Hybrid Advanced Research Announcement (ARA)
(Open ARA and ARA with Closed Calls)

Overview Information

NAICS Code: The NAICS Code for this acquisition is: 541715 (Research and Technology in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Nanotechnology and Biotechnology), and the small business size standard is 1,000 employees.

Federal Agency Name: Air Force Research Laboratory, AFRL/RXC Materials and Manufacturing Directorate

ARA Title: Experiments, Prototypes, Research, and Evaluation Supporting Systems (EXPRESS)

ARA Type: This is the Initial Announcement.

ARA Number: FA8650-22-S-5004.

THIS IS A HYBRID ADVANCED RESEARCH ANNOUNCEMENT (ARA) THAT WILL SOLICIT REQUIREMENTS THROUGH CLOSED CALLS FOR PROPOSALS AND ACCEPTS WHITE PAPERS DURING THE OPEN PERIOD. THIS ANNOUNCEMENT POSTS THE BASIC ARA AND DOES NOT REQUIRE PROPOSALS AT THIS TIME. THE BASIC ARA WILL REMAIN OPEN UNTIL 15 Feb 2028 WITH CLOSED CALLS BEING RELEASED THROUGHOUT THIS TIME PERIOD.

Hybrid ARA Closed Calls (Closed Calls (One-Step) and Open Period (Two-Step), See Section IV for instructions): This ARA will follow a hybrid construct with the option to solicit one-step targeted, Closed Calls for specific research objectives, or a two-step Open Application process for white papers submitted during the Open Period for any research objective. The Basic Statement of Objectives (SOO) will resolicit the research objectives for submittal of white papers once the resulting proposals of the Closed Call(s) have been awarded. Submittal of white papers will be accepted within the first 72 months of the Solicitation date unless a Closed Call is in process.

For white paper submission during the Open Period, topic areas are located in Attachment 1 (EXPRESS Statement of Objectives) of this document. Over the periodof this ARA, Closed Calls will be issued to request proposals for specific area(s) of interest. Each Closed Call will contain specific requirements and pertinent information. When a Closed Call is issued, the specific research objective of the Closed Call will be closed off from the Open Period. The areas of the Closed Call's SOO will reopen for white papers once the resulting proposal(s) of the Closed Call have been awarded. Proposals submitted in response to the Closed Calls will be accepted as specified in the individual Closed Calls and evaluated in accordance

with the Proposal Review Information (section V). Offerors should monitor the SAM.gov website in the event this announcement is amended or Closed Calls are issued.

Proposal Due Dates and Times:

For ONE-STEP targeted, Closed Calls

PROPOSAL DUE DATE AND TIME: To be provided in each Closed Call.

For TWO-STEP Open Applications (White Papers and Proposals)

The Open Period application process under this ARA consists of a white paper step and a proposal step. The purpose of this two-step approach is to facilitate pre-screening by the U.S. Government such that detailed proposals are only sought from applicants whose white papers demonstrate the most promise for award (this also helps to reduce unnecessary proposal preparation efforts). The Government's decision to invite a Proposal will be based upon the evaluation results of a timely and compliant white paper submission. An Applicant that does NOT submit a timely and compliant white paper is NOT eligible to submit a Proposal for consideration for funding. An Applicant that does NOT receive an invitation from the Government to submit a Proposal is NOT eligible to submit a Proposal.

First Step: WHITE PAPER DUE DATE AND TIME: This ARA is open and effective through 15 Feb 2028 at 5:00 pm local time, WPAFB, OH. White papers may be submitted at any time during this period against research objectives unless a Closed Call(s) is in progress.

Second Step: PROPOSAL DUE DATE AND TIME: To be provided in the Requests for Proposal (RFPs) sent to offerors that submit white papers considered to best meet the needs of the Air Force.

NOTE: ***White paper/proposal receipt after the due date and time shall be governed by the provisions of FAR 52.215-1(c)(3).*** Any white paper or proposal received in this ARA after the exact time specified for receipt of offers is "late" and will not be considered except at the Contracting Point of Contact's discretion. It should 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.

Submission: The AF requests electronic white papers/proposals be submitted as the final copy for a stated research objective using DoD SAFE (https://safe.apps.mil/) and an email confirmation listing the documents submitted

via DoD SAFE. Documents shall have uniformity when labelling as such: "Company Name – Document Name – Date of Document" for all steps of submission. If a revision is needed, please request a new link and resubmit the proposal in full. Proposals must be submitted to the Contracting Point of Contact (POC): Ms. Melissa K. Gross, AFRL/RXKMC, melissa.gross.1@us.af.mil.

NOTE: The maximum email file size the Government can receive is 20 MB.

Hand Delivery: Not accepted.

Solicitation Request: The Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL), Materials and Manufacturing Directorate (RXC) are soliciting white papers on the research efforts described in Attachment 1, EXPRESS Statement of Objectives (SOO). Proposal solicitations pursuant to Closed Calls will be requested under separate Closed Call solicitations. Each Closed Call will contain specific requirements pertinent to that particular Closed Call. Unless otherwise stated in a specific Closed Call, all other requirements are listed within this ARA.

Type of Contract/Instrument: The Air Force reserves the right to award Contract(s) and/or Other Transaction(s) pursuant to 10 U.S.C. § 2373, based on the instrument deemed most appropriate. 10 U.S.C. § 2373 is utilized for experimental or test purposes in the development of the best supplies that are needed for the national defense. Offerors should be aware that the primary purpose of this ARA is experimentation, technical evaluation, assessment of operational utility and not applied research.

It is anticipated that contracts awardedunder this ARA will generally be Cost Plus Fixed Fee (CPFF) and/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 https://www.acquisition.gov/browse/index/far.

If proposing an Other Transaction (OT) pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2373, these FAR references and clauses would not apply. The terms and conditions of an OT agreement should be developed and negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

Estimated Program Cost: The total estimated program value is $400,000,000.00, with multiple awards ranging from $50,000.00 to $20,000,000.00 (the Government reserves the right to exceed this amount if determined to be in the best interest of the Government).

