Multi X Office

(MXO)

Office-wide Innovative Solutions Opening

DARPA-PS-26-115

May 20, 2026

Amendment 02
As amended on November 17, 2026

The purpose of Amendment 02 is to add resources to learn about MXO's current interests and to update the abstract applicability criteria. All changes are highlighted in yellow.

This publication constitutes a long term open call following and satisfying competitive requirements of 10 U.S.C. § 4021, 10 U.S.C. § 4022, and 10 U.S.C. § 4023. Any resultant award negotiations will follow all pertinent law and regulation, and any negotiations and/or awards as required by statute and as specified in the Innovative Solutions Opening.

OVERVIEW INFORMATION:

- **Federal agency name** – Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), Multi-X Office
- **Funding opportunity title** – MXO Office-wide Innovative Solutions Opening
- **Announcement type** – Amendment
- **Funding opportunity number** – DARPA-PS-26-115
- **Assistance listing number** – Not applicable
- **Dates/Time - All times are Eastern Time Zone (ET)**
    - Posting dates:
        - Initial Posting: May 20, 2026
        - Amendment 01: September 18, 2026
        - Amendment 02: November 17, 2026
    - Abstract due date: Abstracts may be submitted on a rolling basis until 4:00 p.m. on April 23, 2027.
    - Proposal due date: By Government invitation stemming from the abstract review on a rolling basis until 4:00 PM on the closing date.
    - Closing date: June 4, 2027
- **Submission Requirements: An Abstract must be submitted and an invitation to submit a Proposal must be received, prior to any Proposal submission. A proposal will not be reviewed if it is submitted without:**
    1. Submitting an abstract, and
    2. Receiving an invitation to submit a Proposal.
- **Anticipated individual award**s - Multiple awards are anticipated.
- **Types of instruments that may be awarded** – Other Transaction Agreements (OTAs) and Experimental Transaction Agreements (ETAs)
- **NAICS code**: 541715
- **Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) Required Level**:
    - Minimum of Level 1 (Self-Assessment) (proposals not involving the generation and/or storage of Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI))
    - Up to Level 2 (Self-Assessment) (proposals involving CUI)
- **Agency contact**
    - Points of Contact
      The MXO PS Coordinator for this effort may be reached at:

      DARPA-PS-26-115@darpa.mil
      DARPA / MXO
      ATTN: DARPA-PS-26-115
      675 North Randolph Street
      Arlington, VA 22203-2114

1. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) anticipates funding multiple proposals on a rolling basis under this solicitation. Specifically excluded is research that primarily results in evolutionary improvements to the existing state of practice. Proposed research should investigate innovative approaches that enable revolutionary advances in science, devices, or systems.

The Multi X Office (MXO) at DARPA regularly publishes solicitations requesting responses to specific program topics. This announcement seeks revolutionary research ideas for topics not addressed by ongoing MXO programs or other published DARPA solicitations.

This Innovative Solutions Opening will utilize the procurement authorities of 10 U.S.C. § 4021, 10 U.S.C. § 4022, and 10 U.S.C. § 4023, which allow procurement activities to enter into agreements with industry, academia, and other organizations to fund research and development through Other Transaction for Research agreements (Research OTs), OT for Prototypes agreements (Prototype OTs), and procurements for experimental purposes agreements (DARPA uses the term Experimental Transaction Agreements (ETAs)). Proposals received as a result of this Innovative Solutions Opening will be evaluated by the Government through a scientific review process in accordance with the evaluation criteria specified herein.

DARPA solicitations are posted on the System for Award Management (SAM) website under the Contract Opportunities link at https://sam.gov/. The following information is for those wishing to respond to the MXO Office-wide Innovative Solutions Opening.

1.1. MXO MISSION AND THRUST AREAS

DARPA's Multi X Office (MXO) launched in May 2026 as the next generation of the former Microsystems Technology Office (MTO), with a mission to disrupt across scale and function to dominate militarily and economically. Building on the many technological successes of its predecessor office, MXO expands its scope to better address the increasingly complex challenges shaping U.S. national security and to uphold the Department of War's technological edge.

Strategically, MXO aims to disrupt the development and use of technology by applying physical sciences broadly and in unconventional ways to deliver innovative capabilities. Technologically, this requires multi-scale and multi-disciplinary innovations. Operationally, the MXO technology enables multi-function and multi-domain applications.

