Commercial Solutions Opening (CSO)
FA8629-25-S-C001

Department of the Air Force
Air Force Life Cycle Management Center
Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance & Special Operations Forces Directorate
Special Operations Forces & Personnel Recovery Division
&
Capabilities Development Office

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Authority

The Special Operations Forces and Personnel Recovery Division's (AFLCMC/WIS) mission is to: Deliver Dominance to Air Force Special Warfare and Special Operations Command warfighters worldwide. The division delivers support to Special Warfare operators across the spectrum, provides Asymmetric Operations support, and fields Tactical and Small Uncrewed Aerial Systems. Additionally, the Division holds a Rapid Development Integration Facility that performs engineering, design, manufacturing, and modifications across Air Force platforms.

The Capabilities Development Office (CDO) is responsible for the analysis, planning, and development of future Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance (ISR) & Strike capabilities to satisfy the United States Air Force's responsibility to meet joint military capability requirements. The CDO assesses current airborne capabilities, identifies capability gaps, evaluates potential non-materiel and materiel solutions, and conducts technology maturation activities. Additionally, the CDO represents the ISR & Special Operations Forces Directorate in support of all capability development and planning activities.

Demand for ISR, Strike, and Special Operations capabilities are only growing, and the need to integrate best-of-breed commercial solutions has risen rapidly across the portfolio. Evaluations are done with the operator in mind, and the government may select vendors who show greatest potential to achieve the WIS & CDO mission.

This Commercial Solutions Opening (CSO) is based on 10 U.S.C. 3458 authority. This CSO may use FAR part 12 award procedures or other Department of the Air Force authorities to award innovative solutions, including agreements under 10 U.S.C. 4022. The information provided in this CSO is intended to ensure that, to the maximum extent practicable, competitive procedures are used when entering into awards, agreements, and prototypes. The government is not seeking proposals from this posting and will not accept unsolicited proposals. No funding is available for this posting. All FAR-based contracts resulting from this CSO will be treated commercially, notwithstanding the definition under FAR 2.101.

1.2 CSO Procedures

This CSO is a competitive solicitation seeking proposals for innovative technologies that accelerate the attainment of defense and asymmetric capabilities. This CSO will result in the award of agreements or FAR-based contracts, which include not only commercially-available technologies fueled by commercial or strategic investment, but also concept demonstrations, pilots, and agile development activities that can incrementally improve commercial technologies, existing Government-owned capabilities, or concepts for defense application.

No solutions briefs will be accepted under this CSO. Rather, solution briefs are to be submitted in response to the publication of "Problem Statement Calls". The government will post focused Problem Statement Calls requesting innovative solutions as needs arise. These needs fall under the stated Areas of Interest (AOIs) contained below. AOIs provide a general scope of technology, processes, and methodology that WIS & CDO are interested in. All Problem Statement Calls and their associated responses will be governed by this CSO unless otherwise noted. The Government may post further AOIs and post Problem Statement Calls at any time.

AOIs and problem statement calls are written in broader terms to maximize latitude in creativity when approaching a problem and to allow for maximum participation from commercial vendors who may not be familiar with submitting proposals to Government solicitations.

The CSO outlines the competitive procedures to submit a response to a Problem Statement Call and consists of three phases: Solution Briefs, Pitch Sessions, and full written Proposals.

Phase 1 Solution Briefs: Solution Briefs submitted in response to a Problem Statement Call shall be submitted as specified in Section 3 of this CSO. The Government will evaluate Solution Briefs against the criteria stated in this CSO. The Government will not pay Companies for the costs associated with Solution Brief submissions.

Phase 2 Pitch Sessions: Companies whose Solution Briefs are evaluated to be of merit may be invited to provide a pitch following the instructions provided in Section 3.3 of this CSO. The Government reserves the right to limit the number of Companies invited to pitch. As such, a company's solution may be evaluated to be of merit, but not invited to pitch. In the event that the Government requires a demonstration, additional information will be provided in the specific Problem Statement Call, highlighting those procedures; otherwise, Phase 2 will be comprised solely of the pitch. The Government will not pay Companies for costs associated with pitches, unless otherwise stipulated.

Phase 3 Proposals: Those Companies whose Solution Brief and Pitch are evaluated to be of merit and are selected for potential award, if funding is available, will be invited to submit a full written proposal following the instructions provided in Section 3.4 of this CSO. The Government will not pay Companies for costs associated with the proposal (e.g., proposal development, negotiations) in Phase 3, unless otherwise stipulated.