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 OT(s) and/or contract(s) for all, some or none of each solicited effort based on the offeror's ability to perform desired work and funding fluctuations. There is no limit on the number of OTs or contracts that may be awarded to an individual offeror. Multiple awards subject to Fair Opportunity are not anticipated.

Brief Program Summary: The purpose of this effort is to provide experimentation, evaluation, and assessment of structural materials and processes technologies for Air Force and Space Force applications aimed at meeting validated systems requirements or to sustain and/or modernize installations or operations required for general research, development, test, and evaluation, provide demonstration of new and improved structural materials in experimental prototypes or upgraded fielded or nearing production systems, and to provide transition of materials and processes to ensure required capabilities are available for the national defense.

- The experimentation, evaluation, and assessment of materials and processes technology for Air Force and Space Force applications aimed at meeting validated systems requirements or to sustain and/or modernize installations or operations required for general research, development, test, and evaluation.
- The demonstration of new and improved materials (including procedures, instructions/manuals, and familiarization training) in Air Force and Space Force system specific applications (including development of subsystems and components (experimental prototypes) and/or efforts to reduce risk to systems, and/or efforts to integrate subsystems and components into experimental system prototypes for field experiments and/or tests in a simulated environment or realistic operating environment) and/or development efforts to upgrade fielded or nearing production systems.
- The transition of materials and processes to Air Force and Space Force Systems to ensure the required capabilities are available to enable the best supplies are available for the national defense are of interest.

Communication Between Prospective Offerors and Government Representatives: Dialogue between prospective offerors and Government representatives is encouraged until submission of proposals. Discussions with any of the points of contact (see below) 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. If there is any doubt as to whether a response provides a competitive advantage, the answer will be posted publicly on SAM.gov for all contractors to review. For those white papers not selected to provide a full proposal, notification and feedback will be managed by the Contracting POCs.

Address technical questions to the Technical POCs: Pat Carlin (RXC Biz Ops Onsite Lead & Open BAA Manager), 2941 Hobson Way, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH 45433, 937-545-3362, patrick.carlin.1@us.af.mil.

Address contracting questions to the Contracting POC: Ms. Melissa K. Gross,

AFRL/RXKMC, 2130 8th Street, Building 45, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH 45433-7541, melissa.gross.1@us.af.mil

***ONLY white papers are beingsolicited at this time. Calls will be posted as requirements materialize**

Full Text Announcement

I. Program Description: Air Force Research Laboratory, AFRL/RXC Materials and Manufacturing Directorate are soliciting white papers, and anticipate issuing future Closed Calls, on the following research effort:

1. **Statement of Objective/Description of Technical Area(s)**: See Attachment 1, EXPRESS Statement of Objectives (SOO).

2. **Within Scope Modifications:** Potential offerors are advised that due to the inherent uncertainty of research and development efforts, awards resulting from this announcement may be modified during performance to make within scope changes, to include but not limited to modifications which increase the overall contract ceiling amount.

3. **Deliverable Items:**

   a. Data Items: To be determined for each individual award in the Open Period or on a Closed Call by Closed Call basis; however, a Final Report will be required at a minimum on all awards under the Open Period or on Closed Call by Closed Call basis. See Attachment 2 for a list of potential Contract Data Requirements List (CDRLs), DD Form 1423-1.

   b. Software: Deliverables to be determined based on each award in the Open Period, or on a Closed Call by Closed Call basis.

   c. Hardware: Deliverables to be determined based on each award in the Open Period, or on a Closed Call by Closed Call basis.

   d. Other: To be determined based on each award in the Open Period, or on a Closed Call by Closed Call basis.

4. **Schedule**:

   a. Overall effort: The overall ARA program will run for 120 months. Schedule for each Closed Call is to be determined. Schedule for individual awards under the Open Period is to be determined.

   b. Data Items: To be determined for each award.

   c. Software: To be determined for each award.

   d. Hardware: To be determined for each award.

5. **Other Requirements:**

   a. This announcement incorporates FAR and supplement provisions and

clauses by reference. The full text of provisions and clauses can be found at https://www.acquisition.gov/browse/index/far.

b. Program security classification: Unclassified

c. TEMPEST requirements: Not applicable.

d. OPSEC: See attached Statement of Objectives (SOO) for OPSEC guidance.

e. Export Control: Information involved in Closed Calls and awards under the Open Period for this research effort may be subject to Export Control (International Traffic in Arms Regulation (ITAR) 22 CFR 120-131), or Export Administration Regulations (EAR) (15 CFR 710-774). If a Closed Call or award under the Open Period may be subject to export control, then a Certified DD Form 2345, *Militarily Critical Technical Data Agreement*, will be required to be submitted with proposals.

f. Export-Controlled Items: This acquisition is expected to generate or require access to export controlled items. As prescribed by DFARS 225.7901-4, DFARS 252.225-7048, *Export-Controlled Item* (Jun 2013) is contained in this solicitation. This clause shall be contained in ALL resulting contracts.

g. Data Management Plan - The contractor shall submit a Data Management Plan with this proposal. The Data Management Plan shall be submitted as a stand-alone document. The plan shall be no more than 3 pages, and follow the page limitations established for the technical/management proposal (see Section IV.2.b). Effective data management increases the pace of scientific discovery and engineering development and promotes more efficient and effective use of government funding and resources. Formal data management planning should therefore be an ***integral part of the research and development process.*** The Data Management Plan should document the management of the technical data to be used or created in the course of this proposed effort, identifying which technical data are considered necessary to validate the findings of the proposed effort. The Data Management Plan shall contain the following information:
   - A listing and discussion of the types of digital technical data to be used and/or created during the course of the project to include how the data is to be acquired, digitally processed, methods for quantification of uncertainity, and the standards to be used for data and metadata capture (Existing, accepted community standards should be used where possible. Provided metadata should be sufficient to enable someone else to reproduce the data.);
   - The file formats and file naming conventions to be used (enduring, non-proprietary, human and machine readable format and content, self-describing formats are strongly preferred);

- Whenever possible, a description of the specific data schemata to be used;
- Plans and criteria for delivering and/or archiving datasets, or data samples, and other digitally formatted technical data, and for preservation of access thereto;
- Identification of applicable access, security, and export control restrictions and controls;
- A schedule for review and update of the Data Management Plan;
- If, for legitimate reasons, the technical data cannot be preserved digitally, the plan shall include a justification citing such reasons. Technical Data (DFARS): Recorded information, regardless of the form or method of the recording, of a scientific or technical nature (including computer software documentation). The term does not include computer software or data incidental to contract administration, such as financial and/or management information.