MXO explores ***materials*** at the atomic, molecular, and cellular scales to develop novel ***components***, ***tools***, and ***processes*** with the potential to reshape the battlespace and economies of the future. MXO plans to transition these advances into operational impact for the existing and future battlespace by propagating emerging technologies to displace current capabilities. MXO also proposes to further leverage commercial technologies and deliver asymmetric advantages for the existing battlespace.

MXO seeks to develop high-risk, high-reward technologies and proposed research should investigate innovative approaches that enable revolutionary advances in science, components, or

systems. Specifically excluded is research that primarily results in evolutionary improvements to the existing state of practice.

1.2. THRUST AREAS OF INTEREST

As MXO evolves to address future challenges in this era of advancement, the office is establishing a beyond-the-headlights strategy by periodically rotating thrust areas of interest within this solicitation. MXO may utilize amendments to this solicitation to notify potential proposers of new thrust areas. Each new and evolving thrust area will address key challenges towards MXO's mission as stated above. Core to all thrusts is the requirement that advancements lead to new warfighter capability instead of incremental improvements to existing capabilities.

The three technical thrusts of MXO's Office-wide Innovative Solutions are:

Thrust 1 - Materials and components to expand the foundation: Materials, devices, and their integration serve as the foundation of the modern battlespace, but this complementary metal-oxide-semiconductor (CMOS) -centric foundation is increasingly vulnerable to disruption and exploitation. MXO seeks to establish new technological beyond-CMOS foundations that enable systems to be resilient, secure, and resistant to adversarial attacks. The goal is to harness American ingenuity to develop and scale next-generation materials and component technologies that deliver system-level assurance. MXO is interested in ideas that invent and enable the scalable production of foundational hardware capable of underpinning enduring military and economic advantage.

Thrust 2 - Tools and processes for indigenous development: Indigenous processes, tools, and material supply chains are essential to ensure national and economic security. Our adversaries are increasingly targeting these systems through unconventional and indirect means. MXO aims to strengthen industrial resilience by advancing new tools, processes, and capabilities that support domestic development, create entirely new and indigenous supply chains, and/or reduce reliance on vulnerable supply chains. The office is interested in ideas that help establish new technology sectors, affirm industrial sovereignty, and enable the United States to design, build, and scale critical technologies at home.

Thrust 3 - New modalities to achieve mission effects: Sensing, orienting, computing, and communicating underpin effective operations in the modern battlespace. Achieving these effects does not need to solely rely on a single mode of operation or necessarily be limited to traditional electronic-only approaches. MXO seeks to expand the range of technological modalities available to deliver mission effects in ways that are more resilient to current and emerging vulnerabilities. This includes, but is not limited to, more performant devices that leverage new underlying physics, hybrid approaches that exploit the strengths of electronics and non-electronics to produce effects that are greater that the sum of its parts, and entirely new approaches to achieve mission effects that breakthrough existing paradigms' constraints. The office is interested in ideas that expand beyond a single modality-based approach to enable reliable, uninterrupted mission effects in future conflicts.

Note: efforts that include human or animal subjects research are out of scope for this solicitation.

1.3. GENERAL ADVICE FOR SUBMITTING NEW IDEAS TO MXO

In response to this MXO solicitation, written abstracts are **required in advance of submitting a full proposal**. The government's aim is to lower the administrative burden to entry and preempt further resource allocation by prospective respondents for the expression of project concepts that aren't directly relevant to the immediate needs of MXO Program Managers. Specific abstract evaluation criteria used to make the assessment can be found in Section 2.1.

Typically, abstract submissions proposing short-duration exploratory projects, such as analytical studies or proof of concept experiments, to inform new program ideas will be given priority. An ideal study helps a Program Manager answer some of the Heilmeier Questions (see https://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/heilmeier-catechism), such as: "Why do you think your approach will be successful?"; "What are the risks?"; and "What difference will it make?"

Stemming from the assessment of the proposer's[1] abstract during the abstract phase, the government may invite, in writing, the proposer to provide a written or oral proposal, dictated by the instructions provided, for the fully proposed technical solution to be evaluated. Specific evaluation criteria for proposals can be found in Section 2.2. The Government team reserves the right to inform the proposer of specific challenges, scope, and deliverables required to be addressed in the written or oral proposal in the successful abstract notification letter. Only proposers that submit an abstract and receive an invitation from the Government will be eligible to submit a full proposal or be considered for award.

