DARPA-PA-27-01 Hubble Program
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
as of 11/03/2026

Question 31: Are there any CMMC compliance requirements for subcontractors that do not have access to Federal Contract Information (FCI) or Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI)?

Answer: No. Please reference Section 7.9.C (Subcontractor Flow-Down, page 20) of the Program Announcement (PA).

Question 30: Are Federal Contract Information (FCI) and Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) protection requirements applicable to fundamental research under this program? If all proposed work is conducted on systems and data isolated from FCI/CUI, does the computational workflow need to reside within a CMMC-certified environment, or can a carefully segregated research workflow qualify for the fundamental research exemption?

Answer: Please reference Section 7.9 (page 20), CMMC Level 1 is a baseline requirement for all performers to protect FCI. Also see Attachment B, ARTICLE XVI.C.2.

Question 29: Regarding the CMMC requirements specified in Section 7.9 (CMMC Level 1, current status in SPRS, and current annual affirmation), what CMMC-related documentation must be submitted with the abstract versus provided later if the abstract is selected to advance to the next stage?

Answer: None at the abstract stage. Please reference Section 5.2 (page 13).

Question 28: Should the proposal criteria on Page 6 of the PA be addressed in the context of all possible interaction types, or can proposals focus on broad and/or predominant classes where the full scope of DARPA goals would be achieved through multiple Phase 1 awards?

Answer: Proposers should address the criteria in the context of their proposed approach. Please reference Section 2.1 (page 5).

Question 27: Are proposers expected to address all or most of the eight criteria listed on Page 6 of the PA?

Answer: Please reference Section 2 (page 6).

Question 26: What are the agency's expectations regarding the purchase of dedicated computational equipment versus utilizing the current national supercomputing ecosystem or Department of War (DoW) supercomputing resources?

Answer: Please reference Section 2 (page 6), Out-of-Scope Item #3 excludes "proposers that are unable to operate at the requisite computing and experimental resources."

Question 25: What documents are required for the initial abstract submission? Is only the abstract required, or must the Cost Proposal Spreadsheet (Attachment C) also be submitted at this stage?

Answer: Only the abstract is required. Per Section 5.2 (page 14), proposers must include an "Estimated Cost" (Rough Order of Magnitude).

Question 24: Are the teaming profiles from the Industry Day still accessible to prospective collaborators looking to join existing proposal teams?

Answer: Yes, please refer to the HUBBLE program page (https://www.darpa.mil/research/programs/HUBBLE)

Question 23: What additional modeling or experimental capabilities beyond core protein-protein interaction (PPI) prediction are considered most important for a competitive proposal?

Answer: Please refer to the eight criteria on Page 6 of the PA.

Question 22: May organizations or investigators that did not attend the Industry Day (formerly Proposers Day) still submit a proposal to this opportunity? Additionally, have the proposal submission dates been finalized, or should prospective performers wait for a final published solicitation and dates prior to submitting?

Answer: Per Section 3.1.a (page 11), "Participation in the Proposers' Day is optional and is not a requirement for proposers seeking to submit an abstract."

Question 21: Please confirm whether using existing, de-identified medical datasets from a federal institution is consistent with the Section 7.6 guidance on human subjects research.

Answer: Per Section 7.6 (page 19), "Proposers SHOULD NOT propose human subjects research."

Question 19: Are there Organizational Conflict of Interest (OCI) or eligibility concerns if a HUBBLE performer holds a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) with a federal entity for data access and subject matter expert (SME) input, particularly if that federal entity or an affiliated center participates on the Government team in a test, evaluation, or feature-refinement role? If so, what mitigation strategies (e.g., firewalls, data-source disclosure, restricting SME input to non-evaluative topics) would DARPA consider acceptable?

Answer: Per Section 4.2 (page 12), if a conflict of interest arises the proposer must submit their contact info and a summary of the relationship to Hubble@darpa.mil prior to submission.

Question 18: May an investigator participate in multiple proposals under the HUBBLE program? Specifically, is a faculty member permitted to submit an abstract as the Lead Principal Investigator (PI) on one proposal while also serving as a Co-Investigator on a separate proposal led by another institution?

Answer: Yes. The PA does not restrict investigators from participating in multiple proposals, provided there is no duplication of effort or double-funding of the same work.

Question 17: On Attachment A, Page 1 indicates that the estimated cost is included in the five (5) page limit, whereas Page 3 states, "Estimated cost is not included in the five (5) written page limit." Which instruction is correct?

Answer: No, estimated cost is not included in the 5 page limit.

Question 16: Phase 1 appears to be entirely unclassified. Is Phase 2 anticipated to introduce Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI), export-controlled, or classified components at the performer level? If so, can broad categories for anticipated sensitivity be defined at this stage (e.g., application vs. methods) for provisional planning purposes?

