Advanced Research Announcement (ARA) with Calls

Amendment 04

26 February 2024

THIS ANNOUNCEMENT IS NOT REQUESTING PROPOSALS AT THIS TIME

Overview Information

NAICS Code: The NAICS Code for this acquisition is **541715** and the small business size standard is **1,000** employees.

Federal Agency Name: Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) - Air Force Strategic Development Planning & Experimentation (SDPE)

ARA Title: Defense Experimentation Using Commercial Space Internet (DEUCSI)

ARA Type: This is the initial Advanced Research Announcement (ARA) which will solicit requirements through Call(s) for Proposals. This announcement posts the basic ARA and does not request proposals at this time. The basic ARA will remain open until **15 December 2027.**

ARA Number: FA8650-17-S-9300

Proposal Due Date and Time: Proposal due date and time will be specified in each Call for Proposals against this ARA.

NOTE: Any proposal received at the Government Office designated in this ARA with Calls after the exact time specified for receipt of offers is "late" and will not be considered except at the Contracting Point of Contract's discretion. It shall be noted that this installation observes strict security procedures to enter the facility. These security procedures are NOT considered an interruption of normal Government processes, and proposals received after the above stated date and time as a result of security delays will be considered "late." Furthermore, note that if offerors utilize commercial carriers in the delivery of proposals, they may not honor time-of-day delivery guarantees on military installations. Early proposal submissions are encouraged.

Solicitation Request: This ARA with Call(s) for Proposals is not requesting proposals at this time. Individual requirements known as "Call(s) for Proposals" will be issued against this ARA. Each Call for Proposals will contain the specific requirements and proposal submission dates. Unless otherwise stated in a specific Call, all other requirements are listed within this ARA. Offerors shall be alert for any ARA amendments or future Call(s) for Proposals. **This ARA Shall remain open until 15 December 2027**.

NOTE: This ARA with Calls will be released in addition to a separate Open Two-Step ARA. Both of these ARA's will be released in parallel, and both fall under the Defense Experimentation Using Commercial Space Internet (DEUCSI) program. Both ARA's share the same budget ceiling, the same announcement numbers and the same overarching objectives. The Open Two-Step ARA provides agility to quickly take advantage of innovative approaches from industry and allows timing flexibility as various commercial space internet providers develop capabilities at potentially different paces. The ARA with Calls ensures equal access to information among various potential offerors for the areas of interest that are fundamental to the Government's successful use of commercial space internet, and which are not specific to a vendor's particular technical approach.

System for Award Management (SAM) Registration: SAM is the primary Government repository for prospective federal awardee information and the centralized Government system for contract awards. It replaces CCR/FedReg, On-line Representations and Certifications (ORCA) and the Excluded Parties Lists System (EPLS). Offerors Shall be registered in the SAM database prior to submitting an invoice and through final payment of any award resulting from this ARA. Offerors may obtain information on registration and annual confirmation requirements via the SAM accessed through https://www.acquisition.gov or by calling 866-606-8220.

Type of Contract/Instrument: The Air Force intends to award Contract(s) and/or Other Transaction(s) Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 4023, based on the instrument deemed most appropriate. It is anticipated that Contract awards under this ARA will generally be Cost Reimbursement or Firm Fixed Price (FFP). REMINDER: Cost reimbursement contracts require successful offerors to have an accounting system considered adequate for tracking costs applicable to the contract.

NOTE: If proposing a Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) based contract, the FAR clause references in this ARA Shall apply. This announcement incorporates FAR and supplement provisions and clauses by reference. The full text of these provisions and clauses can be found at http://farsite.hill.af.mil.

If proposing an Other Transaction (OT) Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 4023, these FAR references and clauses would not apply. The terms and conditions of an OT agreement shall be developed and negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

Estimated Program Cost: The total estimated program value is $1,440,000,000 with multiple awards ranging from $50,000 to $50,000,000 (the Government reserves the right to exceed this amount if necessary).

Anticipated Number of Awards: The Air Force anticipates awarding multiple awards for this announcement. However, the Air Force reserves the right to award zero, one, or more agreements and/or contracts for all, some or none of the solicited effort based on the offeror's ability to perform desired work and funding fluctuations. There is no limit on the number of agreements or contracts that may be awarded to an individual offeror.

Brief Program Summary: Future military operations will be multi-domain and will be conducted with unprecedented speed.[1] Establishing and maintaining dominance in such a scenario requires the ability to distribute information from, to, and through all domains and make decisions at a speed our adversaries cannot match. To this end, the "Defense Experimentation Using Commercial Space Internet" program seeks to establish and experiment with the capability to seamlessly move and share data among a wide variety of fixed and mobile operating locations using constantly available, high-bandwidth, beyond-line-of-sight communications. We refer to this desired end state as "path agnostic communications" because users will be able to reliably communicate to any location on the globe without explicitly specifying which nodes of a communication network to use.

The vision for path agnostic communications is becoming possible due to the burgeoning commercial space internet. Multiple commercial entities have announced plans to establish space internet constellations consisting of hundreds to thousands of satellites each in order to create global internet services that will compete with and, eventually, outperform localized terrestrial internet.

This program seeks to establish resilient, high-bandwidth, high-availability Air Force communications and data sharing capabilities by leveraging the developing commercial space internet networks. This approach differs radically from traditional military satellite communications programs where the government typically dictates, and pays for, every aspect of the program. By taking advantage of the commercial space internet, we plan to concentrate government efforts and resources on the few areas that are unique to Air Force applications. Development and experimentation are necessary to effectively use this new global utility for military operations.

