal?

24A: As long as you meet the eligibility requirements of the RA. Tenured and untenured applicants are eligible as long as they are still within the 8-year date of hire window.

23Q: If I am an Assistant Professor not in a tenure-track position (even though my institution offers tenure-track positions) am I eligible to submit a proposal?

23A: Unfortunately no; eligible applicants must be tenure-track or tenured professors (or their equivalents) at the time of submission.

22Q: Are both the Executive summary slide and biosketch included in the 8-page limit for the Technical and Management proposal?

22A: Please review the formatting guidelines in Section IV.B.2 of the RA. The Executive Summary Slide is excluded from the 8 page limit. Biosketches may be included under “Personnel, Qualifications, and Commitments” and will count toward the page limit.

21Q: Will the YFA solicitation go out every year, and will the topic areas vary over the years?

21A: We are unable to make good-faith predictions about future solicitations. While this program has received positive feedback in the past, the future of the program depends on the availability of funding. The topic areas for YFA solicitations tend to vary, but are designed to meet the needs of DARPA Program Managers at the time that the solicitation is issued. Some new technical areas could be added while others may change only slightly.

20Q: Can I view a sample of a previously-awarded proposal?

20A: No.

19Q: Past YFA eligibility criteria prohibited applicants from submitting to the YFA program more than 3 times within the period of eligibility, is this still a restriction?

19A: No. The 3 year max submission rule no longer applies to this program. Applicants can submit to the YFA program as long as they meet all other eligibility criteria.

18Q: I am an untenured Assistant professor. However, my promotion and tenure package is currently being reviewed. If I am granted tenure sometime on or before January 18, 2017, am I eligible for this DARPA YFA?

18A: Yes, you may still apply to the YFA program even if you are tenured as long as you are within the 8 years of having been appointed to a tenure-track position on the proposal due date of January 18, 2017.

17Q: Should we include a budget for equipment, and is there a funding limitation on equipment purchases?

17A: If you will need to purchase equipment to perform your research, then it should be included in your budget via a priced Bill-of-Materials. (All equipment priced at over \$5,000 requires supporting documentation, such as a vendor quote.) There is no specific limit for equipment purchases; however, your total budget for the 24-month base period cannot exceed \$500,000.

16Q: Is it recommended for proposers to include a budget for the Director’s Fellowship in the third year?

16A: Yes. As noted in Section IV, the Cost Proposal should include a summary of total program costs by month and Government Fiscal Year (GFY). Summaries should include

the base and Director's Fellowship Option. Note that there is a maximum budget of \$500,000 for the Director's Fellowship.

15Q: If I took a leave of absence (i.e. maternity, sabbatical, etc.) within 8 years of being hired to a tenure-track position, should this period be included in the 8 year window?

15A: Situations like this are highly case-dependent. Each university or research institution maintains a tenure-track appointment date that begins a "tenure clock" for each employee, and this is the date that should be listed in a proposal. If the institution has approved leaves of absence that have not counted directly towards the employee's "tenure clock", these dates may be listed on the cover sheet of the submission under "PI's Approved Leaves of Absence, if any." DARPA will only accept the official date according to the university. If the time between the tenure-track appointment date and full proposal submission deadline exceeds the 8 year eligibility window, DARPA will expect to see the excess amount justified in the approved leaves of absence section. Failure to provide any/all relevant information relating to the PIs eligibility on the cover page of the submission may result in the proposal being determined non-conforming and subject to rejection without review.

14Q: Are preliminary results required, allowed but not required, or not allowed in this solicitation?

14A: Preliminary results are allowed but not required.

13Q: Are Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) eligible for grant funding under this RA?

13A: Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) and Government entities (e.g., Government/National laboratories, military educational institutions, etc.) are subject to applicable direct competition limitations and cannot propose to this RA in any capacity unless they meet the following conditions: (1) FFRDCs must clearly demonstrate that the proposed work is not otherwise available from the private sector; and (2) FFRDCs must provide a letter on official letterhead from their sponsoring organization citing the specific authority establishing their eligibility to propose to Government solicitations and compete with industry, and their compliance with the associated FFRDC sponsor agreement's terms and conditions. This information is required for FFRDCs proposing to be prime contractors or subawardees. For more information see Section III "Eligibility" of the RA.

12Q: The research announcement specifies that the tables included in the cost proposal should be provided in MS Excel format with formula calculations intact to allow traceability of the cost proposal numbers. It is our experience with grants.gov submissions that data is flattened during the submission process. How should we submit these files?