Answer: Detailed security classification guides and CUI requirements for Phase 2 will be issued to selected performers (Section 3, page 10).

Question 15: Could you clarify the intent of the term "Number of interactors" used in the Protein Interaction Accuracy Metrics table? Does this metric refer to the number of proteins in a formed complex, or the number of proteins that can interact within a system (to potentially form complexes with > 5 constituents)?

Answer: The number of proteins that can interact within a system (to potentially form complexes with > 5 constituents)

Question 14: Regarding the metric "number of unique contexts over which this interaction has been modeled," will the performers choose those contexts, or will DARPA specify them?

Answer: Performers can choose their own contexts, to include non-TBI contexts, to ensure the generalizability of the model. However, for the sake of evaluations, both generalizability and TBI applicability will be assessed.

Question 12: The abstract template and instructions file notes a $2M budget cap for Phase 1, which is not explicitly mentioned in the Program Announcement (PA). Is the $2M cap for Phase 1 authoritative?

Answer: This cap is specified in the template instructions and should be considered for budget planning during the abstract phase.

Question 11: Other Transaction (OT) research awards typically require some form of cost sharing. Is there a cost share requirement for the HUBBLE program?

Answer: Please reference Section 9 (page 22), Research OTs are awarded under 10 U.S.C. § 4021.

----------↑↑↑New Q/A↑↑↑----------

Industry Day Questions

Question 10: Is DARPA interested only in localized protein-protein interactions (PPIs) (e.g., within the brain), or are other organ systems that may contribute to traumatic brain injury (TBI) characteristics also of interest?

Answer: Any relevant changes to PPIs in response to TBI are viewed as appropriate for this opportunity. Moving between tissue-types and cellular conditions is a critical component for elucidating a dynamic interactome.

Question 9: Are performer-conducted experiments expected to support Government validation of the proposed solution, or does the performer have discretion to determine how experiments are used to develop and evaluate their solution?

Answer: The experimental design used for validation of PPIs by the Government team will be developed by the Government team but with open communication to performers. Acknowledging the context dependency of PPIs, it is expected that all parameters for recapitulating PPIs in situ will be captured by experimental validation pipelines.

Question 8: Is there a notional compute constraint for the total inference time metrics, e.g., in terms of node count, CPU/GPU hours, etc.?

Answer: Appropriate compute should be appropriate for the work performed. Please propose what is viewed as necessary and sufficient for achieving program end goals.

Question 7: A major determinant of PPI structure is post-translational modifications (PTMs). Will PTMs be measured and evaluated by the Government team?

Answer: Yes, PTMs are expected to be incorporated into PPI prediction and evaluation by both performers and Government teams for validation studies.

Question 6: Will the full solicitation provide a notional number of proteins each performer should aim to provide coverage for in support of the Government?

Answer: The PA will broadly cover the notional proteins that performers are expected to cover in Phase 1. However, this list will be refined with Phase 1 performance by the Government team. Regular interactions between performers and the Government team will facilitate transfer and refinement of detailed target protein lists prior to the end of the phase.

Question 5: To develop robust and effective biomarkers for mild TBI diagnosis or treatment, mechanistic understanding and validation are often critical. How does this fit in with the HUBBLE vision? What does success look like specifically for Phase 1 and Phase 2?

Answer: There will be a multi-institution HUBBLE Government team that will pursue validation and mechanistic studies on any potential TBI-associated protein targets identified in this program. This work will occur in parallel to performer groups proposing to the HUBBLE program. More details on this portion of the work will be referenced in the HUBBLE PA, but ultimately will be coordinated between

DARPA and those government organizations. Performer success under the HUBBLE program will be determined by matching the general PPI metrics and not held to success of any potential TBI-associated products.

Question 4: Were one-page whitepapers accepted for the in-person teaming activity at Industry Day?

Answer: Yes, for the in-person teaming activity at Industry Day, one-page whitepapers were welcomed from attendees who had additional thoughts or ideas to share on the program.

Question 3: The meeting changed from "Proposers Day" to "Industry Day." Is it a requirement to include a collaboration with industry for the proposal, or is it permissible to submit a proposal consisting solely of academic laboratories?

Answer: There is no requirement to team with industry. The name change is an internal DARPA requirement.

Question 2: Will access to a recording of the Industry Day event be provided?

Answer: No recording will be provided.

Question 1: How can prospective performers submit a proposal to the HUBBLE program?

Answer: A Program Announcement (PA) will be made on SAM.gov outlining all submission instructions, deadlines, and requirements. We anticipate a release of this information in October 2026. (Release date is only an estimate.)