We expect to achieve the overarching goals discussed above in three logically distinct phases, although the time phasing of efforts in these areas may overlap:

Phase I: Establish connectivity.
In Phase I, experiments will be performed to establish connectivity between multiple Air Force sites and assets using the preliminary technology demonstration satellites and user terminals that we anticipate commercial space internet offerors will develop early in the deployment of their commercial offerings.

[1] Goldfein, David, Chief of Staff, United States Air Force, "Enhancing Multi-domain Command and Control… Tying It All Together," White Paper, 10 March 2017.

Phase II: Operational Experimentation
In Phase II, connectivity will be expanded to a large number of diverse Air Force assets to conduct the enterprise-level experimentation for which the Strategic Development Planning and Experimentation (SDPE) office was created. This will involve proliferation of user terminals to multiple locations and vehicle types.

Phase III: Special Purpose Experimentation
In Phase III, special purpose experimentation will be conducted to address military-unique requirements that may not be otherwise met by commercial space internet vendors.

Communication Between Prospective Offerors and Government Representatives: Dialogue between prospective offerors and Government representatives listed below is encouraged until submission of proposals. Discussions with any of the points of contact Shall not constitute a commitment by the Government to subsequently fund or award any proposed effort.
No guidance related to technical approach will be given. However, questions related to the objectives of the effort or prior similar efforts may be answered. Only Contracting Officers are legally authorized to commit the Government. If there is any doubt as to whether a response provides a competitive advantage, the answer will be posted publicly via an amendment to this ARA on Sam.gov for all contractors to review.

Address technical questions to the Technical POCs:

Dr. Brian Beal, AFRL/RS, (937) 904-4004, Brian.Beal.1@us.af.mil

Address contracting questions to the Contracting POCs:

Mr. Doug McCreary, Contracting Officer, AFRL/PZLDB, (937) 713-9974, douglas.mccreary.1@us.af.mil;

Full Text Announcement

I. Program Description: Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL), Strategic Development Planning & Experimentation (SDPE), is announcing its intent to solicit proposals under this ARA with Calls. Solicitations for proposals will be accomplished via Call(s) for Proposals. This announcement does NOT request proposals at this time.

Background:
Establishing and maintaining dominance in future multi-domain conflicts requires the ability to distribute information from, to, and through all domains and make decisions at a speed our adversaries cannot match. To this end, the "Defense Experimentation Using Commercial Space Internet" program seeks to establish and experiment with the capability to seamlessly move and share data among a wide variety of fixed and mobile operating locations using constantly available, high-bandwidth, beyond-line-of-sight communications. We refer to this desired end state as "path agnostic communications" because users will be able to reliably communicate to any location on the globe without explicitly specifying which nodes of a communication network to use.

The vision for path agnostic communications is becoming possible due to the burgeoning commercial space internet. Multiple commercial entities have announced plans to establish space internet constellations consisting of hundreds to thousands of satellites each in order to create global internet services that will compete with and, eventually, outperform localized terrestrial internet.

This program seeks to establish resilient, high-bandwidth, high-availability Air Force communications and data sharing capabilities by leveraging the developing commercial space internet networks. This approach differs radically from traditional military satellite communications programs where the government typically dictates, and pays for, every aspect of the program. By taking advantage of the commercial space internet, we plan to concentrate government efforts and resources on the few areas that are unique to Air Force applications. In short, we will perform development and experimentation necessary to effectively use this new global utility for military operations.

1. Statement of Objectives/ Description of Technical Area(s):

The requirements, terms and specific deliverables of each Call for Proposals will vary depending on the nature of the challenge being addressed. It is anticipated that Call(s) for Proposals will address challenges in the following technology areas:

Establishing connectivity
Perform experiments to establish connectivity between multiple Air Force sites and assets using the preliminary technology demonstration satellites and user terminals that we anticipate commercial space internet offerors will develop early in the deployment of their commercial offerings.

Operational Experimentation
Expand connectivity to a large number of diverse Air Force assets to conduct enterprise-level experimentation. This will involve proliferation of user terminals to multiple locations and vehicle types.

Special Purpose Experimentation
Conduct special purpose experimentation to address military-unique requirements that may not be otherwise met by commercial space internet vendors.

2. Deliverable Items:

a. Data Items: Will be identified in each Call for Proposals.
b. Software: If required, applicable Software deliverables will be identified in each Call for Proposals
c. Hardware: If required, applicable Hardware deliverables will be identified in each Call for Proposals.
d. Other: If required, other deliverables will be identified in each Call for Proposals.

3. Schedule:

a. Overall effort: To be determined on each Call for Proposals.
b. Data Items: To be determined on each Call for Proposals
c. Software: To be determined on each Call for Proposals
d. Hardware: To be determined on each Call for Proposals

4. Other Requirements:

a. Program security classification: Classification will be determined on each Call for Proposals. If a DD254 is applicable, offerors must verify their Cognizant Security Office information is current with Defense Security Service (DSS) at www.dss.mil.
b. OPSEC: OPSEC requirements will be determined on each Call for Proposals.
c. Export Control: Information involved in this research effort is subject to Export Control (International Traffic in Arms Regulation (ITAR) 22 CFR 120-131, or Export Administration Regulations (EAR) 15 CFR 710-774). A Certified DD Form 2345, Militarily Critical Technical Data Agreement, will be required to be submitted with proposal.
d. Export-Controlled Items: As prescribed by DFARS 225.7901-4, DFARS 252.225-7048, "Export-Controlled Item (JUN 2013)" will be contained in ALL resulting contract awards.
e. Safety: The following safety requirements will be incorporated into the award, as applicable per Call: Must comply with all Air Force, federal, state, and local safety and environmental regulations. Must comply with

system safety requirements contained in MIL-STD 882E, Section 4 "Other Requirements" for any deliverable systems or hardware.

