

DARPA BAA HR001120S0019 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1. Can an academic PI be a collaborator on more than one proposal for a single Small Business Opportunity (SBO)?

A: Yes.

Q2. HR001120S0019 BAA, it states Multiple awards are anticipated. DARPA may award FAR-based government contracts (Firm-Fixed Price or Cost-Plus Reimbursement) or Other Transactions for Prototypes agreement (under the authority of 10 U.S.C. § 2371b) as determined by the Contracting Officer. The amount of resources made available under each SBO issued under this BAA will depend on the quality of the proposals received and the availability of funds.

A: Contracting Officers tend to use the vehicle that makes the most sense for the work being done. You are welcome to suggest a contract type in your proposal, with the understanding that it is a point of negotiation after a firm is selected for award.

Q3. Would DARPA consider a Phase I proposal with Period of Performance longer than the 12 months requested?

A. The period of performance is determined by the Program Manager writing the topic. In order to see a project through a possible two-year Phase II, the longest period of performance for a feasibility study is 12 months.

Q4. SBIR typically requires 2/3 of research to be performed by the small business prime. Would DARPA consider a proposal in which the total small-business share is greater than 2/3, but that funding is divided between the small-business prime and a small-business subcontractor?

A. Both the work performed and the funding for SBIR and STTR awards are set by statute and the Small Business Administration Policy Directive (https://www.sbir.gov/sites/default/files/SBIR-STTR_Policy_Directive_2019.pdf), sec 6(a)(2):

“Performance of Work Requirements. For SBIR Phase I, a minimum of two-thirds of the research or analytical effort must be performed by the Awardee. For SBIR Phase II, a minimum of one-half of the research or analytical effort must be performed by the Awardee. Occasionally, deviations from these SBIR requirements may occur, and must be approved in writing by the Funding Agreement officer after consultation with the agency SBIR/STTR program manager/coordinator.”

Q5. Can you clarify if only one research institution is allowed for Phase I proposals? On page 12 of the attached BAA, it states:

“For STTR proposals, a minimum of 40% of the research and/or analytical work in Phase I must be conducted by the small business concern and a minimum of 30% of the effort performed by the single research institution, as defined below.”

However, on page 13, it states:

“For both SBIR and STTR, Phase I and Phase II/DP2 proposals, all research or research and development work must be performed by the small business concern and its subcontractors in the United States.”

A: The requirement is for a single research institution to perform a minimum of 30% of the work. That would not prohibit more than one RI performing as a subcontractor, but you cannot split the 30% between 2 RIs. The 30% of work not mandated for either the RI or the prime can be subcontracted out, so there may be more than one subcontractor on an STTR project.

Q6. The solicitation says that the 5 page commercialization section does not count against the 20 page limit, however, this is not stated in DARPA’s mandatory Phase I template. Please clarify whether or not the 5 page commercialization section counts toward the 20 page limit for the Phase I proposals.

A: The 5 page commercialization section does not count toward the 20 page limit.

Q7. I have recently been awarded a Phase I SBIR grant, and want to know if I am eligible to apply for the DP2 grant, or if I have to complete the Phase I requirements first. Can a DP2 grant be awarded for a new idea that is related to my current Phase I grant?

A: Award of a Direct to Phase II is dependent in part by demonstration of Phase I/feasibility. If your firm's work in the area has progressed to that point, then your proposal could be competitive, but it must be submitted against an active SBO. The SBIR/STTR Program does not accept unsolicited proposals.

Q8. We are interested in proposing a BAA for one of the key technology areas (Space Platforms -- Space Vehicles; Launch Vehicles; Space Propulsion [Integrated HighPayoff Rocket Propulsion Technology (IHRPT)], but note that space propulsion is not one of the SBO’s in amendment 1. Is the intent to release future SBOs for the key technology areas, or will DARPA evaluate proposals based on the key technology areas?

A: There is no plan at DARPA to release topics specific to each Key Technology Area; this is merely a way to categorize research efforts for the DOD as a whole. Evaluation is not specifically based on the technology area either.

Q9. The first three topics don't appear to be in our area of expertise, what is the best way to stay abreast of further topic releases over the coming months?

A: Information is posted on the DARPA.mil Opportunities site, so firms can check it weekly: <https://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/opportunities>

Q10. For a US company, can the PI be a non-US citizen?

A: Yes, but there are limits on where they can be from if it's an ITAR topic. They usually have to have a H1B visa.

Q11. Are non-US vendors allowed to be used?

A: The prime must be more than 50% US-owned - see 13 CFR § 121.702

Q12. Can non-US entities be used as sub-contractors? If so, is there a cost percentage limit

A: Yes, but they can't do more than 1/3 of the work for SBIR.

Q13. I am a faculty member who works in program synthesis. Am I eligible for this program or is it only for companies in the industry?

A: This DARPA Small Business Opportunity (SBO) must be performed by a small business. Proposers must qualify as a small business concern according to the eligibility requirements set out in Sec 3 of the BAA

(<https://beta.sam.gov/opp/b8abeb02f16a4450b2c2f859fc00c177/view>).

Q14. Is an OT proposal allowable under this DP2 SBIR (referencing section 2.1 of the BAA)?

A: OT instruments are allowable for this DP2 effort: keep in mind the contracting instrument is at the sole discretion of the government contracting officer.

Q15. Is there preference given to non-OT submissions, or are OT and non-OT given the same priority?

A: Proposals are given the same consideration regardless of proposed contracting instrument.

Q16. Is there any difference in the level of detail required for the cost basis (Cost Volume 3) of OT vs non-OT?

A: The cost volume should be as detailed as possible, regardless of instrument proposed.

Q17. In the cost volume 3 template on the contractor tab, there is a column for “type of subcontract”, with one option being a FFP. Is the subcontractor required to submit detailed cost basis data, or just FFP pricing for each milestone?

A. A fully disclosed cost proposal as detailed as the prime Offeror’s cost proposal including support documentation is required to be submitted by all proposed subcontractors, regardless of preferred contracting instrument.