

Expeditionary Power- and Energy-Dense Implementations (ExPEDitions) DARPA-SN-26-70 (DARPA-PS-26-118) Doing Business with DARPA

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ExPEditions - Doing Business with DARPA

- Special Notice DARPA-SN-26-70 posted on SAM.gov
- PS DARPA-PS-26-118 is anticipated to be published early next week
- Pay attention to due dates and all submission instructions
- Award Instrument Type - Other Transaction (OT) for Prototype Agreement
- Important Dates (anticipated):
 - Industry's Day: **May 14, 2026**
 - PS Posting Date: **May 18, 2026**
 - Questions Due Date: **June 5, 2026, 5:00 PM, Eastern Time (ET) (3 weeks)**
 - Abstracts Due Date: **June 15, 2026 by 5:00 PM (ET) (4 weeks)**
 - Notification to Proposers for Full Proposal: **June 24, 2026 by 5:00 PM (ET) (5.5 weeks)**
 - Proposal Due Date and Time: **July 20, 2026 by 5:00 PM (ET) (9 weeks)**

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Other Transaction (OT) Authority

- The Government reserves the right to award an **OT for Prototype under 10 U.S.C. § 4022**, or make no award at all.
- Not a Request for Proposal (RFP)- FAR Part 15 does not apply
- Not a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA)- FAR Part 35 does not apply.

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Use of OTs for Prototype

10 U.S.C 4022 (d) (1) permits DARPA's OT authority to be used only when one of the following conditions are met:

- (A) There is at least one nontraditional defense contractor or nonprofit research institution participating to a significant extent in the prototype project;
- (B) All significant participants in the transaction other than the Federal Government are small businesses (15 U.S.C. 638)) or nontraditional defense contractors;
- (C) At least one third of the total cost of the prototype project is to be paid out of funds provided by sources other than the Federal Government; or
- (D) The senior procurement executive for the agency determines in writing that exceptional circumstances justify the use of a transaction that provides for innovative business arrangements or structures that would not be feasible or appropriate under a contract, or would provide an opportunity to expand the defense supply base in a manner that would not be practical or feasible under a contract.

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"Non-Traditional" Defense Contractor

10 U.S.C 3014 Non-Traditional Definition:

- nontraditional defense contractor, with respect to a procurement or with respect to a transaction authorized under section 4022 of this title, means an entity that is not currently performing and has not performed, for at least the one-year period preceding the solicitation of sources by the Department of Defense for the procurement or transaction, any contract or subcontract for the Department of Defense that is **subject to full coverage under the cost accounting standards** prescribed pursuant to section 1502 of title 41 and the regulations implementing such section. To be considered as participating to a significant extent, the proposal should substantiate that the effort being performed by the nontraditional defense contractor is critical to the technical success of the project

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Acquisition Strategy

- ExPEDitions is using a modified acquisition approach to lower the administrative burden of entry, reduce program risk, foster competition, and have performing teams get to work quickly.
- ExPEDitions is a 36 months - two-phase program.
 - Phase I (base period): 18 months
 - Phase II (option period): 18 months
- Will be soliciting independent abstract submissions for ExPEDitions. **Abstract is decisional!**
- A subset of submitted abstracts will be invited **to submit Full Proposal**. Selected proposers may be awarded an Other Transaction (OT) for Prototype Agreement.

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Abstracts

- Abstracts are **REQUIRED** and must be submitted in BAAT.
- Proposers must submit an abstract package to address both phases in response to this solicitation to be eligible to participate in the next acquisition step.
- **Carefully review:** Goals/ metrics, milestones and schedule, required abstract content, evaluation criteria, and templates.
 - **Templates:** Must complete Attachments A and B.
 - **Evaluation Criteria:** 1) Technical Rationale and Approach; and 2) Technical Ability
- The Government Evaluation Team will review submitted abstracts and invite selected abstract proposers to submit a Full Proposal. Proposal packages **MAY NOT** be submitted without an invitation from DARPA.
- Submit questions for abstract to ExPEditions@darpa.mil.
- Monitor SAM.gov for published PS, potential PS amendments and ExPEditions website for Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

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Full Proposal

- Full Proposal **MAY NOT** be submitted without an invitation from DARPA.
- If DARPA requests a Full Proposal, the proposers will be asked to provide further details on their proposed solution. Specific instructions (including content submission guidelines) will be provided via Invitation to Submit a Full Proposal letter.
- Full proposal information within the PS is provided for planning purposes and if there is a discrepancy between the PS and the invitation, the invitation takes precedence.
- **Evaluation Criteria:** 1) Overall Scientific and Technical Merit; 2) Cost and Schedule Realism, and 3) Proposer's Capabilities or Related Experience.
- Carefully reads all proposal submission instructions – Proposer Submissions that fail to comply with all requirements of the PS and/or subsequent proposal instructions may be deemed non-conforming and may be removed from consideration.
- All communication for Full Proposal will be via the ExpEDitions email.

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Proposal Review-Awards Process

- ExPEDitions proposal is a two-phase process: **Abstract & Full Proposal**
- 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.
- The Government will review all submitted Abstracts for **1) Technical Rationale and Approach; and 2) Technical Ability**. Upon review of Abstracts, the Government may elect to invite all, some, or none of the proposers to submit Full Proposal.
- **The information for Full Proposal within the PS is provided for planning purposes. The finalized instructions, guidance, templates, etc. will be provided within the Invitation to Submit a Full Proposal. Evaluation criteria and instructions may vary from what is published in the PS and the invitation will take precedence.**
- Government anticipates making multiple awards, and the number of awards will be based on the quality of the proposals.
- The DARPA contracting office will contact the selected performers and begin the negotiation process.
- For planning purposes, award is anticipated by January 2027.

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Teaming & Eligibility Information

- Non-U.S. organizations MAY NOT participate in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies, including those pertaining to export controls and security.
- FFRDCs, UARCs & Government Entities MAY propose against this solicitation per instructions within the PS. DARPA will only leverage existing contractual agreement for these entities and a new contractual agreement will not be established. If submitted as Sub, these entities must 1) clearly defined in the technical proposal with a point of contact, and 2) ROM.
- 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 also be a performer on a DARPA research program. If a prospective proposer believes a conflict of interest exists or may exist or has questions on what constitutes a conflict of interest, the proposer **must send their contact information and a summary of the potential conflict** to the ExPEDitions e-mail address identified in this PS before time and effort are expended in preparing the abstract package.

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Competition Sensitive Information

DARPA policy is to treat all submissions as competition sensitive, and to disclose their contents only for the purpose of evaluation.

- 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

- Fundamental Research Risk-Based Security (FRRBS) Review Process
 - Required for fundamental research effort. Read requirement carefully.
- DARPA reserves the right(s) to:
 - Will fund the effort in phase(s) 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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