To ensure alignment with office priorities and avoid submitting concepts that duplicate existing activities or active solicitations, potential proposers are strongly encouraged to investigate current MXO interests prior to submission by:

- Reviewing Active Programs & Solicitations: Exploring current MXO programs at http://www.darpa.mil/about-us/offices/mxo and published opportunities at http://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/opportunities.
- Exploring Emerging Concepts: Checking current research focus areas under Ideas for Incubation at https://www.darpa.mil/research/ideas.
- Consulting Program Managers: Reviewing current MXO Program Managers and their focus areas at http://www.darpa.mil/about-us/people. Proposers may contact PMs directly to discuss general research alignment.

Proposers are advised that MXO Program Managers are not permitted to help with the crafting of ideas or abstracts; further, MXO Program Managers will not direct proposers to submit an abstract.

Proposers must not manipulate, alter, or enhance technical, performance, cost, or other factual data using artificial intelligence (AI) tools or other automated methods in a manner that misrepresents the underlying results or capabilities. All data, analyses, and representations in submissions must accurately reflect the proposer's actual work, methods, and outcomes. Submissions that show

[1] As used throughout this solicitation, "proposer" refers to the lead organization on a submission to this solicitation. The proposer is responsible for ensuring that all information required by a solicitation—from all team members—is submitted in accordance with the solicitation.

evidence of the above utilization of AI may be deemed non-conforming, in which case they will not be reviewed.

Submissions that are deemed technically identical, or nearly identical, to previous submissions may be deemed non-conforming and rejected without further review. Submissions including profane, racially charged, politically charged, or other similarly inappropriate language will not be reviewed. Proposers will be notified of non-conforming determinations via letter, distributed via email to the Technical POC and Administrative POC specified in the submission.

2. ABSTRACT AND PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

This solicitation allows for multiple award instrument types to be awarded, including Other Transactions Agreements. This includes the award of Other Transaction (OT) for Prototype agreements, which can include not only commercially available technologies fueled by commercial or strategic investment, but also concept demonstrations, pilots, and agile development activities that can incrementally improve commercial technologies, existing government-owned capabilities, and/or concepts for broad defense and/or public application(s). Follow-on production contracts or transactions may also be awarded pursuant to 10 U.S.C. § 4022. The OT agreement will not require cost sharing unless the offeror is a traditional defense contractor who is not working with a nontraditional defense contractor participating in the program to a significant extent. The following websites are incorporated by reference and contain additional information regarding overall proposer instructions, general terms and conditions, and Other Transactions for Prototype. The following websites contain additional information regarding overall proposer instructions, general terms and conditions, and each specific award instrument type:

- **Proposer Instructions and General Terms and Conditions:** https://www.darpa.mil/about/offices/contracts-management/proposer-general-terms
- **Other Transaction Agreements:** https://www.darpa.mil/about/offices/contracts-management/proposer-transactions

PS Attachments:

- Attachment A **(Informational)**: Broad Agency Announcement Tool (BAAT) Submission Portal Guide
- Attachment B: Abstract Instructions and Template

The following attachments will only be provided to those who receive an invitation to submit a full proposal.

- Attachment C: Proposal Summary Slide Template
- Attachment D: Proposal Instructions and Volume I Template (Technical and Management)
- Attachment E: Proposal Instructions and Volume II Template (Price)
- Attachment F: Price Summary Spreadsheet
- Attachment G: Other Transaction Certification
- Attachment H: Task Description Document (TDD) Template
- Attachment I: Schedule of Milestones and Payments

- Attachment J: Model Other Transaction for Prototype
- Attachment K: Model Other Transaction for Research
- Attachment L **(Informational)**: Proposers' Checklist

All technical, contractual, and administrative questions regarding this notice must be emailed to DARPA-PS-26-115@darpa.mil. Emails sent directly to any Program Manager or MXO Office Director or any other address may result in delayed or no response. All questions and/or correspondence must be in English and must include the name, email address, and telephone number of a point of contact. DARPA will attempt to answer all questions in a timely manner and post an FAQ list on the DARPA/MXO Opportunities page at (http://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/opportunities). The list will be updated on an ongoing basis until two weeks prior to the solicitation closing date.

