

Virtual-Integrated Twin for Autonomous Lifesaving (VITAL)

DARPA-PS-26-26

Doing Business with DARPA

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March 31, 2026





VITAL - Doing Business with DARPA

- Program Solicitation (PS) will be posted at SAM.gov website
- Pay attention to due dates and all submission instructions
- Award Instrument Type
 - Other Transaction (OT) for Prototype
- DARPA expects the proposed solutions to be **fundamental**
- Anticipated Important Dates:
 - Industry Day: **March 31, 2026**
 - PS Posted: **April 2026**
 - Submit questions by: **TBD**
 - Abstracts Due: **TBD**
 - Oral Presentation Proposal (OPP) Package Due Date: **TBD (By Government invitation only)**

**NOTE: If there is any discrepancy between what is presented today and the PS, the PS takes precedence.
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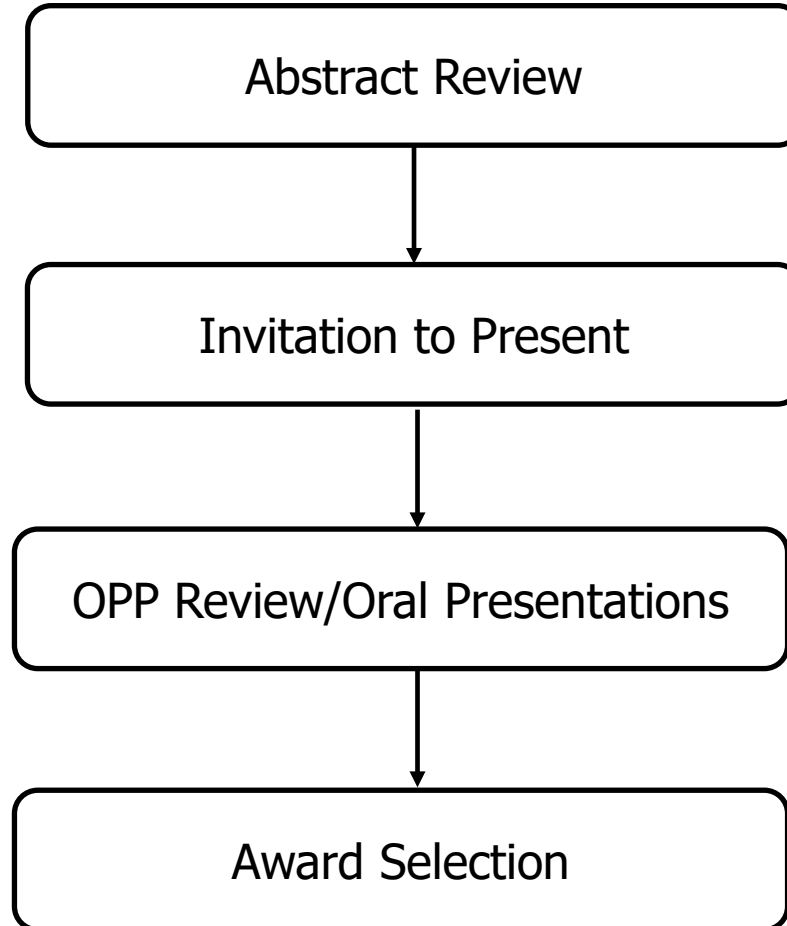
Acquisition Strategy

- Multiple awards are anticipated.
 - The number of awards will be based on the quality of the proposals.
- This is a **36-month**, two-phase program.
 - Phase 1 – 15 months
 - Phase 2 – 21 months
- This PS is soliciting for all Phases and Focus Areas.

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Acquisition Strategy



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Abstract Evaluation

- Abstracts are **required** in order to be considered for an invitation to submit an OPP Package and present.
- Attachments A and B of the PS are **required** when submitting an abstract.
- Must submit through **BAAT!**

Abstract evaluation criteria are listed in descending order of importance. Individual abstracts will be evaluated against the evaluation criteria described below:

Technical Approach: The proposed technical approach is innovative and rigorous, and key technical challenges and risks are identified.

Technical Ability: The offerors demonstrate an ability, if selected, to achieve the goals of the VITAL program.

Budget: The estimated costs are reasonable, realistic, and affordable for the technical approach and accurately reflect the technical goals and objectives of the Program Solicitation.