12A: Please submit the files in the format specified according to the Research Announcement guidelines. As there is no page limit for the cost proposal, you are welcome to display a breakdown of numbers in a format that provides the greatest clarity. If selected for award, the contracting officer will be able to request the working MS Excel file(s) from you directly.

11Q: DARPA-RA-16-63 says: "Submissions responding to this RA should clearly describe the DoD problem being addressed..." Are there any recommended resources to learn about specific DoD problems?

11A: DARPA seeks to understand and solve a wide variety of DoD problems. Current research efforts can be found on the DARPA website, located here: <http://www.darpa.mil/our-research>. Several of the technology offices also have "focus" or "thrust" areas. These should not be treated as comprehensive lists, and DARPA leaves it up to the proposer to suggest potential applications for his or her research.

10Q: Is there a place in the submission package to include Letters of Support and Collaboration?

10A: Letters of support can be included in Volume I, Section I of the proposal (if you choose to submit them), and will count against the page limit. For subcontractors, letters of collaboration should be included Section 2 of the required Volume 2: Cost Proposal (Attachment 3 the RA).

9Q: Is a Letter of Support from the University Department Head required for the full proposal submission?

9A: No. However, an official transmittal letter is required for a full proposal submission. This is typically a brief, signed statement from an official at the submitter's organization (perhaps a Director of Research or Sponsored Programs) in support of the research proposed. Please reach out to your University's Office of Sponsored Research for further information and guidance.

8Q: What is the effort requirement for the PI? We plan on having other FTEs working on this project so we want to budget appropriately for the PI.

8A: DARPA cannot determine this for you. The PI's level of effort should be substantial enough to ensure that the proposed research can be completed during the grant period.

7Q: My proposed idea is **[insert research idea]**. Is this of interest? Can I get confirmation that my research fits within the scope of one of the 22 Topic Areas listed in DARPA-RA-16-63?

7A: The Topic Areas are purposefully broad to allow proposers to have maximum creativity in their responses. No further guidance will be provided outside of the technical information listed in the RA. Proposers are strongly encouraged to submit an executive summary in advance of a full proposal to determine DARPA's interest and minimize the effort and expense of preparing an out of scope proposal.

6Q: Does the limit of \$500,000 for the Base Award include indirect costs?

6A: Yes.

5Q: The RA requests that Cost Volumes clearly identify the individual labor categories of employees supporting the proposed research. Is there a DARPA list of labor categories and associated qualifications?

5A: There is no such list maintained by DARPA. You may use the categories established by your institution.

4Q: May proposers include research students or visitors in the proposed travel budget?

4A: Proposers should submit a realistic and appropriate travel budget. If you propose a travel budget for multiple individuals you will be expected to justify this in the cost proposal. All requests for travel funding (for both the Principal Investigator and others) will be reviewed by the DARPA Program Manager as well as the Grants Officer for those proposals selected for award. Any requests for travel funding that are deemed excessive will likely be reduced during negotiations, if selected.

3Q: According to the RA, proposers intending to include animals in their study need to include a document detailing animal use. Where should this document be placed in the proposal package?

3A: For projects anticipating animal use, proposals should briefly describe plans for Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) review and approval. A description of these plans should be included in the Volume I: Technical and Management Proposal under "Administrative and National Policy Requirements" (Section 12.e of the mandatory template provided as Attachment 2 to the RA).

~~2Q: My idea fits into multiple topic areas. May I submit to multiple topic areas and/or submit multiple applications?~~

~~2A: No, you may submit only one YFA application, and may specify only one topic area. Proposers must specify ONE and only one of TA for their submission and identify this on the cover page. If your research idea spans multiple topics, then you should choose one, best suited topic. DARPA reserves the right to assign proposals to a different topic area than indicated by the proposer.~~

1A: I am interested in submitting a proposal to the 2017 YFA Research Announcement (RA), but my research topic does not fall under any of the 22 Topic Areas (TAs). Does DARPA encourage proposals outside of these 22 topic areas?

1A: Unfortunately, no. If you feel that your research is not directly related to one of the 22 topic areas, you may look into submitting a proposal to another active DARPA solicitation, including the DARPA Office-wide Broad Agency Announcements (<http://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/office-wide-broad-agency-announcements>). It is important to note that any such submission cannot be referred to as a "YFA" proposal. Prior to any submission, you should carefully review technical area description to ensure the proposed concept is in line with that solicitation and/or office's technology investment portfolio.