f. Science and Technology (S&T) Protection: In accordance with Air Force Research Laboratory Instruction (AFRLI) 61-113, "Science and Technology (S&T) Protection for the Air Force Research Laboratory", offerors are required to submit the following as part of their proposal:

1) A completed initial Standard Form (SF) 424, Research and Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) Form, (Attachment 1) for all Senior/Key Personnel proposed in support of the AFRLI 61-113 Personnel Risk Assessment requirement.

2) Documentation of a Security Program Plan in support of the AFRLI 61-113 Initial Institution S&T Protection Program Review requirement. This must include, at a minimum, a completed Security Program Questionnaire (Attachment 2). Submittal may also include a pre-existing plan that that the offeror uses as a matter of course or plan developed specifically for this acquisition. The purpose of requesting the plan is to assess the offeror's capacity for protection of the Government's S&T. Failure to demonstrate a plan adequate to meet the needs of the requirements, as determined by the Government in its sole discretion, may be grounds for considering the proposal un-awardable.

<u>Government Procedures</u>

The Government will review the submitted S&T protection documentation only for those proposals categorized as Selectable and selected for funding and negotiations.

S&T Protection Initial Risk Review:

- Personnel Risk Assessment: The Government will review non-government research key/senior performers identified by the offeror on the initial SF 424 for workload conflicts and conflicts of interest.
- Initial Institution S&T Protection Program Review: The Government will review the offeror's security program information submitted in accordance with paragraph 2 of this section (above) to identify any potential risks and ensure appropriate measures are in place to protect S&T information.

The Government may require the offeror to submit additional information and/or a mitigation plan for any identified S&T protection risks. If the Government determines the offeror failed to provide adequate additional information; or an acceptable mitigation plan; or it is determined the offeror's S&T protection approach is high risk and does not provide

adequate protection of S&T information, the Government may reject the proposal and withdraw it from consideration for award.

S&T Protection Annual Risk Review

The Contractor Shall be required to provide an SF 424 with the following information: 1) an initial report of all Senior/Key Personnel at the time of award; 2) an annual report of all Senior/Key Personnel providing support; and 3) a report for any new Senior/Key Personnel who join the contract, agreement, grant, or OT. Any updated SF 424s for new Senior/Key Personnel supporting the award require coordination from the Government prior to the contractor employee receiving access to S&T information. The purpose of this report is oversight and shall not be construed as relieving the contractor/recipient of any S&T Protection requirements within the contract, grant, agreement, or OT.

5. Other Information:

a. Government Furnished Property (GFP): Availability will be determined on each Call for Proposals. If applicable, each Call for Proposals will contain an attachment detailing the scheduled GFP.

In accordance with FAR 45.201(b), the contractor is responsible for all costs related to making the property available for use, such as payment of all transportation, installation or rehabilitation costs.

If GFP is included in a Call for Proposals, or requested in the proposal, the following clauses/provisions apply:

i. FAR 52.245-1 Government Property or FAR 52.245-1, Alt II if the resulting contract is with a nonprofit organization or applied research at nonprofit organizations (SEP 2021),

ii. FAR 52.245-9 Use and Charges (APR 2012),

iii. DFARS 252.211.7007, Reporting of Government-Furnished Property (MAR 2022),

iv. DFARS 252.245-7001, Tagging, Labeling, and Marking of Government-Furnished Property (APR 2012),

v. DFARS 252.245-7002, Reporting Loss of Government Property (Jan 2021).

vi. DFARS 252.245-7003, Contractor Property Management System Administration (APR 2012)

vii. DFARS 252.245-7004, Reporting, Reutilization, and Disposal (DEC 2017). Class Deviation 2022-O0006

b. Base Support/ Network Access: Base Support/Network access is not anticipated to be made available. If contractor determines use of available base support to be in their best interest, it *must* be included as such in the proposal. Use of available base support will not be assumed during technical evaluation unless proposed.

c. Two-Step Proposal Process: If applicable, the use of a two-step proposal process utilizing white papers will be specified on individual Call(s) for Proposals.

d. Data Rights Desired: To be determined on each Call for Proposals. The Government generally desires the following rights:

(1) Technical Data: Unlimited Rights
(2) Non-Commercial Software (NCS): Unlimited Rights
(3) NCS Documentation: Unlimited Rights
(4) Commercial Computer Software Rights: Customary License

Due to the nature of this program, which relies heavily on the use of commercial space internet capabilities that may be developed at private expense, the government anticipates that less than Unlimited Rights may be appropriate in some cases and will be considered where appropriate.

The Air Force Research Laboratory is engaged in the discovery, development, and integration of warfighting technologies for our air, space, and cyberspace forces. As such, rights in technical data and NCS developed or delivered are of significant concern to the government. The Government will therefore carefully consider any restrictions on the use of technical data, NCS, and NCS documentation which could result in transition difficulty or less-than full and open competition for subsequent development of technology resulting from a Call for Proposals.

In exchange for paying for development of the data, the Government expects technical data, NCS, and NCS documentation developed entirely at Government expense to be delivered with Unlimited Rights.