Note: A problem statement call may contain all, some, or none of these phases. Specific procedures will be noted within the problem statement call.

1.3 AOIs/Scope

- Science and Technology
- Research and Development
- Test and Evaluation
- Integration/Assembly
- Production and Fielding
- Operations and Sustainment
- Modernization
- Prototyping
- Experimentation
- Procurement of Prototypes
- Studies, Demonstrations, Testing of Prototypes
- Cloud Architecting and Software Containerization
- Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Implementation
- Hardware and Software Modifications
- Hardware Design, Test, and Qualification
- Weapon Designs
- Munitions Designs
- Digital Engineering
- Modeling, Simulation, and Analysis
- Digital Engineering
- Data Mining, Collection, Analysis
- Unmanned Aircraft Systems
- Low-cost Aircraft systems
- Additive Manufacturing
- American Domestic Production Chains
- Foreign Production Chains
- Swarming Capabilities
- Autonomy
- Target Recognition
- Long Endurance Technologies
- Software-Defined Capabilities
- Non-Kinetic Effects Techniques and Capabilities
- Agile Combat Employment Concepts and Capabilities

- Kill Chain Enabling Capabilities
- Special Operations Capabilities
- Computer Networks and Networking
- Software & Tools (to include software licenses)
- Information Technology Licenses and Hardware
- Software Development Kits (SDKs)
- Third Party Software Development
- Third Party Software Integration
- Integration technology and processes
- Software DevSecOps Factories
- Operation Testing
- Sensor and Sensor Fusion
- Low-cost Sensor systems
- Testing Infrastructure
- Mission Planning Software
- Mission Data
- Government Reference Architecture
- Weapons Reprogramming Software
- Software Tool Training
- Analytic and Visualization Tool Development
- Target Generation
- Market Analysis
- Domestic Manufacturing Growth
- Asymmetric Capabilities
- Logistics
- Personnel Recovery
- Computer Vision
- Radios and Handheld Communication
- Waveform and Signature Management
- Foster relationships across the intelligence community and Department of Defense
- Identify, prioritize, and document capability gaps
- ISR systems and platforms
- Strike systems and platforms
- Agile Acquisition Methods

SECTION 2 – DEFINITIONS

"Commercial Solutions Opening" (CSO) is a solicitation method covered under 10 U.S.C. 3458.

“Area of Interest” (AOI) means the general areas of interest or scope that the Government will pursue with this CSO.

“Problem Statement Calls” are the focused posting of requests for Solutions Briefs that may be awarded as an agreement or FAR-based acquisition.

“Solutions Briefs” Are briefs submitted in response to Problem Statement Calls in accordance with section 3 of this CSO.

“Other Transaction” (OT) – Refers to Other Transaction Agreements (OTAs) that may be placed as a result of this CSO.

"Other Transaction for Prototypes” (OTP) refers to a type of Other Transaction Agreement (OTA) that may be awarded as a result of this CSO and associated Problem Statement Call. This type of OTA is authorized by 10 U.S.C. 4022 for prototype projects directly relevant to enhancing the mission effectiveness of military personnel and the supporting platforms, systems, components, or materials proposed to be acquired or developed by the DoD, or for the improvement of platforms, systems, components, or materials in use by the armed forces.

“Prototype Project” in accordance with 10 U.S.C. 4022, the term includes projects that address -
(1) a proof of concept, model, or process, including a business process;
(2) reverse engineering to address obsolescence;
(3) a pilot or novel application of commercial technologies for defense purposes;
(4) agile development activity;
(5) the creation, design, development, or demonstration of operational utility; or
(6) any combination of subparagraphs (1) through (5).

Although assistance terms are generally not appropriate in OT agreements, in 10 U.S.C. 4022, ancillary work efforts that are necessary for completion of the prototype project, such as test site training or limited logistics support, may be included in prototype projects. A prototype may be physical, virtual, or conceptual in nature. The quantity of prototypes/commercial solutions should generally be limited to that needed to prove technical or manufacturing feasibility or evaluate military utility, and pilot authority for installation and facility prototyping.

“Nontraditional Defense Contractor” is defined in 10 U.S.C. 3014 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. This includes all small business concerns. Individual business segments may also meet the definition of Nontraditional Defense Contractor.

“Nonprofit Institution” means a nonprofit institution, as defined in 15 U.S.C. 3703, as an organization owned and operated exclusively for scientific or educational purposes, no part of the net earnings of which inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual.

“Small Business” is defined under the Small Business Act, 15 U.S.C. 632, and CFR Part 121.