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Oral Presentation Proposal Package Submission – Anticipated Documents

If selected to be invited to submit an OPP package and present based on the abstract review, the following documents will be required for a complete proposal submission:

- 1. Title Page**
- 2. Oral Presentation Slides**
- 3. Model Other Transaction (OT) for Prototype Agreement**
 - Task Description Document
 - Report Requirements
 - Schedule of Milestones and Payments
 - Agreement Officer's Representative Appointment Memo
 - Property and Equipment list (if applicable)
 - Performer Attestation
 - Associate Performer Agreement template (if applicable)
 - Certifications for agreement
 - Property/Equipment (if applicable)
 - IP Assertion (if applicable) - See PS Section 6.5 Intellectual Property
- 4. Detailed Cost Proposal Spreadsheet (subawardees/subcontractors are required to fill out as well) and Schedule of Milestones and Payments (Milestone Schedule)**
- 5. Technical Clarification Document (TCD) - The TCD provides proposers with an opportunity to respond to questions and feedback raised by the program office. Additionally, proposers should use the TCD to clearly describe their experimental plans, measurement models, and implementation details, including how these will be used to evaluate the proposed approach and demonstrate achievement of program metrics and milestones. (7 pages)**
- 6. Additional Narrative - clearly articulate your complete experimental plans, define the precise measurement models you will use to gauge performance, and provide specific implementation details. Crucially, the companion narrative must function as a comprehensive guide that allows for the evaluation of your proposed approach and demonstrates a clear path to achieving all program metrics and milestones. (7 pages)**

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Oral Presentation Proposal Package Evaluation

OPP Evaluation Criteria: OPP evaluation criteria are listed in descending order of importance. Individual presentations will be evaluated against the evaluation criteria described below:

Technical Approach: The proposed technical approach is reasonable, feasible, and innovative. The approach demonstrates an innovative yet feasible approach to address the identified technical risks and challenges and meet TA metrics.

Relevant Qualifications: Personnel and/or company experience and qualifications are accurate, relevant, and demonstrate the ability of the offeror to meet the technical goals of the program.

Budget: The costs associated with experimentation, instrumentation, and measurement models should be clearly described and well-justified. The proposed solution is reasonable, realistic, and affordable for the proposed effort.

Data Rights: Extent to which data assertions allow the Government to realize the objectives of the VITAL program.

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Oral Presentations

Each oral presentation will be scheduled for 60 minutes, allowing for a strictly limited 40-minute presentation time, and up to 20 minutes of questions and answers following.

Oral presentations are subject to the following constraints:

- No more than 20 slides in PDF or PowerPoint format
- No smaller than 12-point font (except for footnotes)
- Video demonstrations are allowed
- Files containing Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) must be encrypted when sending over the Internet. If the file size is too large for email, send an email to the address above for further instructions.
- Appendix Slides – Summative risk matrix and summary table (using conventions from Attachment D – Risk Matrix). Required as part of OPP package, but do not plan to brief during the oral presentation.

The Government intends for Oral Presentations to be done in-person over the course of 1-2 days in the Washington, DC metro area; the Government reserves the right to record presentations. Virtual presentations will be allowed, on a case-by-case basis, where in-person attendance is not possible. Travel costs for oral presentation will not be reimbursed by the Government.

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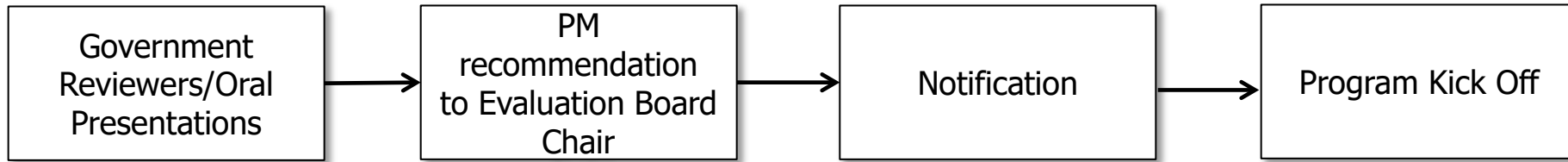
Oral Presentation Proposal Package Tips

- Read the PS carefully – **Non-conforming proposals may be rejected** without review.
- Please ensure review of eligibility and statutory requirements when requesting an **Other Transaction for Prototype**.
- Proposal Submissions:
 - Other Transaction for Prototype Agreement are submitted through **BAAT**.
- Please submit questions to VITAL@darpa.mil.
- Monitor SAM.gov for potential PS amendments and VITAL website for Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).
- Carefully read DARPA Fundamental Research Risk-Based Security Review Process for Fundamental Research.

