

CRYSTAL WEBINAR QUESTIONS

4/2/25

Question: Understanding that purely data driven modeling is out of scope, are approaches that incorporate AI/ML techniques in addition or as part of a Multi-physics modeling approach responsive to this solicitation? E.g. the development and use of ML-potentials as part of MD simulations, or using AI/ML as part of a multiscale modeling approach.

Answer: AI/ML techniques that are used as a component to or supplementing multi-physics modeling is permitted. For example, the development and use of ML-potentials as a part of molecular dynamics simulations is allowed.

Question: Can you please clarify the definition of "multi-physics" in the CRYSTAL ARC. Could you elaborate on the types of physical phenomena that we are interested in? How many types of physical phenomena or the number of simulation methods (e.g., molecular dynamics simulations or continuum methods) are we expected to propose to make our model "multi-physics"?

Answer: Your model should be capable of theoretical first-principles modeling spanning from molecular scale to device or wafer scale. We do not specify the number of physical phenomena or number of simulation methods in our definition of multi-physics.

Question: According to DARPA-EA-25-02 FFRDCs and Government Entities are to contact the specific ARC Opportunity to determine if there are any limitations to FFRDCs or Government Entities responding. Are there any such limitations for CRYSTAL?

Answer: Yes. If you are an FFRDC or government entity, please email crystal@darpa.mil to receive additional guidance.

Question: My first question involves the re-submission process. From today's presentation, I understood that you will provide feedback for an abstract if it is not acceptable. However, if I submit an early abstract and it is acceptable, am I allowed to re-submit (i.e., added info or a concept that wasn't in the original abstract) or is an abstract submitted and accepted considered to be 'final'?

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Answer: Once an abstract is submitted for evaluation it is considered final. Following the evaluation of the abstract, each offeror will receive a letter from DARPA inviting them or not inviting them to submit an Oral Proposal Package which includes an Oral Presentation. We would like to note that multiple abstracts from a single organization is allowable as long as the proposed personnel does not conflict with an abstract currently under evaluation.

Question: If the abstract describes more than one of the assessment methods (to better test the model), will that be considered non-compliant?

Answer: No, an abstract may describe more than one assessment option.

Question: Is the ARC awarded to company/institute or the person? What happens when the person moves from one company to another during the award POP.

Answer: Per page 7 of DARPA-EA-25-02, "Organizations may submit multiple Abstracts, but since individuals are expected to be proposed at or near full-time for each effort, an individual may not be Key Personnel on more than one OT award simultaneously. In addition, multiple abstracts or OPPs proposing the same individual as Key Personnel will not be reviewed concurrently. If the Government receives an Abstract with an individual proposed as Key Personnel while another Abstract or OPP is under review with the same individual, the subsequent Abstract will be deemed non-conforming."

Question: What happens when the person moves from one company to another during the award POP?

Answer: Per page 6 of DARPA-EA-25-02, "The milestone payments will be contingent on the proposed individual(s) continuing work on the proposed ARC idea for the entire Period of Performance at their proposed LOE.

Question: Is it possible to exceed the \$10,000 limit on ODCs?

Answer: No, ODCs are limited to what is listed in the Master Solicitation.

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Question: Considering the program will have no subcontractor participation, what are possibilities for interactions between government labs and submitting teams?

Answer: If awarded an Other Transaction Agreement, there may be the possibility for interactions amongst selected performers and government entities.