“Successful Completion of the OTA” – The appropriate approving official determines in writing that the Prototype OTA meets the technical goals, satisfies established Agreement success metrics, or accomplishes a particularly favorable or unexpected result that justifies transition. Furthermore, successful completion can occur prior to the conclusion of a prototype project to allow the Government to transition any aspect of the prototype project determined to provide utility into production while other aspects of the prototype project have yet to be completed. Each Problem Statement Call will have a provision describing the conditions of successful completion.

“Innovative” means any new technology, process, or business practice; or any new application of a technology, process, or business practice.

SECTION 3 –GUIDELINES FOR SOLUTION BRIEFS, PITCHES, AND PROPOSALS

3.1 General Guidelines

1. Unnecessarily elaborate brochures or proposals are not desired.

2. Use of a diagram(s) or figure(s) to depict the essence of the proposed solution is strongly encouraged.

3. Companies may submit multiple Solution Briefs in response to any single Problem Statement Call if each submission represents a separate and distinct concept.

4. The period of performance for any Solution Brief or proposal submitted under this CSO should generally be no greater than 24 months.

5. Technical data with military application may require appropriate approval, authorization, or license for lawful exportation.

6. All Solution Briefs, Pitches, and Proposals shall be unclassified unless otherwise specified. Solution Briefs, Pitches, and Proposals containing data that is not to be disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the Government except for evaluation purposes shall include the following disclaimer on the cover page:

“This [select one: Solution Brief, Pitch, or Proposal] includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the Government, except to non-Government personnel for evaluation purposes, and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed -- in whole or in part -- for any purpose other than to evaluate this submission. If, however, an agreement is awarded to this Company as a result of -- or in connection with – the submission of this data, the Government shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent agreed upon by both parties in the resulting agreement. This restriction does not limit the Government's right to use the information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to

this restriction is contained in sheets [insert numbers or other identification of sheets]

Each restricted data sheet should be marked as follows: “Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this proposal.”

7. Foreign owned businesses may independently submit a solution or do so as part of a teaming arrangement with one or more United States owned businesses. However, the ability to obtain an agreement based upon a submission may depend upon the ability of the Foreign Owned business to obtain necessary clearances and approvals to obtain proscribed information.

8. Submissions must be submitted electronically via email to the email address specified within the Problem Statement Call.

9. Submissions sent through other channels or after the Problem Statement Call period has ended will not be reviewed or evaluated.

10. Solution Briefs that are chosen for the Phase 2 Pitch will be notified in writing as soon as practicable.

Note: Restrictive notices notwithstanding, during the evaluation process, submissions may be handled by Government-contracted Non-Government advisors for administrative purposes and/or to assist with technical evaluation(s) (i.e., government support contractors). These government support contractors are expressly prohibited from business lines competing in the CSO and are bound by appropriate NDA submissions. The original of each submission received will be retained, and all other non-required copies destroyed. A certification of destruction may be requested, provided the formal request is received by the contracting office within 5 days after notification that the proposal was not selected.

3.2 Phase 1 Solution Brief

PHASE 1 SOLUTION BRIEF CONTENT

Solution Briefs should not exceed five (5) written pages using 12-point font or, alternatively, Solution Briefs may take the form of briefing slides, which should not exceed ten (10) slides. These limits are not requirements but are strongly recommended.

Title Page (does not count against page limit): Company Name, Title, Date, Point of Contact Name, E-Mail Address, Phone, and Address. Specifically identify the Problem Statement Call for which the Solution Brief is submitted.

Executive Summary (one page): Provide an executive summary of the technology.

Technology Concept: Describe the unique aspects of your technology and the proposed work as it relates to the Problem Statement Call. Identify whether the effort includes the pilot or demonstration of existing commercial technology or the development of technology for potential defense applications. If development or adaptation is proposed, identify a suggested path to

mature the technology. Identify aspects that may be considered proprietary.

Company Viability: Provide a brief overview of the company. Provide a summary of current fundraising to date or a summary of the top line (gross sales/revenues). Provide a summary of commercialization efforts and go-to-market strategy.

Estimated Price/Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM): Provide a rough order of magnitude price for the solution

PHASE 1 SOLUTION BRIEF BASIS OF EVALUATION

All solution briefs correctly submitted in response to a Problem Statement Call will be evaluated against the stated criteria below.

1) Relevance of the Solution Brief in addressing the Problem Statement Call.

2) The company's approach and/or underlying technology is unique, underutilized, and/or innovative to Government applications. In addition, the Government finds this approach and/or underlying technology to be a compelling solution to the Problem Statement Call.