Technical data, NCS, and NCS documentation developed with mixed funding are expected to be delivered with at least Government Purpose Rights. Offers that propose delivery of technical data, NCS, or NCS documentation subject to Government Purpose Rights shall fully explain what technical data, NCS, or NCS documentation developed with costs charged to indirect cost pools and/or costs not allocated to a Government contract will be incorporated, how the incorporation will benefit the

program, and address whether those portions or processes are segregable. The Government expects that delivery of technical data, NCS, and NCS documentation subject to Government Purpose Rights will fully meet program needs.

Offers that propose delivery of technical data, NCS, or NCS documentation subject to Limited Rights, Restricted Rights, or Specifically Negotiated License Rights will be considered. Proposals shall fully explain what technical data, NCS, or NCS documentation developed with costs charged to indirect cost pools and/or costs not allocated to a government contract will be incorporated and how the incorporation will benefit the program.

Offerors are reminded that the Identification and Assertion of Restrictions on the Government's Use, Release, or Disclosure of Technical Data or Computer Software (the assertions list), required under DFARS 252.227-7013 and DFARS 252.227-7014, are due at time of proposals. Assertions must be completed with specificity with regard to each item, component, or process listed. Nonconforming assertions lists will be rejected. Offerors proposing an Other Transaction Pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 4023 shall also identify and document any data rights assertions and provide them at the time of proposal submission.

Note that DFARS 252.227-7014(d) describes requirements for incorporation of third-party computer software (commercial and noncommercial). Any commercial software to be incorporated into a deliverable must be clearly identified in the proposal. Because many commercial software licenses are not transferrable or may not be acceptable to the Government, commercial software licenses proposed for delivery to the Government must be approved by the contracting officer prior to award.

As used in this subparagraph, the terms Unlimited Rights, Government Purpose Rights, Specifically Negotiated License Rights, and Limited Rights in technical data are as defined in DFARS 252.227-7013. The terms Unlimited Rights, Government Purpose Rights, Specifically Negotiated License Rights, and Restricted Rights in noncommercial computer software and noncommercial software documentation are as defined in DFARS 252.227-7014. The term Commercial Computer Software is as defined in DFARS 252.227-7014.

II. Award Information

1. **Anticipated Award Date:** To be determined in Call for Proposals.

2. **Anticipated funding:** To be determined in Call for Proposals. Funding profiles on future Call(s) for Proposals are estimates only and not a contractual obligation for funding.

   All funding profiles listed in Call(s) for Proposals are subject to change due to Government discretion and availability. Budgets are subject to unanticipated fluctuations in any or all areas with little or no notice.

3. **Number of awards anticipated:** To be determined in Call for Proposals.

III. Eligibility Information

1. **Eligible Offeror**: This is an unrestricted solicitation. Small businesses are encouraged to propose on all or any part of this solicitation.

2. **Cost Sharing or Matching**: Cost Sharing is not required.

3. **Federally Funded Research and Development Centers**: The following guidance is provided for Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) contemplating submitting a proposal, as either a prime or subcontractor, against this ARA. FAR 35.017-1(c)(4) prohibits an FFRDC from competing with any non-FFRDC concern in response to a Federal agency request for proposal for other than the operation of an FFRDC (with exceptions stated in DFARS 235.017-1(c)(4)). There is no regulation prohibiting an FFRDC from responding to a solicitation. However, the FFRDC's sponsoring agency must first make a determination that the effort being proposed falls within the purpose, mission, general scope of effort, or special competency of the FFRDC, and that determination must be included in the FFRDC's proposal. In addition, the non-sponsoring agency (in this case AFRL) must make a determination that the work proposed would not place the FFRDC in direct competition with domestic private industry. Only after these determinations are made would a determination be made concerning the FFRDC's eligibility to receive an award.

4. **Government Agencies**: If a Government agency is interested in performing work, contact the Program Office identified in the Call for Proposals. If those discussions result in a mutual interest to pursue your agency's participation, the effort will be pursued independent of this announcement.

5. **Other**:
   a. Foreign participation: Foreign participation is not authorized. Foreign Nationals (FNs) can be employed by the US Prime Contractor or Sub-Contractor; however, FNs will be limited to Public Domain information unless the contractor has obtained the proper License or Technical Assistance Agreement that authorizes disclosure of CMI and/or CUI to

foreign entities pursuant to the Department of State's ITAR or Department of Commerce's EAR. Public Domain information is defined as information that is releasable to the general public and sometimes referred to as open-source material. Examples include but are not limited to newspapers, magazines and information posted on the internet. Any proprietary information will have to be appropriately protected.

b. Future Calls for proposals will involve data that is subject to export control laws and regulations. Participation in the Call will be limited to contractors who are registered and certified with the Defense Logistics Services Center (DLSC) and have a legitimate business purpose. Contact the Defense Logistics Services Center, 74 Washington Avenue N., Battle Creek, Michigan 40917-3084 (1-800-352-3572) for further information on the certification process. You must submit a copy of your approved DD Form 2345, Militarily Critical Technical Data Agreement, with your proposal.

c. There are no limits to the number of proposals an offeror may submit.

d. You may be ineligible for award if all requirements of a Call for Proposals are not met on the proposal due date as identified above.

IV. Proposal and Submission Information

1. **Overview**: Proposals submitted under a Call for Proposals Shall be in accordance with the specific Call and this announcement. ***This solicitation does not request proposals at this time.*** For individual Call(s) for Proposals the Government intends to evaluate resulting proposals and award some, all, or none of the proposals received without negotiation/discussion; however, the Government reserves the right to negotiate with those offeror(s) whose proposal is selected for funding.