2.1. ABSTRACT GENERAL GUIDELINES

This solicitation contains an abstract phase. Abstracts are used as a decision point, which means that only abstracts that are reviewed and invited to submit a full proposal, will be able to submit a full proposal. Abstracts are accepted on a rolling basis through the due date and time stated in the Overview section. **Attachment B** contains specific instructions and templates and constitutes an abstract submission. Please see Attachment A for instructions on submitting abstracts via the Broad Agency Announcement Tool (BAAT).

Prior to submitting a full proposal, proposers are required to first submit an abstract as described below. Upon receipt of the abstract, the Government first will ascertain whether the proposed concept is (1) applicable to the MXO Office-wide Thrust Areas and (2) currently of interest. For the purposes of this solicitation, applicability is defined as follows:

- The described concept is applicable to the technical areas described herein.
- ~~The described concept is important to MXO's current investment portfolio.~~
- The described concept addresses targeted research domains and active focus areas of the current MXO investment portfolio.
- The described concept aligns with MXO Program Manager expertise and current research interests.
- ~~The described concept investigates an innovative approach that enables revolutionary advances, i.e., will not primarily result in evolutionary improvements to the existing state of practice.~~
- The described concept is not duplicative of work that already has been completed or currently is underway.
- The Proposer has not already received government funding or a positive funding decision for the proposed concept (whether from DARPA or another Government agency).

Abstracts that are deemed not applicable to the MXO Office-wide Innovative Solutions Opening, as defined above, may be deemed non-conforming and removed from consideration. All abstracts must provide sufficient information to assess their validity, and feasibility, and they must comply with the requirements outlined herein for submission formatting, content, and transmission to DARPA.

Additional guidance on submitting abstracts include:

a. Do not include elaborate brochures or marketing materials; only include information relevant to the submission requirements or evaluation criteria.

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

c. Proposers are responsible for clearly identifying proprietary information. Submissions containing proprietary information must have the cover page and each page containing such information clearly marked with a label such as “Proprietary” or “Company Proprietary.” NOTE: “Confidential” is a classification marking used to control the dissemination of U.S. Government National Security Information as dictated in Executive Order 13526 and should not be used to identify proprietary business information.

d. Abstract submissions sent in response to this MXO Office-wide Innovative Solutions Opening shall be submitted via DARPA's Broad Agency Announcement Tool (BAAT) Website (https://baa.darpa.mil). Note: If an account has already been created for the DARPA BAAT Website, this account may be reused. If no account currently exists for the DARPA BAAT Website, follow the instructions in Attachment A to set up a new DARPA BAAT account. Proposers using the DARPA BAAT website may encounter heavy traffic on the submission deadline date; proposers should start the account creation and submission process as early as possible. All documentation submitted electronically through DARPA's BAAT Website must be uploaded as zip files (.zip or .zipx extension). The final zip file shall be no greater than 100 MB in size. Only one zip file will be accepted per submission, and submissions not uploaded as zip files will be rejected by DARPA. Technical support for DARPA's BAAT Website may be reached at BAAT_Support@darpa.mil, and is typically available during regular business hours (9:00 AM – 5:00 PM Eastern Time).

e. **Submissions sent through other means not described above or after the prescribed MXO Innovative Solutions Opening deadline will not be considered.**

f. **Written abstracts**. Proposers must see Attachment B for all abstract formatting instructions. In addition to following the Attachment B instructions, proposers should ensure:

- To include a truthful statement that no people or entities on the proposer's team are also working for DARPA as Systems Engineering Technical Assistance (SETA), Advisory and Assistance Services (A&AS), or similar support services, as DARPA has a policy prohibiting such people and entities from working as a technical performer. Include this statement on the title page; it will NOT count as part of the written page limit.
- The proposed concept is applicable to the technical areas described herein.
- ~~The proposed concept is important to MXO's current investment portfolio~~
- The proposed concept addresses targeted research domains and active focus areas of the current MXO investment portfolio.
- The described concept aligns with MXO Program Manager expertise and current research interests.
- ~~The proposed concept investigates an innovative approach that enables revolutionary advances, i.e., will not primarily result in evolutionary improvements to the existing state of practice.~~
- The proposed work is not duplicative of work that either has already been completed or currently is underway.
- The proposer has not already received government funding or a positive funding decision for the proposed concept (whether from DARPA or another Government agency).
- Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) Cost: Provide a ROM cost for the total proposed solution with minimal, high-level instantiations of said cost. This cost

can be given as a range. The ROM cost should not be more than ½ page and does not count against the page limit.