6. **Other Information:**

a. Government Furnished Property (GFP) availability: To be determined for each award.

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 the Closed Call or requested in a proposal, the following clauses/provisions apply:

1) 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 (Apr 2012);
2) FAR 52.245-9 Use and Charges (Apr 2012);
3) DFARS 252.211-7007, Reporting of Government Furnished Property (Aug 2012);
4) DFARS 252.211-7007, Tagging, Labeling and Marking of Government Furnished Property (Apr 2012);
5) DFARS 252.245-7002, Reporting Loss of Government Property (Apr 2012);
6) DFARS 252.245-7003, Contractor Property Management System Administration (Apr 2012);
7) DFARS 252.245-7004, Reporting, Reutilization, and Disposal (May 2013).

b. Base Support / Network Access: To be determined for each award.

c. Organization Conflict of Interest: To be determined for each award.

d. Flight Testing: Not applicable.

e. Human Use: To be determined for each award.

f. Animal Use: To be determined for each award.

g. Multiple awards subject to Fair Opportunity are **not anticipated**.

h. Data Rights Desired: Will be determined for each Closed Call or Open Period award. Data Rights desired by the contractor should be included with proposal submission as part of the Section K. Unless a Closed Call states otherwise, see desired rights below. **Given their importance in the Peer or Scientific Review criteria, Contractors MUST clearly mark any data and/or software rights assertions in their proposals**.

(1) Noncommercial Technical Data: Unlimited Rights desired, Government Purpose Rights (GPR) acceptable
(2) Noncommercial Computer Software (NCS): Unlimited Rights desired, GPR acceptable
(3) NCS Documentation: Unlimited Rights desired, GPR acceptable
(4) Commercial Computer Software Rights: Customary License acceptable

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

In accordance with DFARS 252.227-7013(b)(1) and 252.227-7014(b)(1), the Government shall receive unlimited rights in all noncommercial technical data and computer software developed exclusively with Government funds.

In accordance with DFARS 252.227-7013(b)(2) and DFARS 252.227-7014(b)(2), the Government shall receive Government Purpose Rights in all noncommercial technical data and computer software developed with mixed funding. “Developed with mixed funding” means, “development was accomplished partially with costs charged to indirect cost pools and/or costs not allocated to a government contract, and partially with costs charged directly to a government contract. Offerors that propose delivery of noncommercial technical data, NCS, or NCS documentation

subject to Government Purpose Rights should fully explain how a portion of the data was developed at private expense. Specifically, offerors must explain what noncommercial 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.

Offerors that propose delivery of non-commercial technical data with Limited Rights, NCS with Restricted Rights, or NCS documentation with Limited Rights will be considered. Proposals should fully explain what noncommercial 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 and whether those portions or processes are segregable.

Offerors shall include the data rights assertions as required by DFARS 252.227-7017*, Identification and Assertion of Restrictions on the Government's Use, Release, or Disclosure of Technical Data or Computer Software*. The assertions list is included in Section K and due at time of proposals. Assertions must be completed with specificity. Each assertion must identify the technical data or computer software to be delivered and the associated item, component, or process developed exclusively or partially at private expense to which it pertains. Nonconforming data rights assertion lists will not be accepted until submitted in accordance with DFARS 252.227-7017. See *Data Assertions List (DAL) Guide*, Attachment 3, for key rules and a sample listing.

Terms used in this section are defined in the clauses at 252.227-7013, *Rights in Technical Data-Noncommercial Items*, and 252.227-7014, *Rights in Noncommercial Computer Software and Noncommercial Computer Software Documentation*.

THIRD PARTY SOFTWARE (COMMERCIAL AND NONCOMMERCIAL): If any such software, noncommercial or commercial, is not reasonably identifiable at proposal submission, it must still be approved by the contracting officer prior to incorporation. This obligation to obtain pre-approval by the contracting officer, as described above, continues throughout contract administration.

Noncommercial Computer Software: DFARS 252.227-7014(d) describes requirements for incorporation of third party noncommercial copyrighted computer software and computer software documentation, and is incorporated as follows. The Contractor shall not, without the written approval of the Contracting Officer, incorporate any copyrighted computersoftware or computer software documentation in the software or documentation to be delivered under this contract unless the Contractor isthe copyright owner or has obtained for the Government

the license rightsnecessary to perfect a license or licenses in the deliverable software or documentation of the appropriate scope set forth in DFARS 252.227- 7014(b); and prior to delivery of such—

- Computer software, has provided a statement of the license rights obtained in a form acceptable to the Contracting Officer; or
- Computer software documentation, has affixed to the transmittal document a statement of the license rights obtained.

In addition, all noncommercial computer software will receive the appropriate level rights set forth in DFARS 252-7014(b), which could include: Unlimited Rights, GPR, Restricted Rights, or specifically negotiated license.