   Offerors shall be alert for any ARA amendments or Call(s) for Proposals.

2. **Content and Form of Proposal Submission**: The paragraphs below identify proposal format and content applicable when a Call for Proposals is released. Proposals shall be addressed via email to the Contracting Point of Contact (POC) identified in the Call for Proposals.

   a. **General Instructions**:

      i. Technical/management and cost volumes shall be submitted in separate volumes and must be valid for 180 days.

      ii. The following information shall be contained in a cover sheet attached to the cost proposal:

         i. Full company name and address.

         ii. Reference the announcement number.

         iii. Point of contact, name, title, phone, email, and fax number.

iv. CAGE code (Prime contractor and all proposed sub-contractors and/or interdivisional transfers).

v. Unique Entity ID number (Prime contractor).

vi. Name, address, and phone number of administration (DCMA, DCAA, and/or DACO) office.

vii. Is this proposal consistent with your established estimating and accounting practices and procedures and FAR Part 31 cost principles? If no, explain.

iii. The cost file(s) spreadsheets must be in Microsoft Excel and include the formulas (with simple and clear traceability) for calculating cost element bases (i.e., G&A, O/H, etc.)

iv. Number of proposal copies will be specified in each Call for Proposals. Proposals will be submitted to the Contracting POC, identified in Section VII.

v. Offerors are advised that only contracting officers are legally authorized to contractually bind or otherwise commit the government.

vi. The cost of preparing proposals in response to this ARA with Calls is not considered an allowable direct charge to any resulting or any other contract; however, it may be an allowable expense to the normal bid and proposal indirect cost as specified in FAR 31.205-18.

b. **Technical/Management Proposal**:

i. Page Limitations: To be determined in Call for Proposals.

(a) Page limitations will be identified in the Call for Proposals. Proposals are required to be prepared and submitted in Microsoft Word format.

(b) Font Shall be standard 10-point business font Arial.

(c) Character spacing must be "normal," not condensed in any manner.

(d) Pages Shall be double-spaced (must use standard double-space function in Microsoft Word), double sided (each side counts as one page), 8.5 by 11 inches, with at least one-inch margins on both sides, top and bottom.

(e) All text, including text in tables and charts, must adhere to all font size and line spacing requirements listed herein. Font and line spacing requirements do not have to be followed for illustrations, flowcharts, drawings, and diagrams. These exceptions Shall not be used to circumvent formatting requirements and page count limitations by including lengthy narratives in such items.

(f) Pages Shall be numbered starting with the cover page being Page 1, and the last page being no greater than the page limitation specified in the Call for Proposals. The page limitation covers all information including indices, photographs, foldouts (counted as 1 page for each 8.5 by 11 portion) tables, charts, appendices, attachments, resumes, etc.

(g) The proposal page limit does not include the offeror's proposed Statement of Work (SOW); however, the same formatting rules apply to the SOW. SOW page limitations may be specified in each Call for Proposals. Additionally, the page limit does not include the Standard Form (SF) 424, Research and Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) Form or the Security Program Questionnaire.

(h) A CD with the Microsoft WORD version of your Technical/Management Proposal and the SOW must be submitted with the hard copies of the proposal and must match the hard copy.

(i) **Please note:- The Government will check the proposal and SOW for conformance to the stated requirements. Any pages in excess of the stated page limitation after the format check will not be considered.**

ii. Proposals solicited via a Call for Proposals Shall include a discussion of the nature and scope of the research and the technical approach. Additional information on prior work in this area, descriptions of available equipment, data and facilities and resumes of personnel who will be participating in this effort may be included as attachments to the technical proposal. This volume Shall include a SOW detailing the technical tasks proposed to be accomplished under the proposed effort and suitable for contract incorporation. ***Do not include any proprietary information in the SOW*.**

iii. If Government Furnished Property is requested, you are required to include the following information in the proposal:

(a) A list describing all Government property that the offeror or its subcontractors propose to use on a rent-free basis. The list Shall identify the accountable contract under which the property is held and the authorization for its use (from the contracting officer having cognizance of the property).

(b) The dates during which the property will be available for use (including the first, last, and all intervening months) and, for any property that will be used concurrently in performing two or more contracts, the amounts of the respective uses in sufficient detail to support prorating the rent.

(c) The amount of rent that would otherwise be charged in accordance with FAR 52.245-9, Use and Charges; and

(d) The voluntary consensus standard or industry leading practices and standards to be used in the management of Government

property, or existing property management plans, methods, practices, or procedures for accounting for property.

iv. Any questions concerning the technical proposal or SOW preparation Shall be referred to the Technical POC identified in the Call for Proposals.

c. **Cost/Business Proposal Solicited via Call for Proposals**:

i. Separate the proposal into a business section and cost section. Adequate price competition is anticipated but will be TBD per call.

(a) The business section shall contain all business aspects to the proposed contract, such as type of contractual instrument, any exceptions to terms and conditions in the Call for Proposals, any information not technically related, etc. Provide rationale for exceptions.

(b) Identify any technical data that will be delivered with less than unlimited rights.