2.2. CLASSIFIED ABSTRACT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Specific information regarding classified proposal submission methods can be found in **Attachment D**.

Should a proposer wish to submit classified abstracts, an unclassified email must be sent to the MXO Office-wide mailbox to coordinate contact with, and submission instructions from DARPA MXO. If a determination is made that the abstract may result in access to classified information, an SCG and/or DD Form 254 may be facilitated by DARPA. Classified submissions must **NOT** be submitted through the DARPA BAAT website.

2.3. ABSTRACT EVALUATION CRITERIA

Individual abstracts will be evaluated against the criteria described below: Technical Concept and Understanding and Potential to Achieve Proposed Goals.

1. **TECHNICAL CONCEPT AND UNDERSTANDING:** The extent to which the abstract demonstrates a sound and accurate understanding of the technical problem and proposes an innovative concept that addresses the key technical challenges of the program. The identification of major technical risks and the plausibility of the proposed approach will be considered.
2. **POTENTIAL TO ACHIEVE PROPOSED GOALS:** The degree to which the abstract indicates that the proposer has the technical capability and approach necessary to achieve the stated objectives if selected to submit a full proposal. The proposed ROM cost is consistent with the risk profile and reflects a sufficient understanding of the anticipated costs and level of effort needed to successfully accomplish the proposed technical approach.

2.4. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION INFORMATION

If DARPA sends an invite to submit a proposal, specific submission instructions (including content submission guidelines and templates) will be provided in the invitation to participate. Only proposers that submit an abstract and receive an invitation from the Government will be eligible to submit a full proposal or be considered for award.

If warranted during the proposal response phase, resulting awards may be segregated into pre-priced options. Additionally, DARPA reserves the right to act on proposals in their entirety or to select only portions of proposals for award. In the event that DARPA desires to award only portions of a proposal, negotiations may be opened with that proposer. The Government reserves the right to fund proposals in phases with options for continued work, as applicable. The Government reserves the right to request any additional, necessary documentation once it makes the award instrument determination.

Full proposals may be invited via the Government abstract response letter before the due date outlined in this announcement. **Attachments D, E, F, G, H, and I** containing specific instructions and templates will be provided as part of the proposal invitation. Please visit Proposer Instructions and General Terms and Conditions for additional information regarding abstract and proposal submission methods through the Broad Agency Announcement Tool (BAAT) (https://baa.darpa.mil).

Non-conforming submissions that do not follow the instructions herein may be rejected without further review.

DARPA is interested in whether, and to what extent, proposers are using artificial intelligence (AI) tools to contribute to Volume 1 of proposals submitted in response to DARPA solicitations. Therefore, proposers must answer the following questions on the cover sheet of Volume 1 of this solicitation:

- Did you use AI tools to assist in preparing this proposal?
- If yes, what tools did you employ?

Any content in Volume 1 that utilized an AI tool to generate information, assist in technical understanding, or guide the technical work should have a citation and a corresponding reference in the Bibliography section of Volume 1. The citation should specify the tool, content, and purpose. For example, "[AI tool] was used to understand existing state of the art in manufacturing."

NOTE – THIS INFORMATION WILL NOT BE USED FOR EVALUATION PURPOSES. Conforming proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the Evaluation Criteria outlined in the solicitation regardless of whether AI tools were employed.

2.5. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Invited proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria listed in ***descending order of importance***:

1. **OVERALL SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL MERIT:** The proposed technical approach is innovative, feasible, achievable, and complete. The proposed technical team has the expertise and experience to accomplish the proposed tasks. Task descriptions and associated technical elements provided are complete and in a logical sequence with all proposed deliverables clearly defined such that a final outcome that achieves the goal can be expected as a result of award. The proposal identifies major technical risks, and planned mitigation efforts are clearly defined and feasible. The proposal clearly explains the technical approach(es) that will be employed and provides ample justification as to why the approach(es) is feasible.

2. **POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION AND REVELANCE TO DARPA MISSION:** The potential contributions of the proposed effort bolster the national security technology base and support DARPA's mission to make pivotal early technology investments that create or prevent technological surprise.