Commercial Computer Software: For commercial computer software, the Government will neither accept nor execute a DD Form 250 for such software deliverables until the Contractor obtains from all third party software suppliers and/or vendors (Licensor) licenses for any commercial computer software to be delivered that are consistent with Federal Statutes, Federal Case Law, and Federal Regulations.
The following is a non-exhaustive list of terms and conditions which are inconsistent with Federal law and shall not be included in the commercial computer software license between the Licensor and the Government (Licensee):

- The license shall not subject the Government to a contingent liability or a liability that is indefinite or indeterminate, including but not limited to: indemnification clauses, unilateral price increases, the right to attorney fees, automatic assessment of charges, or automatic renewal provisions, as these provisions may constitute obligations in advance or in excess of an appropriation and may violate the Anti-Deficiency Act.
- The license shall be governed by Federal Statutes, Federal Case Law, and Federal Regulations, and shall not be subject to the laws or jurisdiction of any municipality, state, or foreign country. The license shall not bind the Government to litigation in a particular forum or venue or require the Government to participate in arbitration.
- The license shall not include non-substitution language that would preclude or limit the Government from using another vendor/reseller and/or product to fulfill Government requirements. The Licensor shall not have the authority to unilaterally terminate the license. All remedies available shall be consistent with the Disputes and Termination Clauses in the underlying basic contract.
- The Licensor shall not have the right to enter the premise or monitor Government networks for the purpose of auditing the use of the license.
- The Licensor shall not have the authority to control or otherwise

influence any litigation between a third party and the Government.

- The Licensor shall not use the fact that the Government is using the Licensor's products in any notification or advertisement to the public (e.g., no publicity rights permitted).

Additionally, the Contractor may be required to obtain licenses that comply with the following terms and conditions, based on the Government's needs:

- The license shall not disclaim all warranties through use of an "as is" provision.
- The license shall neither restrict the Government from using the product at various sites nor limit use of the product by various Government agencies or third parties performing work on behalf of the Air Force under the EXPRESS Program. In performance of the EXPRESS Program, Government personnel as well as Government contractors may use the software.
- The license shall not limit the Government's use of the software at other Government and Government contractor sites.
- The license shall not require automatic updates or give Licensor the authority to unilaterally replace the software.
- The license shall not restrict the Government from copying or embedding elements of accessible code into other applications (e.g., nesting code, derivative works).

The Contractor may obtain agreement from the Licensor to insert the clause below in its respective software licenses intended to be transferred to the Government:

> "In the event that any of the provisions of the [Software License] are determined to be inconsistent with Federal law or do not otherwise satisfy the Government's needs, the parties to the [Software License] hereby agree that such provisions shall be null and void as they pertain to the Government. Specifically, the following sections are hereby deleted from the [Software License] [and/or amended as indicated below]:
>
> [Section X: deleted; Section Y: amended as follows […]"

If the Licensor will not agree to the terms and conditions cited herein and/or as contained in DFARS 227.72, the Contractor shall retain the current license on behalf of and for the benefit of the US Government if permissible under its license, and such use will not subject the Government to the terms of the license. If the software in question is required to be delivered to the Government, the Licensor must grant the

Government a sublicense that allows the Government to use the software to meet its requirements.

The Contractor shall provide documentation to clearly correlate or map any commercial computer software to be delivered to:

- Contract Line Item Numbers (CLIN);
- Contract Deliverables (CDRLs);
- Paragraphs in the Statement of Work (SOW); and
- Portions of any functional block diagrams and/or system architecture diagrams, so that it can be readily determined where certain commercial computer software corresponding to certain software license agreement(s) are physically located on the system to be delivered under the contract.

II. Award Information

1. **Anticipated Award Date:** To be determined for each award.

2. **Anticipated funding:** Anticipated funding is $40M per year for thenext ten years and will be shared between the Open and the Closed with Calls. Each Closed Call will include an anticipated fundingprofile/amount for that specific Closed Call. Each Open Period RFP will include an anticipated funding profile for that particular award. This funding profile is an estimate only and not a contractual obligation for funding. All funding is subject to change due to Government discretion and availability. Potential offerors should be aware that due to unanticipated budget fluctuations funding in any or all areas may change with little or no notice.

III. Eligibility Information

1. **Eligible Offeror**: This is an unrestricted solicitation. Businesses of all sizes are encouraged to propose on all or any part of this solicitation during the Open Period and under each Closed Call.

2. **Cost Sharing or Matching**: 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 a subcontractor. FAR 35.017-1(c)(4) prohibits an FFRDC from competing with any non-FFRDC concern in response to a Federal agency request for proposalfor 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, 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 participating in this program, contact the Technical POC identified in the applicable Closed Call. 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 at the prime contractor level IAW 13 CFR 121.702.

   b. This acquisition may involve data that is subject to export control laws and regulations. This determination will be made on a case-by-case basis and identified in each Closed Call. If the data is determined to be subject to export control laws, only contractors who are registered and certified with the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) and have a legitimate business purpose may participate in this solicitation. Contact the DLA Customer Interaction Center, 74 Washington Avenue N., Battle Creek, Michigan 40917-3084 (1-800-352-3572 / 1-877-352-2255) 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, if applicable.

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

   d. The proposal may be ineligible for award if all requirements of this solicitation are not met on the proposal due date as identified in each Closed Call.

IV. Proposal and Submission Information

1. **Overview**: White papers and/or proposals submitted under a Closed Call or Open Period shall be in accordance with the instructions provided in the specific Closed Call or Open Period RFP instructions, and in this announcement. Each Closed Call will be a one-step process; applications during the Open Period will be a two-step process. For individual Closed Calls and Open Period applications, the Government intends to review resulting white papers/proposals and award all, some, or none of the proposals received without negotiations/discussions. However, the Government does reserve the right to negotiate with those offerors whose proposals have been selected for funding. Offerors should be alert for any ARA/Closed Call amendments that may change proposal requirements or permit extensions to the proposal submission dates.