(c) Cost proposals have no page limitations, The proposal Shall be furnished with supporting schedules and Shall contain a person hour breakdown per task.

ii. Subcontracting plans, for efforts anticipated to exceed $750,000, Shall be submitted along with the technical and cost proposals. Reference FAR 19.704, DFARS 219.704, and DAFFARS 5319.704(a)(1) for subcontracting plan requirements. Small business concerns are exempt from this requirement.

d. **Cost Element Breakdown:** All submitted documentation must be titled appropriately and clearly represent the contents of the document. Clear, concise, and accurate cost proposals reflect the offeror's financial plan for accomplishing the effort contained in the technical proposal. As a part of its cost proposal, the offeror shall submit the information outlined below, together with supporting breakdowns and documentation. All direct costs (labor, material, travel, computer, etc.) as well as labor and overhead rates shall be provided by contractor fiscal year (CFY). Detailed cost element breakdowns by Government Fiscal Year or calendar year are not required. The cost element breakdown(s) shall include the following if applicable. Information, such as historical cost information, judgment, analogy to other similar efforts, etc., are generally accepted methods of projecting labor expenditures. Purchase order history, catalog prices, vendor quotations, firm negotiated values, engineering estimates, etc. are generally accepted methods of projecting material requirements. The cost element breakdown(s) may include the following.

i. **Direct Labor**: Direct labor shall be detailed by number of labor hours by category of labor.

ii. **Labor and Overhead Rates**: Direct labor hours, with their applicable rates, must be broken out and the bases used clearly identified. The source of labor and overhead rates and all pricing factors shall be identified. For instance, if a Forward Pricing Rate Agreement (FPRA) is in existence, that shall be noted, along with the Administrative Contracting Officer's (ACO's) name, email, and telephone number. If the rates are based on current experience in your organization, provide the historical base used and clearly identify all escalation, by year, applied to derive the proposed rates. If computer usage is determined by a rate, identify the basis used and rationale used to derive the rate.

iii. **Material/Equipment:** List all material/equipment items by type and kind with associated costs and advise if the costs are based on vendor quotes, data and/or engineering estimates; provide copies of vendor quotes and/or catalog pricing data. If pricing data is available online, provide screen shots to support your proposal; do not submit weblinks. Proposed material costs shall reflect only the prime offeror's material cost. Sub-contractor and/or interdivisional transfer material costs shall be included as part of the subcontractor and/or interdivisional transfer proposals.

iv. **Subcontractor Costs**: Submit all subcontractor and/or interdivisional transfer proposals and analyses with your cost proposal. If the subcontractor and/or interdivisional transfer will not submit cost and pricing information to the offeror, this information must be submitted directly to the Government for analysis. On all subcontracts and interdivisional transfers, provide the method of selection used to determine the subcontractor and/or interdivisional transfer and the proposed contract type of each subcontract. An explanation shall be provided if the offeror proposes a different amount than that quoted by the subcontractor and/or interdivisional transfer. The offeror's proposal must:

(a) Identify principal items/services to be subcontracted and/or interdivisional transferred.

(b) Identify prospective subcontractors and/or interdivisional transfer and the basis on which they were selected. If non-competitive, provide selected source justification.

(c) Identify the type of contractual business arrangement contemplated for the subcontract and/or interdivisional transfer and provide rationale.

(d) Identify the basis for the subcontract and/or interdivisional transfer costs (e.g., firm quote or engineering estimate, etc.).

(e) Identify the cost or pricing data submitted by the subcontractor and/or interdivisional transfer.

(f) Provide an analysis of the proposed subcontract in accordance with FAR 15.404-3(b).

(g) Provide an analysis concerning the reasonableness, realism and completeness of each subcontractor's and/or interdivisional transfer proposal. If the analysis is based on comparison with prior prices, identify the basis on which the prior prices were determined to be reasonable. The analysis shall include, but not be limited to, an analysis of materials, labor, travel, other direct costs and proposed profit or fee rates.

e. **Other Direct Cost (ODC):** All additional proposed ODCs shall be separately identified and priced. For each proposed ODC provide copies of vendor quotes and/or catalog pricing data. If pricing data is available online, provide screen shots to support your proposal; do not submit weblinks. Proposed ODC costs shall reflect only the prime offeror's ODC cost. Sub-contractor and/or interdivisional transfer ODCs shall be included as part of the subcontractor and/or interdivisional transfer proposals. Examples of additional ODCs are as follows, but are not limited to these examples:

   i. **Special Tooling or Test Equipment:** When special tooling, and/or test equipment is proposed, attach a brief description of items and indicate if they are solely for the performance of this particular contract or project and if they are or are not already available in the offeror's existing facilities. Indicate quantities, unit prices, whether items are to be purchased or fabricated, whether items are of a severable nature and the basis of the price. These items may be included under Direct Material in the summary format.

   ii. **Consultants:** When consultants are proposed to be used in the performance of the effort, indicate the specific project or area in which such services are to be used. Identify each consultant, number of hours or days to be used and the consultant's rate per hour or day. State the basis of said rate and give your analysis of the acceptability of the consultant's rate.

   iii. **Cost Estimating Relationships (CER)/Process Reinvention Integrating Systems for Manufacturing (PRISM):** CER/PRISM cost must be justified and related to proposed cost category. Any Offerors proposing CER and/or PRISM rates, shall provide current documentation from DCMA, DCAA, or DACO with determination showing rates have been determined allowable, allocable and reasonable in accordance with FAR 31.201. Offerors shall not propose CER and/or PRISM cost or methodology formatted or calculated differently than how they were reviewed and determination allowable, allocable and reasonable in accordance with FAR 31.201 from DCMA, DCAA, or DACO.