   The proposer clearly demonstrates their plans and capabilities to contribute to U.S. national security and U.S. technological capabilities. The evaluation will consider the proposer's

plans and capabilities to transition proposed technologies to U.S. national security applications and to U.S. industry. The evaluation may consider the proposer's history of transitioning or plans to transition technologies to foreign governments or to companies that are foreign-owned, controlled, or influenced. The evaluation will also consider the proposer's plans and capabilities to assist its employees and agents to be eligible to participate in the U.S. national security environment.

In addition, the evaluation will take into consideration the proposed technology transition strategy and the extent to which the proposed intellectual property (IP) rights will potentially impact the government's ability to transition the technology, as applicable

3. **BUDGET AND PRICE:** The proposed price, value, or costs are realistic for the technical and management approach and accurately reflect the technical goals and objectives of the solicitation. The proposed price, value, or costs are consistent with the proposer's Task Description Document (TDD) and reflect a sufficient understanding of the price, value, or costs and level of effort needed to successfully accomplish the proposed technical approach. The price, value, or costs for the prime proposer and proposed sub-awardees are substantiated by the details provided in the proposal (e.g., the type and number of labor hours proposed per task, the types and quantities of materials, equipment and fabrication costs, travel and any other applicable costs and the basis for the estimates). It is expected that the effort will leverage all available relevant prior research in order to obtain the maximum benefit from the available funding. For efforts with a likelihood of commercial application, appropriate direct cost sharing may be a positive factor in the evaluation. DARPA recognizes that undue emphasis on cost may motivate proposers to offer low-risk ideas with minimum uncertainty and to staff the effort with junior personnel in order to be in a more competitive posture. DARPA discourages such cost strategies.

3. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

This announcement, stated attachments, and websites incorporated by reference constitute the entire solicitation. In the event of a discrepancy between the announcement, attachments, or websites, the announcement takes precedence.

3.1. ELIGIBILITY

All responsible sources capable of satisfying the Government's needs, including both U.S. and non-U.S. sources, may submit a proposal that shall be considered by DARPA. Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Small Businesses, Small Disadvantaged Businesses and Minority Institutions are encouraged to submit proposals and join others in submitting proposals; however, no portion of this announcement will be set aside for these organizations' participation due to the impracticality of reserving discrete or severable areas of this research for exclusive competition among these entities. Non-U.S. organizations and/or individuals may participate to the extent that such participants comply with any necessary nondisclosure agreements, security regulations, export control laws, and other governing statutes applicable under the circumstances.

DARPA encourages technical solutions from all responsible sources capable of satisfying the government's needs. To ensure fair competition across the ecosystem, DARPA prohibits

performers under this solicitation from concurrently providing Systems Engineering Technical Assistance (SETA), Advisory and Assistance Services (A&AS), or similar support services and being a technical performer. DARPA extends this prohibition to University-Affiliated Research Centers (UARCs) and Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) including National Labs, who as a result of their specialized expertise and areas of competencies, are able to accomplish integral tasks that cannot be met by government or contractor resources.

Due to their specialized roles and longstanding regulatory relationships with the Government, FFRDCs, UARCs, and Government Entities to include National Laboratories present potential conflicts and advantages that would compromise fair and open competition. If an FFRDC, UARC, or Government Entity believes they offer unique and innovative approaches to this solicitation and are interested in this solicitation, either as a prime or a subcontractor, they should contact the Agency Point of Contact (POC) listed in the Overview section prior to the abstract due date to discuss potential participation as part of the government team or eligibility as a technical performer. These entities typically may only receive funding through existing awards they hold with their sponsoring agencies. If these entities are proposed as subawardees, their costs must be clearly segregable in cost proposals. If scientifically merited, DARPA may fund work proposed by these entities with the following caveats:

- FFRDCs: (1) FFRDCs must clearly demonstrate that the proposed work is not otherwise available from the private sector. (2) FFRDCs must provide a letter, on official letterhead from their sponsoring organization, that (a) cites the specific authority establishing their eligibility to propose to Government solicitations and compete with industry, and (b) certifies the FFRDC's compliance with the associated FFRDC sponsor agreement's terms and conditions. DARPA, under this solicitation, will not award separate contracts to FFRDCs as prime or subawardees but will instead leverage their existing sponsors' agreements.