2. **Closed Call Proposal Instructions**

a. **General Instructions**:

1) Offerors will submit a technical and cost proposal within 30 working days of the proposal request (unless otherwise stated in the Closed Call). After receipt, proposals will be reviewed in accordance with the award criteria as defined in the Closed Call. Proposals will be categorized and subsequently selected for negotiations.
2) Technical/management and cost/business volumes should be submitted in separate volumes and must be valid for at least 180 days.
3) Proposals must reference the announcement number, and relevant technical areas of interest.
4) Offerors must submit one original copy of their proposals to the Contracting POC through DoD SAFE (See Submission paragraph on pg. 3)).
5) Offerors are advised that only Contracting Officers are legally authorized to contractually bind or otherwise commit the Government.
6) The cost of preparing proposals in response to this ARA 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.
7) No classified technical proposals or cost volumes are expected. Offerors are encouraged to keep all elements of the proposal package unclassified. In the rare case where an offeror has a need to submit a classified appendix, please contact the Contracting POC for delivery instructions.

b. **Technical/Management Proposal To Be Solicited via Closed Calls**:

1) Page Limitations: The following describes proposal page limitations.
    a) The Technical/Management Proposal shall be limited to 25 pages (unless otherwise stated in the Closed Call). Technical/Management proposals and SOWs must be provided in Microsoft Word (DOCX) format. Signed pages may be submitted in Adobe (PDF) 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 Page 25 (unless otherwise stated in the Closed Call). 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. The Government will not consider pages in excess of these limitations.

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, which is limited to 15 pages (unless otherwise stated in the Closed Call).

h) **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 for review purposes.**

2) The Technical/Management proposal(s) 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, use of base support (if desired), data and facilities and resumes of personnel who will be participating in this effort should also be included as attachments to the technical proposal. The volume(s) shall include a SOW(s) detailing the technicaltasks proposed to be accomplished under the proposed effort and suitable for contract incorporation. ***Do not include any proprietary information in the SOW.*** In addition to the contractor proposed SOW, a Government generated SOW Supplemental Requirements document containing additional contracting requirements will be included in any resulting contracts.

3) Any questions concerning the technical proposal or SOW preparation shall be referred to the Contracting POC.

c. **Cost/Business Proposal To Be Solicited Via Closed Calls**:

1) Separate the proposal into a business section and cost section. Adequate price competition is anticipated.

a) The business section should contain all business aspects to the proposed contract, such as type of contract, any exceptions to terms and conditions of the Model Contract, any information not technically related, etc. Provide rationale for exceptions to any portion of the Model Contract.

b) Associate Contractor Agreements: Associate Contractor Agreements (ACAs) are agreements between contractors working on Government contracts that require 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.

c) Identify any technical data that will be delivered with less than unlimited rights (See section I.7.h Data Rights desired).

d) Subcontracting Plans: For efforts to exceed $750,000, Subcontracting Plans shall be submitted in the cost/business proposal. Reference FAR 19.704, DFARS 219.704, and AFFARS 5319.704(a)(1) for subcontracting plan requirements. Small business concerns are exempt from this requirement.

e) 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), apply.

f) Completed Certifications and Representations will be sent when a proposal is requested and are due with the submission of the proposal. Offerors may also be required to submit updated or supplemental Certifications and Representations based on the specifics of their proposal. See Section K, Representations and Certifications, and provide the completed Section K as part of the proposal package for each Closed Call (unless otherwise stated in the Closed Call).

g) If an offeror proposes the use of Government Furnished Property (GFP), other than the GFP identified in the Closed Call (if applicable), the offer must specifically identify each piece of GFP in the Cost/Business Proposal and propose and substantiate a rental cost for evaluation purposes in accordance with FAR 45.202. Include the following information in the proposal:

   (i) 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);

   (ii) The dates during which the property will be used 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;

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

   (iv) 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.

2) **Cost Element Breakdown:** 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. All direct costs (labor, material, travel, computer, etc.) as well as labor and overhead rates should be provided by contractor fiscal year (CFY). Detailed cost element breakdowns by Government Fiscal Year or calendar year are not required. The supporting schedules may include summary level estimating rationale used to generate the proposed costs. The cost element breakdown(s) should include the following if applicable.

   a) **Direct Labor**: Direct labor should be detailed by number of labor hours by category of labor.

   b) **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 should be identified. For instance, if a Forward Pricing Rate Agreement (FPRA) is in existence, that should be noted, along with

the Administrative Contracting Officer (ACO) name 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.

c) **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.

d) **Subcontractor Costs**: Submit all subcontractor proposals and analyses with your cost proposal (See FAR 15.404-3(b)). If the subcontractor 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 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. The offeror's proposal must:

   (i) Identify principal items/services to be subcontracted.

   (ii) Identify prospective subcontractors and the basis on which they were selected. If non-competitive, provide selected source justification.

   (iii) Identify the type of contractual business arrangement contemplated for the subcontract and provide rationale.

   (iv) Identify the basis for the subcontract costs (e.g., firm quote or engineering estimate, etc.).

   (v) Identify the cost or pricing data submitted by the subcontractor.

   (vi) Provide an analysis of the proposed subcontract in accordance with FAR 15.404-3(b). Provide an analysis concerning the reasonableness, realism and completeness of each subcontractor's 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 should include, but not be limited to, an analysis of: materials, labor, travel, other direct costs and proposed profit or fee rates.

e) **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.

f) **Consultants:** When consultants are proposed to be used in the performance of the contract, 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.

g) **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 should be broken out by trip with number of travelers, airfare, per diem, lodging, etc.

h) **Computer Use:** Detail the amount and kind of computer usage, the cost, and how the costs were derived.

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

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

k) If an offeror takes exceptions to the requirements called out in the announcement (e.g., base support, Government-furnished property (GFP), CDRLs), the exceptions should be clearly stated in the cost proposal.

l) **Forward Pricing Rate Agreements:** Offerors who have forward pricing rate agreements (FPRAs) and forward pricing rate recommendations (FPRRs) should submit them with their proposal.

m) Cost/Business proposals have no page limitations.

3) **Proposal Content Summary**: The proposal may be ineligible for award if all requirements of this solicitation are not met on the proposal due date.

