REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate
Homeland Security Advanced Research Projects Agency (HSARPA)
Border Security Testbed Consortium Orchestrator for the Science and Technology Directorate

1.0 General Information

1.1 Introduction

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Office of Procurement Operations (OPO) issues this Request for Information (RFI) on behalf of the DHS Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) Homeland Security Advanced Research Projects Agency (HSARPA).

NOTE: THIS IS A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) ONLY. This RFI is issued solely for information and market research planning purposes. This RFI shall not be construed as an obligation on the part of DHS. This is NOT a Request for Quotations or Proposals. No solicitation document exists, and DHS may or may not issue a formal solicitation as a result of the responses received to this RFI.

DHS is not seeking proposals at this time. Respondents are advised that DHS will not pay for any response or demonstration expenses. All costs incurred responding to this RFI will be solely at the interested party's expense. Failure to respond to this RFI will not preclude participation in any future solicitation. Any information received will become the property of the Government and will not be returned to the submitter. Interested parties are responsible for adequately marking proprietary or sensitive information.

DHS's explicit intent, in this RFI, is to not receive from respondents any proprietary data, trade secrets, business sensitive information, or information considered CONFIDENTIAL under 18 U.S.C. §1905. DHS's constraint does not in any way relieve contractors from their responsibility to properly mark proprietary data when it is provided, nor does it alleviate any requirement for the Government to protect marked data. The Government is not obligated to protect unmarked data.

The information provided in this RFI is subject to change and is not binding on DHS. All submissions become the property of the Federal Government and will not be returned.

1.2 Program Information

a. Program Name: Air, Land, & Maritime Security Division (ALMS)

b. Managing Program Office: Homeland Security Advanced Research Projects Agency (HSARPA)

1.3 Procurement Information

c. 2023 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes:

- 541715 – Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Nanotechnology and Biotechnology)

d. Product Service Codes:

- AJ12 – General Science and Technology R&D Services, Applied Research

2.0 Requirements

2.1 BACKGROUND

DHS S&T is seeking to enhance its test and evaluation enterprise for border security technologies specifically within the land and maritime domains. The goal is to bridge the gap between innovation and operational use by developing a consortium model that leverages diverse facilities and subject matter experts (SMEs) for rapid, rigorous, and reliable T&E activities.

As the land and maritime border security environments grow more complex and interconnected, the nation is confronted with rapidly evolving threats and challenges making the security landscape more dynamic than ever. While the Department continues to steadily advance its efforts in land and maritime border security, many of these threats and challenges are accelerating in complexity and scale. Without innovative strategies and tools, the divide between emerging risks and our capacity to respond and manage them will expand, potentially causing significant disruptions and allowing threat actors to exploit our nation's land and maritime border environment. The primary purpose of this RFI is to identify capabilities of a Border Security Testbed Consortium Orchestrator to support the development and execution of a land and maritime border security testbed consortium. The objective is to establish a collaborative framework for test and evaluation (T&E) of technologies and operational concepts relevant to land and maritime border security. The Consortium Orchestrator would be responsible for all functions required to receive direction from DHS Program Management and manage T&E Providers.

2.2 OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THIS RFI

1) **Test and Evaluation Coordination:** Ability to schedule, manage, and oversee all aspects of T&E events, including logistics, resource allocation, and operational decision-making. DHS S&T is interested in:

    - Developing and maintaining detailed schedules for T&E events, ensuring alignment with program milestones and stakeholder requirements.

- Coordinating logistics, including facility access, equipment deployment, personnel assignments, and transportation.

- Allocating resources efficiently across multiple test campaigns, adapting to changing priorities and operational needs.

- Making real-time operational decisions to address unforeseen challenges during test execution, ensuring continuity and safety.

2) **Partnership Management:** Capability to establish and maintain effective relationships with T&E providers, ensuring timely communication and collaboration. DHS S&T is interested in:

    - Establishing and maintaining strong working relationships with T&E providers, including government entities, academic, and industry partners.

    - Facilitating timely and clear communication between all consortium members and stakeholders throughout T&E campaigns.

    - Managing partnership agreements, roles, and responsibilities to ensure alignment with DHS objectives and operational requirements.

    - Coordinating collaborative activities, such as joint planning sessions, technical reviews, and post-test debriefs.

    - Resolving conflicts and addressing issues that arise during T&E activities to maintain effective collaboration and project momentum.

3) **Data Collection and Transfer:** Ensure secure, compliant, and accurate collection, curation, and transfer of data generated during T&E activities, in alignment with DHS standards. DHS S&T is interested in:

    - Implementing secure and compliant data collection processes during T&E activities, ensuring protection of sensitive information.

    - Curating and organizing data with appropriate metadata to support traceability, analysis, and future reuse.

    - Facilitating timely and accurate transfer of data to DHS repositories or designated stakeholders, maintaining data integrity and accessibility.

- Enforcing data governance policies, including retention, access control, and auditability, in accordance with DHS standards.

- Supporting digital infrastructure and tools for efficient data management, including secure storage, retrieval, and sharing.

4) **Operational Security and Safety Oversight:** Implement and enforce robust security and safety protocols to protect personnel, facilities, and sensitive information during test campaigns. DHS S&T is interested in:

    - Developing and enforcing operational security protocols to safeguard personnel, facilities, and sensitive information during T&E activities.

    - Conducting risk assessments and implementing mitigation measures to address physical, cyber, and operational threats.

    - Ensuring compliance with DHS safety standards and regulatory requirements throughout all test campaigns.

    - Providing training and guidance to personnel and partners on security and safety procedures relevant to T&E operations.