- UARCs: While UARCs typically have statutory authority to compete with industry, internal DARPA policy views them as trusted advisors who are only eligible to act as performers in fields where they do not serve in an advisory role. Even in those situations, DARPA still considers UARCs as having organizational conflicts of interest (OCI) when applying for a performer role. Proposals with UARCs as prime or subawardees must include an OCI mitigation plan.

- Government Entities: Government Entities (e.g., Government/National laboratories, military educational institutions, etc.) are subject to applicable direct competition limitations. Government Entities must clearly demonstrate that the work is not otherwise available from the private sector and provide written documentation citing the specific statutory authority and contractual authority, if relevant, establishing their ability to propose to Government solicitations and compete with industry. This information is required for Government Entities proposing to be awardees or subawardees.

- Authority and Eligibility: At the present time, DARPA does not consider 15 U.S.C. § 3710a to be sufficient legal authority to show eligibility. While 10 U.S.C.§ 4892 may be the appropriate statutory starting point for some entities, specific supporting regulatory

guidance, together with evidence of agency approval, will still be required to fully establish eligibility. DARPA will consider FFRDC and Government Entity eligibility submissions on a case-by-case basis; however, the burden to prove eligibility for all team members rests solely with the proposer.

DARPA will not establish new contractual agreements for their participation. Accordingly, any proposal submitted directly by these entities in a prime contractor capacity may be deemed non-conforming and not evaluated. Proposals that include a UARC, FFRDC, Government entities, or National Laboratory as a subcontractor may also be deemed non-conforming unless: (1) their role is clearly defined in the technical proposal with a point of contact, and (2) a rough order of magnitude cost is provided in the technical proposal only—cost proposals must exclude their funding, as DARPA will not fund them through the prime. It is important to note that if funded, these organizations will be required to share their work and findings with other performers also supporting the same program. Additionally, DARPA may contact these entities directly to discuss proposed activities.

Requirements for U.S. Permanent Resident and Foreign National Attendance at Program Events
All proposers are hereby notified regarding additional security screening measures for any U.S. Permanent Residents (i.e., Green Card holders) and foreign nationals who may attend any DARPA-sponsored event related to this program, including but not limited to oral proposal presentations, kickoff meetings, program reviews, site visits, and demonstrations, **regardless of the event's format (in-person, offsite, or virtual).**

- With respect to this solicitation, proposers must submit an eForm 60 for all U.S. Permanent Residents and foreign nationals who will be participating in the oral proposal presentation no later than the due date for the Notification of Intent to Propose specified in the Overview Information section. Failure to submit the required documentation in a timely manner may result in the individual being denied access to the event without exception.

- It is the responsibility of the prime contractor to ensure that all personnel, including those from sub-awardees, who are U.S. Permanent Residents or foreign nationals comply with the requirements detailed below.

- **Submission Link:** The form must be submitted electronically via the following secure portal: https://dtsn.darpa.mil/eform60/.

3.2. CYBERSECURITY MATURITY MODEL CERTIFICATION (CMMC)

As codified in 32 CFR Part 170, the Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) Program is designed to ensure Department of War (DoW) performers are properly safeguarding Federal Contract Information (FCI) and Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) that is processed, stored, or transmitted on performer information systems. FCI and CUI must be protected to meet evolving threats and safeguard nonpublic, unclassified information that supports and enables the warfighter. The CMMC Program provides a consistent methodology to

assess a defense contractor's implementation of required cybersecurity requirements. Proposers are encouraged to visit the DoW Chief Information Officer CMMC Resources & Documentation site for more information on CMMC: https://dodcio.defense.gov/cmmc/Resources-Documentation/.

This provision outlines the CMMC requirements pertaining to this solicitation, to include the required CMMC level and the corresponding proposal requirements. All DARPA efforts, including those involving Fundamental Research, at a minimum require prime performers and subcontractors to demonstrate compliance with CMMC Level 1, which focuses on the protection of FCI and consists of the security requirements that correspond to the 15 basic safeguarding requirements specified in 48 CFR 52.204-21.

1. **Required CMMC Level**
The minimum required CMMC level for this solicitation is:

- CMMC Level 1 (Self-Assessment). Level 1 focuses on the protection of FCI and consists of the security requirements that correspond to the 15 basic safeguarding requirements specified in 48 CFR 52.204-21.