3. **Open Period White Paper/Proposal and Submission Information**

a. **Overview**: Each Open Period application consists of a two-step process described in detail below. White papers and proposals submitted shall be in accordance with this announcement. The Government intends to review white papers/proposals and award some, all, or none of the proposals received without negotiation/discussion; however, the Government reserves the right to negotiate with the offeror(s) whose proposal(s) is/are selected for funding. Offerors should be alert for any

ARA amendments that may permit extensions to the white paper submission date.

b. **Open Period Application First Step (White Paper) General Instructions**

1) The *FIRST STEP* requests a white paper and a rough order of magnitude (ROM) cost. The white paper shall include a discussion of the nature and scope of the research and the offeror's proposed technical approach. The Government will review the white papers in accordance with the FIRST STEP Peer or Scientific Review criteria, set forth in Section VI below. Based on this review, the Government will determine which of the white papers have the potential to best meet the Air Force's needs. Offerors will be notified of the disposition of their white paper whether it is Selectable or Non Selectable. It is anticipated that Government review of the white paper submitted will take approximately 20 working days. Those offerors submitting white papers assessed as best meeting Air Force needs will be asked to submit a technical and cost proposal. Those offerors not requested to submit a technical and cost proposal will be notified. The cost of preparing white papers in response to this Solicitation 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.

2) The white paper shall be limited to 5 pages, prepared and submitted in MS Word format. Font shall be standard 10-point business font Arial. Character spacing must be "normal," not condensed in any manner. Pages shall be double-spaced (must use standard double-space function in MS 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. 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. Pages shall be numbered starting with the cover page being Page 1, and the last page being no greater than Page 5. 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. The Government will not consider pages in excess of these limitations.

3) Format: The white paper will be formatted as follows:

a) Section A: ARA Number, Title of Program, Name of Company, Business Size, Company's Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) number, Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number, Contracting POC and Technical

POC with appropriate telephone numbers, fax numbers, and email addresses for the POCs.

b) Section B: Period of Performance and Task Objectives.

c) Section C: Technical Summary and Proposed Deliverables.

d) Section D: Cost of Task (Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM)).

4) Technical Portion: The technical portion of the white paper shall include a discussion of the nature and scope of the research and the offeror's proposed technical approach/solution. It may also include any proposed deliverables. Resumes, descriptions of facilities and equipment, and a proposed Statement of Work (SOW) are not required at this point.

5) Cost Portion: The cost portion of the white paper shall include a ROM cost estimate. No detailed price or cost support information should be forwarded; only a time-phased bottom line figure should be provided.

6) Other Information: Multiple white papers within the purview of this announcement may be submitted by each offeror. If the offeror wishes to restrict its white papers, they must be marked with the restrictive language stated in FAR 52.215-1(e).

7) White Paper/Proposal Content Summary: A Proposal may be ineligible for award if all requirements of this solicitation are not met on the proposal due date.

c. **Open Period Application Second Step (Proposal) General Instructions**

1) The *SECOND STEP* consists of offerors submitting a technical and cost proposal within 30 working days of the proposal request (unless otherwise stated in the Closed Call). After receipt, proposals will be reviewed in accordance with the award criteria in Section VI below. Proposals will be categorized and subsequently selected for negotiations.

2) Offerors should apply the restrictive notice prescribed in FAR 52.215-1(e) Instructions to Offerors—Competitive Acquisition.

3) Technical/management and cost/business volumes should be submitted in separate volumes and must be valid for at least 180 days.

4) Proposals must reference the announcement number and relevant research objective.

5) Offerors must submit one original of their proposals via DoD SAFE link. If a revision is needed, please request a new link and resubmit the proposal in full to the Contracting POC.

6) Offerors shall submit Technical/Management Proposal, SOW and Subcontracting Plan (if applicable) in Microsoft Word format.

7) The cost file(s) spreadsheets must be in Microsoft Excel format (unlocked) and include all the formulas for calculating cost element bases (i.e., G&A, O/H, etc.)

8) Offerors are advised that only Contracting Officers are legally authorized to contractually bind or otherwise commit the Government.

9) The cost of preparing proposals in response to this ARA 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.

10) No classified technical proposals or cost volumes are expected. Offerors are encouraged to keep all elements of the proposal package unclassified. In the rare case where an offeror has a need to submit a classified appendix, please contact the Contracting POC for delivery instructions.

d. **Open Period Application - Technical/Management Proposal**

1) Page Limitations: The following describes proposal page limitations:

a) The Technical/Management Proposal shall be limited to 25 pages (unless otherwise stated in Closed Call). Technical/Management proposals and SOWs must be provided in Microsoft Word. Signed pages may be submitted in Adobe.

b) Font shall be standard 10-point business font Arial. Character spacing must be "normal," not condensed in any manner.

c) 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.

d) 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.

e) Pages shall be numbered starting with the cover page being Page 1, and the last page being no greater than Page 25 (unless otherwise stated in Closed Call). The page limitation covers all information including indices, photographs, foldouts (counted as one page for each 8.5 by 11 portion) tables, charts, appendices, attachments, resumes, etc.

f) The proposal page limit does not include the offeror's proposed SOW; however, the same formatting rules apply to the SOW, which is limited to 10 pages (unless otherwise stated in Closed Call).

g) **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 for review purposes.**

2) The Technical/Management proposal(s) 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, use of base support (if desired), data and facilities and resumes of personnel who will be participating in this effort should also be included as attachments to the technical proposal. This/These volume(s) shall include a SOW(s) 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.*** In addition to the contractor proposed SOW, a Government generated SOW Supplemental Requirements, will be included in any resulting contracts. The SOO is included as Attachment 1 to this ARA.