   iv. **Travel:** Travel costs must be justified and related to the needs of the project. Identify the number of trips, the destination and purpose. Travel costs shall be broken out by trip with number of travelers, airfare, per diem, lodging, car rental, etc. Provide copies of travel quotes. If pricing data is available online, provide screen shots to support your proposal; do not submit weblinks. If proposing airfare,

departing and arrival airports shall be identified for each proposed trip. All other travel cost not included in airfare, per diem, lodging, and/or rental car shall be broken out per trip with each cost being separately identified with supporting documentation on proposed other travel cost.

v. **Computer Use:** Detail the amount and kind of computer usage, the cost, and how the costs were derived. Provide copies of vendor quotes and/or catalog pricing data. If pricing data is available online, provide screen shots to support your proposal; do not submit weblinks.

f. **Facilities Capital Cost of Money (FCCOM):** If Facilities Capital Cost of Money is proposed, a properly executed DD Form 1861 is required.

g. **Project Funding Profile:** Offerors shall include a project funding profile by Government Fiscal Year (GFY) (1 Oct through 30 Sept) for budgetary purposes. This will enable the Government to easily identify program funding needs by GFY.

h. If an offeror takes exceptions to the requirements called out in the announcement, the exceptions shall be clearly stated in the cost proposal.

i. **Forward Pricing Rate Agreements:** Offerors who have forward pricing rate agreements (FPRA's) and forward pricing rate recommendations (FPRR's) shall submit them with their proposal.

j. **Proposal Content Summary**: Offeror proposal may be ineligible for award if all requirements of this ARA and a Call for Proposals are not met on the proposal due date. Reference Section VIII for a Checklist of the requirements.

4. **Proposal Due Date and Time:** To be determined in Call for Proposals.

5. **Intergovernmental Review**: To be determined in Call for Proposals, if applicable.

6. **Funding Restrictions**: To be determined in Call for Proposals.

7. Other Submission Requirements: To be determined in Call for Proposals.

V. Proposal Review Information

1. Evaluation Criteria: Evaluation criteria will be established for each Call for Proposals. In general, the evaluation criteria will encompass technical and cost/price assessments.

2. Review and Selection Process

a. **Categories**: Technical and Cost proposals submitted in response to a Call for Proposals will be evaluated at the same time and categorized as set forth in the Call for Proposals.

b. Only evaluation criteria defined in the Call for Proposals will be used. The Air Force reserves the right to select for award any, all, part or none of each proposal received.

c. As indicated in Section I.4.f above, the Government will conduct a S&T Protection Initial Risk Review only for those proposals categorized as Selectable and selected for funding and negotiations.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. **Award Notices**: To be determined in Call for Proposals.

2. **Administrative and National Policy Requirements**: To be determined in Call for Proposals, if applicable.

3. **Reporting:** To be determined in Call for Proposals.

VII. Agency Contacts for this ARA with Call(s) for Proposals

1. **Address technical questions to:**

   Dr. Brian Beal, AFRL/RS
   Phone: (937) 904-4004
   Email: brian.beal.1@us.af.mil

2. **Address contracting questions to:**

   Mr. Doug McCreary, AFRL/PZLDB
   2130 8th Street, Bldg. 45
   Wright-Patterson AFB, OH 45433
   Phone: (937) 713-9974
   Email: douglas.mccreary.1@us.af.mil

VIII. Other Information

1. **Support contractors:** Only Government employees will evaluate proposals for selection. Offerors are advised that employees of commercial firms under contract to the Government may be used to administratively process proposals, monitor contract performance, or perform other administrative duties requiring access to other contractors' proprietary information. These support contracts include nondisclosure agreements prohibiting their contractor employees from disclosing any information submitted by other

contractors or using such information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

2. **Communications**: Dialogue between prospective offerors and Government representatives is encouraged until submission of proposals. Discussions with any of the points of contact Shall not constitute a commitment by the Government to subsequently fund or award any proposed effort. Only Contracting Officers are legally authorized to commit the Government.

3. **Informal Feedback Sessions:** When requested, an informal feedback session will be provided. The process will follow the time guidelines outlined in the notification letter.

4. **Wide Area Work Flow**: NOTICE: Any contract award resulting from this solicitation will contain the clause at DFARS 252.232-7003, Electronic Submission of Payment Requests and Receiving Reports (DEC 2018) which requires electronic submission of all payment requests. Any contract resulting from this solicitation will establish a requirement to use WAWF-RA for invoicing and receipt/acceptance and provide coding instructions applicable to this contract via the clause at DFARS 252.232-7006, Wide Area Workflow Payment Instructions (JAN 2023). Contractors are encouraged to take advantage of available training (both web-based and through your local DCMA office), and to register in the WAWF-RA system. Information regarding WAWF-RA, including the web-based training and registration, can be found at https://wawf.eb.mil. Note: This WAWF-RA requirement does not apply to universities that are audited by an agency other than DCAA.

5. **Forward Pricing Rate Agreements:** Offerors who have forward pricing rate agreements (FPRA's) and forward pricing rate recommendations (FPRR's) shall submit them with their proposal.

6. **Pre-Award Clearance:** Pursuant to FAR 22.805, a pre-award clearance must be obtained from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration, Office Of Federal Contract Compliance Program's (OFCCP) prior to award of a contract (or subcontract) of $10,000,000 or more unless the contractor is listed in OFCCP's National Pre-award Registry http://www.dol-esa.gov/preaward. This registry indicates that the contractor has been found to be "in compliance" within the past two years with The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) regulations that the OFCCP is mandated to enforce. The registry is updated nightly, and facilities reviewed more than 2 years ago are removed and new ones are added. Award may be delayed if you are not currently listed in the registry and the contracting officer must request a pre-award clearance from the OFCCP.