3) Technical Merit and feasibility of the solution to address the Government Problem Statement Call.

4) The estimated Price/ROM reasonableness

Additional technical evaluation criteria specific to a particular project may be used. In these instances, the additional criteria will be posted within the Problem Statement Call.

Solution Briefs will be evaluated on the basis of the merit of the proposed concept in addressing the Problem Statement Call, not against other Solution Briefs submitted in response to the same Problem Statement Call. Additionally, while not overtly stated in Problem Statement Calls, the Government's evaluation will consider whether the proposal increases the likelihood of accomplishing the WIS & CDO mission.

All submissions will be fairly evaluated; however, only a select few will be invited to pitch. The government reserves the right to limit the number of Companies invited to pitch. As such, a company's solution may be evaluated to be of merit, but not invited to pitch. Solution Briefs that are chosen for the Phase 2 Pitch will be notified in writing as soon as practicable.

3.3 Phase 2 Pitch

PHASE 2 PITCH CONTENT

In Phase 2, companies shall provide an in-person or virtual Pitch to demonstrate and provide further details on their proposed concept, technology, or solution, as well as the technical and business viability of the proposed solution. The Government may elect to use external market

research during the Pitch to evaluate a Company's viability. In addition to the Pitch, the Government, at its discretion, may request for consideration an additional written submission to further supplement the information provided in the Phase 1 Solution Brief. During the Phase 2 Pitch, the Company must detail and address:

Estimated Price/Schedule: Provide a ROM price and notional schedule for how this concept may be executed within the Air Force or Special Operations Command. A milestone format is the preferred approach.

Data Rights Assertions: The Solution Brief will identify any IP involved in the effort and associated restrictions on the Government's use of that IP.

In addition to these required areas, the Government may request the Company provide additional information/details with respect to the Technology Concept information provided in the Phase 1 Solution Brief.

PHASE 2 PITCH BASIS OF EVALUATION

Individual pitches will be evaluated against the following factors:

1) Relevance of the pitch in addressing the Problem Statement Call

2) The solution has technical merit, adequately addresses the Government's need, and is feasible;

3) Evaluation of company viability;

4) Company's approach is unique, underutilized, and/or innovative to Government application and is a compelling solution to the Government problem;

5) The estimated Price/ROM reasonableness

6) The notional schedule is acceptable, and

7) The potential impact of data rights assertions.

Individual pitches will be evaluated based on the merit of the proposed concept in addressing the Problem Statement Call and the factors above, not against any other Pitches held under the same Problem Statement Call. Pitch submissions will be valid for 180 calendar days after the pitch date. Upon completion of evaluations, the Government will notify the Company that: (1) the proposed concept/technology/solution has been selected for possible award of a Prototype OTA or FAR based contract and the Company is invited to submit a full proposal; (2) the proposed concept/technology/solution is not of interest to the Government; or (3) the proposed concept/technology/solution is of interest, but not eligible for a proposal due to availability of Government resources.

If the proposed concept/technology/solution is of interest, but not eligible for a proposal due to

the availability of Government resources, the Company may be contacted with a request to respond with a proposal within 180 calendar days from the pitch date. If, after 180 calendar days from the pitch date, Government resources are not identified to formally move into Phase 3, the Company will no longer be eligible for an award under that particular Problem Statement Call.

3.4 Phase 3 Proposal

PHASE 3 PROPOSAL CONTENT

The final phase of the CSO process is the proposal. Based upon the evaluation detailed above, the Government may request the company respond to the Problem Statement Call with a proposal. The Company will be invited to develop and submit a full written proposal and negotiate appropriate terms and conditions governing the project. Companies may discuss ideas and details of the proposal during the proposal writing process with the Government. Each proposal submitted shall consist of two sections: Section 1 shall provide the technical proposal; Section 2 shall address the price/cost/schedule portions of the proposal. Subject matter experts will assess these proposals. Companies may propose their own internal terms and conditions (e.g., Service License Agreements (SLA) and/or User License Agreements (ULA)) to be considered during negotiations with the Government.

Companies should note that there are certain terms and conditions that the Government is unable to accept. However, projects awarded through the CSO are flexible to adopt customary industry standards where it is otherwise legal and where it meets the Government's needs. The government may choose to award all, some, or none of a company's proposal.

3.4 Section 1 Technical Proposal

Title Page: Company Name, Title, Point of Contact Name, Date, E-Mail Address, Phone, and Address, and any subcontractors or team members.