3) Any questions concerning the technical proposal or SOW preparation shall be referred to the appropriate Technical POC.

e. **Open Period Application - Cost/Business Proposal**:

1) Separate the proposal into a business section and cost section. Adequate price competition is not anticipated.

a) The business section should contain all business aspects to the proposed contract, such as type of contract, any exceptions to terms and conditions of the announcement including the model contract, any information not technically related, etc. Provide rationale for exceptions.

b) Associate Contractor Agreements: Associate Contractor Agreements (ACAs) are agreements between contractors working on Government contracts that require 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.

c) Identify any technical data that will be delivered with less than unlimited rights (See section I.7.h Data Rights desired above).

d) Subcontracting Plans: For efforts to exceed $750,000, Subcontracting Plans shall be submitted in the cost/business proposal. Reference FAR 19.704 and DFARS 219.704 for subcontracting plan requirements. Small business concerns are exempt from this requirement.

e) 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)," apply.

f) Completed Certifications and Representations (Section K) are due with the proposal. Certifications and Representations (Section K) can be found at Attachment 4. Offerors may also be required to submit updated or supplemental Certifications and Representations based on the specifics of their proposal.

g) If an offeror proposes the use of Government Furnished Property (GFP), the offer must specifically identify each piece of GFP in the Cost/Business Proposal and propose and substantiate a rental cost for evaluation purposes in accordance with FAR 45.202. Include the following information in the proposal:

(i) 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);

(ii) The dates during which the property will be used 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;

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

(iv) 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.

2) **Cost Element Breakdown:** 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. All direct costs (labor, material,

travel, computer, etc.) as well as labor and overhead rates should be provided by contractor fiscal year (CFY). Detailed cost element breakdowns by Government Fiscal Year or calendar year are not required. The supporting schedules may include summary level estimating rationale used to generate the proposed costs. The cost element breakdown(s) should include the following if applicable.

a) **Direct Labor**: Direct labor should be detailed by number of labor hours by category of labor.

b) **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 should be identified. For instance, if a Forward Pricing Rate Agreement (FPRA) is in existence, that should be noted, along with the Administrative Contracting Officer's (ACO's) name 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.

c) **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.

d) **Subcontractor Costs**: Submit all subcontractor proposals and analyses with your cost proposal (See FAR 15.404-3(b)). If the subcontractor 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 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. The offeror's proposal must:

   (i) Identify principal items/services to be subcontracted.

   (ii) Identify prospective subcontractors and the basis on which they were selected. If non-competitive, provide selected source justification.

   (iii) Identify the type of contractual business arrangement contemplated for the subcontract and provide rationale.

   (iv) Identify the basis for the subcontract costs (e.g., firm quote or engineering estimate, etc.).

   (v) Identify the cost or pricing data submitted by the subcontractor.

(vi) Provide an analysis of the proposed subcontract in accordance with FAR 15.404-3(b). Provide an analysis concerning the reasonableness, realism and completeness of each subcontractor's 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 should include, but not be limited to, an analysis of: materials, labor, travel, other direct costs and proposed profit or fee rates.

e) **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.

f) **Consultants:** When consultants are proposed to be used in the performance of the contract, 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.

g) **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 should be broken out by trip with number of travelers, airfare, per diem, lodging, etc.

h) **Computer Use:** Detail the amount and kind of computer usage, the cost, and how the costs were derived.

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

j) **Project Funding Profile:** Offerors should 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.

k) If an offeror takes exceptions to the requirements called out in the announcement (e.g., base support, Government-furnished property (GFP), CDRLs), the exceptions should be clearly stated in the cost proposal.

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

m) Cost/Business proposals have no page limitations.

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

4. **Funding Restrictions**: N/A

V. Closed Call Proposal Review Information:

1. **Closed Call Proposal - Peer or Scientific Review Criteria**: Proposals will be reviewed using the criteria provided in subparagraphs a. and b. for each individual Closed Call against the EXPRESS ARA. The technical aspect, which is ranked as the first order of priority, shall be reviewed based on the following criteria that are of descending order of importance.

    a. **Technical**:

        1) Approach appropriate for Advanced Research and/or prototyping activity to enhance mission effectiveness of military personnel, and/or supporting platforms, systems, components, or materials.

        2) The offeror's understanding of the scope of the technical effort.

        3) Soundness of the offeror's technical approach including whether the proposal identifies major technical risks, clearly defines feasible mitigation efforts, and demonstrates related experience and qualifications of technical personnel.

        4) The potential to transition the research and development deliverables to future Government needs. Any proposed restrictions on technical data or computer software will be considered.

    b. **Closed Call Proposal - Cost/Price**: The cost/price criterion includes the realism of the proposed cost. Cost/Price is a substantial factor, but ranked as the second order of priority. (If an offeror proposes the use of GFP other than any GFP identified in the Closed Call, and that proposed GFP provides the offeror an unfair competitive advantage, then FAR 45.202 requires rental equivalent be applied to the Cost Factor for evaluation purposes only).

2. **Closed Call Proposal - Review and Selection Process:**

    a. **Categories**: Based on the Peer or Scientific Review, proposals will be categorized as Selectable or Not Selectable (see definitions below). The selection of one or more sources for award will be based on the Peer or Scientific Review, as well as importance to agency programs and funding availability.

        1) **Selectable:** Proposals are recommended for acceptance if sufficient funding is available.

        2) **Not Selectable:** Even if sufficient funding existed, the proposal

should not be funded.

Note: The Government reserves the right to award some, all, or none of proposals. When the Government elects to award only a part of a proposal, the selected part may be categorized as Selectable, though the proposal as a whole may not merit such a categorization.

b. No other criteria will be used.

c. Prior to award of a potentially successful offer, the Contracting Officer will make a determination regarding price reasonableness.

VI. White Paper / Proposal Review Information

1. **FIRST STEP – <u>WHITE PAPER</u> Review Criteria:** The Government will review white papers to determine which of them have the potential to best meet the Air Force's needs based on the following criteria, which are listed in descending order of importance:

    a. Technology is a covered area in the ARA.

    b. Technology is of interest to the Structural Materials Division (AFRL/RXC).

    c. Appropriate funding is available.

    d. The effort is necessary for experimental or test purposes in the development of the best suppliers for national defense.

    e. The quantity of effort is not greater than necessary for experimentation, technical evaluation, and/or assessment of technology.