7. **Limitations on Pass-Through Charges**. As prescribed in FAR 15.408(n)(1) & 15.408(n)(2), provisions 52.215-22, Limitations on Pass Through Charges – Identification of Subcontract Effort (OCT 2009), and 52.215-23, Limitations on Pass-Through Charges (JUN 2020), are contained

in this solicitation by reference. Any contract valued greater than the threshold for cost or pricing data threshold, except fixed price contracts awarded on the basis of adequate price competition, resulting from this solicitation, shall contain the Clause at FAR 52.215-23 (or Alt I).

8. **Associate Contractor Agreements**: Associate Contractor Agreements (ACAs) are agreements between contractors working on Government contracts that specify requirements for them to share information, data, technical knowledge, expertise, or resources. The contracting officer may require ACAs when contractors working on separate government contracts must cooperate, share resources or otherwise jointly participate in working on contracts or projects. Prime contractor to subcontractor relationships do not constitute ACAs. For each award, the contracting officer will identify associate contractors with whom agreements are required.

9. **Post-Award Small Business Program Rerepresentation**: As prescribed in FAR 19.309(d), FAR Clause 52.219-28, Post-Award Small Business Program Rerepresentation (SEP 2023), is incorporated by reference in this solicitation. This clause will be contained in any contracts resulting from this solicitation. This clause requires a contractor to rerepresent its size status when certain conditions apply. The clause provides detail on when the rerepresentation must be complete and what the contractor must do when a rerepresentation is required.

10. **Employment Eligibility Verification**: As prescribed by FAR 22.1803, FAR Clause 52.222-54, Employment Eligibility Verification (MAY 2022), is hereby incorporated by reference in this solicitation. Any contract awarded as a result of this ARA that is above the Simplified Acquisition Threshold and contains a period of performance greater than 120 days, shall include this clause in its contract. This clause provides the requirement of contractors to enroll as a Federal Contractor in the E-Verify program within 30 days after contract award.

11. **Reporting Executive Compensation and First-Tier Sub-contract/Sub-recipient Awards:** Any contract valued at $25,000 or more, excluding classified contracts or contractors with individuals, must contain FAR 52.204-10, Reporting Executive Compensation and First-Tier Subcontract Awards (JUN 2020).

12. **Updates of Publicly Available Information Regarding Responsibility Matters:** Any contract or assistance award that is expected to exceed $600,000; and when an offeror checked "has" in paragraph (b) of the provision FAR 52.209-7, Shall contain the clause/article, FAR 52.209-9, Updates of Publicly Available Information Regarding Responsibility Matters (OCT 2018).

13. **Accelerated Payment to Small Business Subcontractors:** As prescribed in FAR 32.009-2, FAR 52.232-40, Providing Accelerated Payments to Small Business Subcontractors (MAR 2023), is hereby incorporated by reference.

14. **Terms of Service, Open-Ended Indemnification and Unenforceability of Unauthorized Obligations:** As prescribed in FAR 32.706-3, FAR 52.232-39, Unenforceability of Unauthorized Obligations (JUN 2013), is hereby incorporated by reference.

15. **Whistleblower Protections:** As prescribed in DFARS 203.970, DFARS 252.203-7002, Requirement to Inform Employees of Whistleblower Rights (DEC 2022), is hereby incorporated by reference.

16. **Contractor Business Systems:** DFARS 252.242-7005, Contractor Business Systems (FEB 2012), is hereby incorporated by reference.

17. **Safeguarding of Unclassified Controlled Technical Information**: As prescribed in DFARS 204.7303, DFARS 252.204-7012, Safeguarding of Unclassified Controlled Technical Information (JAN 2023), is hereby incorporated by reference.

18. **Ombudsman**: The Ombudsman clause, DAFFARS 5352.201-9101 Ombudsman (JUL 2023) will be contained in any contracts or agreements resulting from a Call for Proposals. The AFRL Ombudsman is AFRL/PK Director; Alternate Ombudsman: AFRL/PK Deputy Director, 1864 Fourth St., Wright-Patterson AFB.

19. **Proposal Content Checklist**: You may be ineligible for award if all requirements of this solicitation are not met on the proposal due date.

    a. Proposals are due to the Contracting POC.
    b. Proposals are due no later than the due date and time specified in this announcement.
    c. Proposal page limits are strictly enforced. See Section IV.3.b. of the solicitation for page limits.
    d. If a contract is proposed, completed Certifications and Representations (Section K) are required. Certifications and Representations (Section K) can be found at www.sam.gov.
    e. The Cost/Business Proposal must contain all information described in the Content and Form of Proposal Section.
    f. For any subcontracts proposed, the Cost/Business Proposal must contain a subcontractor analysis IAW FAR 15.404-3(b).

g. Offerors other than small businesses are to include a subcontracting plan in Microsoft Word Readable.
h. Proposals must be submitted in the format specified in Section IV.
i. Offerors who have Forward Pricing Rate Agreements (FPRA's) and Forward Pricing Rate Recommendations (FPRR's) shall submit them with their proposal.
j. If a DD254 is applicable, offerors must verify their Cognizant Security Office information is current with Defense Security Service (DSS) at www.dss.mil.
k. Due to this effort being subject to export control, offerors must submit a Certified DD Form 2345, Militarily Critical Technical Data Agreement, with proposal.

Attachment(s)

1. Standard Form (SF) 424, Research and Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) Form
2. Security Program Questionnaire