Abstract: Include an abstract that provides a concise description of the proposal.

Propose a Technical Approach: Describe the background and objectives of the proposed work, the approach, deliverables, and the resources needed to execute it. Include the nature and extent of the anticipated results. Include ancillary and operational issues such as certifications, algorithms, and any engineering/software development methodologies to be used. This proposal must include a Statement of Work (SOW) identifying the work to be performed and the deliverables. Provide a detailed project schedule that outlines the various phases of work to be accomplished within the proposed period of performance. Companies may refer to the Solution Brief or Pitch that prompted this proposal request, but do not duplicate it.

Government Support Required: Identify the type of support, if any, the Company requests of the Government in general, such as facilities, equipment, data, and information or materials.

3.4 Section 2, Price Proposal

The Company shall propose a total price to complete the project and provide any other data or supporting information that is necessary for the determination of a fair and reasonable price. This can include, but is not limited to, commercial price catalogs, sales data, material costs and labor, or other proprietary information to help the Government assess project costs.

SECTION 4 – AWARDS

4.1 General Guidelines

Upon favorable review and available funds, the Government may choose to make an award. Awards will be made using OTAs or FAR-based contracts. The Agreements Officer or Contracting Officer will negotiate directly with the Company on the terms and conditions of the OTA or FAR-based contract, including payments, and will execute the OTA or FAR-based contract on behalf of the Government. Only an Agreements Officer or Contracting Officer has the respective authority to enter into, or modify, a binding agreement on behalf of the Government.

Companies must have a Dunn and Bradstreet (DUNS) number and must register in the System for Award Management (SAM) to receive an award. Companies are advised to commence SAM registration early in the CSO process.

Companies must also register in the prescribed Government invoicing system (e.g. Wide Area Work Flow). The government will provide further direction to those Companies from whom a full proposal is requested.

The Company must be determined to be responsible by the Government and must not be suspended or debarred from award by the Federal Government, nor be prohibited by Presidential Executive Order and/or law from receiving an award.

Receipt of a proposal request does not guarantee that a Company will receive an award. The Government reserves the right, at any point prior to award of an OTA or FAR-based contract, to cancel the proposal request.

4.2 Comptroller General Access to Information

In projects that provide for payments in a total amount in excess of $5,000,000, any OTA/Agreement will include a mandatory clause that provides for the Comptroller General the ability to examine the records of any party to the agreement or any entity that participates in the performance of the agreement.

4.3 Procurement Integrity Act (PIA)

As required by 10 U.S.C. § 2371b(h), all Agreements and Contracts awarded under this CSO shall be treated as Federal Agency procurements for the purpose of 41 U.S.C. Chapter 21. Accordingly, the CSO competitive solicitation process and awards made thereof must adhere to the ethical standards required by the PIA.

SECTION 5 - ITERATIVE DEVELOPMENT, MODULAR SYSTEMS, & OPEN ARCHITECTURE

Innovative Solutions and Prototype OTAs awarded against this CSO will have a preference for iterative development, modular systems, and open architectures.

This will allow the Government to modify, by mutual agreement, the work in an innovative solution or prototype project to allow the adaptation and modification of the proposed technology to meet additional unique and discrete purposes/mission sets. These additional unique and discrete purposes/mission sets can be generated by the original Government customer or originate with other organizations within the Federal Government.

SECTION 6 – FOLLOW-ON PRODUCTION

Upon successful completion of an innovative solution or prototype project under the CSO, the Government and Company may negotiate a follow-on production agreement or contract without further competition. Any concept/technology/solution successfully proven through a Prototype OTA or an innovative solution can be transitioned to production.

Problem Statement Calls posted by the Government under this CSO and Prototype OTAs will include language providing for the potential award of a follow-on production contract or agreement. Additionally, Problem Statement Calls will explicitly identify follow-on Production contracts as a potential outcome of a successful prototyping effort.

SECTION 7 – SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION

A transaction for a prototype project is complete upon the written determination of the appropriate approving official (program manager and Agreement Officer) for the matter in question that efforts conducted under a Prototype OTA: (1) met the key technical goals of a project; (2) satisfied success metrics incorporated into the Prototype OTA; or (3) accomplished a particularly favorable or unexpected result that justifies the transition to production.

Furthermore, successful completion can occur prior to the conclusion of a prototype project to allow the Government to transition any aspect of the prototype project determined to provide utility into production while other aspects of the prototype project have yet to be completed. Any Prototype OTA shall contain a provision that sets forth the conditions under which that prototype agreement must be successfully completed.