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Oral Presentation Proposal Package Review-Awards Process



- No common Statement of Work – Proposals are evaluated on individual merit and relevance as it relates to the stated research goals/objectives rather than against each other.
- Proposals are evaluated for strengths and weaknesses relative to the criteria published in the PS.
- The DARPA contracting office will contact the selected performers and begin the negotiation process.
- Government reserves the right to select for award all, some (partial selection), or none of the proposals received.

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Teaming & Eligibility Information

- **Non-U.S. organizations and/or individuals:** Non-U.S. organizations and/or individuals may participate to the extent that such participants comply with any necessary nondisclosure agreements, security regulations, export control laws, and other governing statutes applicable under the circumstances.
- **FFRDC, UARCs and Government agencies/labs:** Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) and University-Affiliated Research Centers (UARCs) are subject to applicable direct competition limitations and cannot propose to this PS in any capacity unless they meet the following conditions: **(1) FFRDCs/UARCs must clearly demonstrate, with specific details, that the proposed work, expertise, and facilities are not otherwise available from the private sector, and (2) FFRDCs/UARCs 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 awardees or subawardees. FFRDC/UARC proposals that do not include these elements may be deemed non-conforming and removed from consideration.

FFRDCs/UARCs proposing as prime awardees must be able to accept an OT for Prototype agreement as the award instrument. FFRDCs/UARCs that can only be funded through their existing sponsor contracts should not submit an abstract directly to this PS.

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Teaming & Eligibility Information (Continued)

- **Government Entities (e.g., Government/National laboratories, military educational institutions, etc.):** Subject to applicable direct competition limitations. Government entities must clearly demonstrate that the work is not otherwise available from the private sector and provide written documentation citing the specific statutory authority and contractual authority, if relevant, establishing their ability to propose to Government solicitations, and compete with industry. This information is required for Government Entities invited to submit OPPs as either awardees or subawardees.

Government Entities submitting abstracts as prime awardees must be able to accept an OT for Prototype agreement as the award instrument. Government Entities that can only be funded through their existing sponsor contracts should not submit abstracts directly to this PS.

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Teaming & Eligibility Information (Continued)

- **Organizational Conflicts of Interest:** An organization cannot simultaneously provide scientific, engineering, technical assistance (SETA), advisory and assistance services (A&AS), or similar support to DARPA and be a technical performer. All facts relevant to the existence or potential existence of Organizational Conflicts of Interest (OCI) must be disclosed in the Administrative and National Policy Requirements document, should the proposer be invited to submit an OPP.

If SETA, A&AS, or similar support is being or was provided to any DARPA office(s), the OPP must include in the Administrative and National Policy Requirements document:

1. The name of the DARPA office receiving the support;
2. The prime contract number;
3. Identification of proposed team member (subawardee, consultant) providing the support;
4. An OCI mitigation plan.

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DARPA's Fundamental Research Risk-Based Security Review Process (FRRBS)

- DARPA's Fundamental Research Risk-Based Security Review Process (FRRBS) is an **adaptive risk management security program** designed to help protect the critical technology and performer intellectual property associated with DARPA's research projects by identifying the possible vectors of undue foreign influence. DARPA will create risk assessments of all proposed Senior/Key Personnel selected for negotiation of fundamental research awards (to include cooperative agreements and Other Transactions). The DARPA risk assessment process will be conducted separately from the DARPA scientific review process and adjudicated prior to final award.
- Applicable to fundamental research efforts, awarded using Other Transaction for Prototype Agreement.
- For additional information on this process, please visit Proposer Instructions link below.
 - Other Transaction agreements: <https://www.darpa.mil/about/offices/contracts-management/proposer-transactions>

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Competition Sensitive Information

DARPA policy is to treat all submissions as procurement sensitive, and to disclose their contents only for the purpose of scientific review & source selection.

- Restrictive notices notwithstanding, during the evaluation process, submissions may be handled by support contractors for administrative purposes and/or to assist with technical evaluation.
- All DARPA support contractors performing this role are expressly prohibited from performing DARPA sponsored technical research and are bound by appropriate nondisclosure agreements.
- Input on technical aspects of the proposals may be solicited by DARPA from non-Government consultants/experts who are strictly bound by the appropriate non-disclosure requirements.

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Award Information

DARPA reserves the right(s) to:

- Fund proposals in phases and may or may not exercise the option period for continued work at the end of one or more of the phases
- Remove proposers from award consideration should the parties fail to reach agreement on award terms, conditions and cost/price

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