    After review, white papers will be categorized as selectable or not selectable (see paragraph IV.3.b.1, above). If a white paper is determined to be selectable and funding is available to the applicable RH Division, a formal technical and cost proposal will be requested from the offeror.

2. **SECOND STEP – <u>PROPOSAL</u> Peer or Scientific Review Criteria**: Proposals will be reviewed against the criteria listed below. The technical aspect, which is ranked as the first order of priority, shall be reviewed based on the following criteria that are of descending order of importance.

    a. **Technical**:

        1) Approach appropriate for Advanced Research and/or prototyping activity to enhance mission effectiveness of military personnel, and/or supporting platforms, systems, components, or materials.

2) The offeror's understanding of the scope of the technical effort.

3) Soundness of the offeror's technical approach including whether the proposal identifies major technical risks, clearly defines feasible mitigation efforts, and demonstrates related experience and qualifications of technical personnel.

4) The potential to transition the research and development deliverables to future Government needs. Any proposed restrictions on technical data or computer software will be considered.

b. **Cost/Price**: The cost/price criterion includes the realism of the proposed cost. Cost/price is a substantial factor, but ranked as the second order of priority. (If an offeror proposes the use of GFP other than any GFP identified in this ARA, and that proposed GFP provides the offeror an unfair competitive advantage, then FAR 45.202 requires rental equivalent be applied to the Cost Factor for evaluation purposes only).

3. **SECOND STEP - <u>PROPOSAL</u> Review and Selection Process**

a. **Categories**: Based on the Peer or Scientific Review, proposals will be categorized as Selectable or Not Selectable (see definitions below). The selection of one or more sources for award will be based on the Peer or Scientific Review, as well as importance to agency programs and funding availability.

1) **Selectable:** Proposals are recommended for acceptance if sufficient funding is available.

2) **Not Selectable:** Even if sufficient funding existed, the proposal should not be funded.

Note: The Government reserves the right to award some, all, or none of proposals. When the Government elects to award only a part of a proposal, the selected part may be categorized as Selectable, though the proposal as a whole may not merit such a categorization.

b. No other criteria will be used.

c. Prior to award of a potentially successful offer, the Contracting Officer will make a determination regarding price reasonableness.

VII. Award Administration Information:

1. **Award Notices:** Offerors will be notified whether their proposal is recommended for award on or about 30 days after receipt of the proposal. The notification is not to be construed to mean that any contract or

assistance award is assured, as availability of funds and successful negotiations are prerequisites to any award.

2. **Administrative and National Policy Requirements**: See ARA Section I.

3. **Reporting:** See paragraph I.4.a., Contract Data Requirements List (CDRL).

VIII. Other Information:

1. **Acquisition of Commercial Items**: Based upon market research, the Government is not using the policies contained in Part 12, Acquisition of Commercial Items, in this solicitation. However, interested offerors may identify to the Contracting Officer their interest and capability to satisfy the Government's requirement with a commercial item within 15 days of this notice.

2. **Support Contractors:** Only Government employees will participate in Peer or Scientific Reviews. 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.

3. **Item Unique Identification and Valuation.** It is DoD policy that contractors shall be required to identify the Government's unit acquisition cost for all deliverable end items for which Item Unique Identification applies. Therefore, proposals must clearly break out the unit acquisition cost for any deliverable items. See DFARS 211.274-3, Policy for Valuation, for more information. (Per DoD, "fully burdened unit costs" to the Government would include all direct, indirect, and G&A costs, and an appropriate portion of fee). For more information, see the following website: http://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/pdi/uid/index.html.

4. **Pre-Award Clearance:** Pursuant to FAR 22.805, a preaward 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 Preaward Registry https://ofccp.dol-esa.gov/preaward/pa_reg.html. Award may be delayed if the contractor is not currently listed in the registry and the Contracting Officer must request a preaward clearance from the OFCCP.

5. **Updates of Publicly Available Information Regarding Responsibility Matters:** Any contract or assistance award that exceeds $600,000; and when 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."

6. **Proposal Adequacy Checklist:** Offerors of proposals (Step 2) submitted during the Open Period may be required to submit the completed provision at DFARS 252.215-7009 Proposal Adequacy Checklist with their proposal. *(See Attch 5)*.

7. **White Paper/Proposal Content Checklist:** If the described 2-step process applies, the contractor may be ineligible for award if all requirements of the solicitation are not met on the white paper/proposal due date.

   a. White papers/proposals are due to the Contracting POC.

   b. White papers/proposals are due no later than the due date and time specified in the letter RFP.

   c. Proposal page limits are strictly enforced. See ARA Section IV.3 for page limits.

   d. If a contract is proposed, completed Certifications and Representations (Section K) are required. See Section K (Attachment 4) as attached to the Closed Call solicitation.

   e. The Cost/Business Proposal must contain all information described in the Content and Form of Proposal Submission 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 must include a subcontracting plan in Microsoft Word format submitted via e-mail, as well as a hardcopy.

   h. Proposals must be submitted in the format specified in ARA Section IV.

   i. Offerors who have Forward Pricing Rate Agreements (FPRAs) or Forward Pricing Rate Recommendations (FPRRs) should submit them with their proposal.

   j. It is anticipated efforts under this ARA will be Unclassified. Howveer, if a DD Form 254 is applicable, offerors must verify their Cognizant Security Office information is current with the Defense Counterintelligenceand Security Agency (DCSA) at https://www.dcsa.mil/.

   k. If effort is subject to Export Control, offerors must submit a Certified DD Form 2345, *Militarily Critical Technical Data Agreement*, with proposal.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENTS:

1. EXPRESS Statement of Objectives (SOO)
2. Sample Contract Data Requirements List (CDRL) Package, DD Form 1423-1
3. Data Assertions List (DAL) Guide
4. Section K
5. Proposal Adequacy Checklist