    - Monitoring and reporting security and safety incidents and coordinating response actions as necessary to maintain a secure and safe test environment.

5) **Reporting and Process Improvement:** Deliver timely and accurate reporting to the Program Management team, collect lessons learned, and continuously refine operational processes for improved efficiency and effectiveness. DHS S&T is interested in:

    - Preparing and delivering timely, accurate, and comprehensive reports on T&E activities, outcomes, and performance metrics to the Program Management team.

    - Collecting, documenting, and analyzing lessons learned from each test campaign to inform future operations.

    - Identifying opportunities for operational process improvement and implementing refinements to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

    - Facilitating regular review sessions with stakeholders to discuss findings, share best practices, and drive continuous improvement.

- Maintaining transparent records of process changes and their impacts to support ongoing evaluation and accountability.

6) **Administration:** Ability to create, maintain, and close out agreements with all T&E partners, ensuring compliance, efficiency, and proper documentation throughout the contract lifecycle. DHS S&T is interested in:

    - Drafting, negotiating, and executing agreements with T&E providers in accordance with DHS policies and federal regulations.
    - Maintaining accurate records and documentation for all agreement actions, amendments, and deliverables.
    - Monitoring agreement performance, ensuring timely completion of milestones and deliverables.
    - Managing agreement modifications, extensions, and closeout procedures to ensure proper closure and compliance.
    - Coordinating with legal, procurement, and financial teams to address issues and support audit readiness.

3.0 Responses to this RFI

3.1 Submissions

Information or inquiries submitted in response to this RFI must be submitted via email to Jennifer.Koons@hq.dhs.gov and Yao.Kole@hq.dhs.gov by July 24 , 2026. In addition to specific information requested in section 3.2 below, submissions must:

- Include the RFI number (**70RSAT26RFI000024**) in the subject line of the email.
- Format in either Word or PDF format and address the requirements listed above.

Responses must have a cover letter that includes the following information:

- Company Name
- Company Address
- Company website
- UEI Number
- Company's Size and Socio-Economic Status information for NAICS code(s): 541715 – Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Nanotechnology and Biotechnology)
- Technical Point of Contact(s) (Name, title, email, and phone number)
- Contracting Point of Contact(s) (Name, title, email, and phone number)

- List of all contract vehicles your company is an awardee under (e.g., Blanket Purchase Agreements, Indefinite-Delivery, Indefinite-Quantity contracts, etc.) and the administering Federal agency.
- Suggestions on contract type and/or structure for the sought consortium

3.2 Submission Guidelines

- Responses must not exceed a total of seven (7) pages:
  - Mandatory sections are limited to a total maximum of two (2) pages.
  - Optional sections are limited to a total maximum of five (5) pages.
- Submit responses in either Microsoft Word or PDF format using 12-point font and 1-inch margins throughout the document.
- Please use section headings and subheadings as outlined above to organize your response.
- Sections labeled "Mandatory" must be completed; sections labeled "Optional" are encouraged but not required.
- Supporting documentation (e.g., facility diagrams, org charts, past performance summaries) may be included as appendices and will not count toward the page limit.

1. **Organization Information Cover Page *(Mandatory)***
   - Brief overview of organizational structure and relevant experience.

2. **Relevant Expertise and Experience *(Mandatory)***
   - Summary of personnel expertise (SMEs, health and safety, test planning, human factors, logistics, etc.) and your understanding of the challenges an Consortium Orchestrator will encounter.
   - Experience in test analysis, reporting, and operations for land and maritime security technologies.
3. **Test and Evaluation Coordination *(Optional)***
   - Describe your team's approach to scheduling, logistics, and resource allocation for T&E events.
   - Provide examples of operational decision-making and problem-solving during test execution.
4. **Partnership Management *(Optional)***
   - Explain methods used to establish and maintain effective relationships with T&E providers.
   - Outline communication strategies and conflict resolution practices for consortium collaboration.

5. **Data Collection and Transfer *(Optional)***
    - Detail processes for secure and compliant data collection, curation, and transfer during T&E activities.
    - Describe tools and infrastructure used to support data governance and accessibility.
6. **Operational Security and Safety Oversight *(Optional)***
    - Summarize protocols for operational security and safety during T&E campaigns.
    - Provide examples of risk assessment and mitigation measures implemented by your team.
7. **Reporting and Process Improvement *(Optional)***
    - Describe your approach to preparing and delivering timely reports and performance metrics.
    - Explain how lessons learned are collected, analyzed, and used to refine operational processes.
8. **Contractual Administration *(Optional)***
    - Outline your experience and procedures for drafting, maintaining, and closing out contracts with T&E partners.
    - Describe how you ensure compliance and proper documentation throughout the contract lifecycle.
    - Recommend a contract type or structure (e.g., firm-fixed-price, cost-reimbursement, indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity, consortium agreement, etc.) that you believe would best support the objectives and operational needs of the Border Security Testbed Consortium. Please provide a brief rationale for your recommendation.
9. **Additional Capabilities or Resources *(Optional)***
    - Any other relevant capabilities, resources, or recommendations to support DHS S&T's border security T&E objectives.

4.0 Review of Vendor Responses

Responses to this RFI may be reviewed by Government technical experts drawn from staff within DHS and other Federal agencies. The Government does not intend to provide a response to submissions for this RFI, but the Government reserves the right to meet with respondents, either individually or as a group, regarding this RFI. These meetings may be scheduled at the Government's discretion but are not guaranteed.

5.0 Relevant Supporting Information and Links

- DHS Border Security https://www.dhs.gov/topics/border-security
- DHS S&T Border Security https://www.dhs.gov/science-and-technology/border-security