For any proposal submitted under this solicitation that will involve the generation and/or storage of Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI), the required CMMC level is:

- CMMC Level 2 (Self-Assessment). Level 2 focuses on the protection of CUI and incorporates the 110 security requirements specified in NIST SP 800-171 Rev 2.

2. **Eligibility for Award**
To be eligible for award under this solicitation, the CMMC Unique Identifier (UID) associated with the prime proposer must reflect a current CMMC status (representing either Final or Conditional status) posted in the Supplier Performance Risk System (SPRS) indicating compliance at the required level above. Additionally, the proposer must have a current annual CMMC affirmation, submitted by an authorized Affirming Official, posted in SPRS. Further, as some entities may have multiple business segments, multiple CAGE codes, etc., DARPA must reasonably be able to relate the CMMC UID in SPRS to the proposing entity.
(Note: SPRS is housed within the Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment https://piee.eb.mil; an additional resource on SPRS is located here: https://dodcio.defense.gov/Portals/0/Documents/CMMC/CMMC-SPRS.pdf)

3. Subcontractor Flow-Down
Prime proposers are responsible for verifying subcontractor compliance. In the proposal, the prime proposer must attest that all subcontractors who will process, store, or transmit FCI or CUI under a resultant award will meet the applicable CMMC level required by 32 CFR § 170.23. The proposal must also describe the verification method the prime proposer will use to ensure subcontractors have the required CMMC status in SPRS prior to subcontract award.

Specifically:

If the Subcontractor will process, store, or transmit...	...the Subcontractor's Minimum Required CMMC Level is:
Federal Contract Information (FCI) only	CMMC Level 1 (Self-Assessment)

Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI)	The CMMC Level required by this solicitation

3.3 FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH

As of the date of publication of this solicitation, the Government cannot identify whether the work under this solicitation may be considered fundamental research and may award both fundamental and non-fundamental research. For additional information on fundamental research, please visit Proposer Instructions: General Terms and Conditions.

- Proposers should indicate in their proposal whether they believe the scope of the research included in their proposal is fundamental or not. While proposers should clearly explain the intended results of their research, the Government shall have sole discretion to determine whether the proposed research shall be considered fundamental and to select the award instrument type. Appropriate language will be included in resultant awards for nonfundamental research to prescribe publication requirements and other restrictions, as appropriate. This language can be found at http://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/additionalbaa.
- For certain research projects, it may be possible that although the research to be performed by a potential awardee is non-fundamental research, its proposed sub-awardee's effort may be fundamental research. In all cases, it is the potential awardee's responsibility to explain in its proposal which proposed efforts are fundamental research and why the proposed efforts should be considered fundamental research.

DARPA's Fundamental Research Risk-Based Security Review (FRRBS) Process is an adaptive risk management security program designed to help protect the critical technology and performer intellectual property associated with DARPA's research projects by identifying the possible vectors of undue foreign influence. Effective June 30, 2025, the DARPA FRRBS will be conducted on all fundamental research awards executed through non-FAR-based instruments. FRRBS is an adaptive risk management security program designed to help protect the critical technology and performer intellectual property associated with DARPA's research projects by identifying the possible vectors of undue foreign influence. The DARPA team will create risk assessments of all proposed Senior/Key Personnel selected for negotiation of a fundamental research award. The DARPA risk assessment process will be conducted separately from the DARPA scientific review process and adjudicated prior to final award. For any proposal where fundamental research is included, proposers must submit the (1) Common Form for Biographical Sketch, and (2) Common Form for Current and Pending (Other) Support Information form for all covered individuals, in addition to the volumes and required attachments specified elsewhere in this Program Solicitation. Both forms are available via the NSF website - NSPM-33 Implementation Guidance - Division of Institution and Award Support (BFA/DIAS) | NSF - National Science Foundation. Please review the DARPA Fundamental Research Risk-Based Security Review Process detailed at Proposer Instructions: Other Transactions | DARPA.

3.3. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Stay connected to MXO: Subscribe to DARPA MXO's newsletter for timely updates on research opportunities, upcoming events, ways to work with us, and more.

The APEX Accelerators program, formerly known as the Procurement Technical Assistance Program (PTAP), focuses on building strong, sustainable, and resilient U.S. supply chains by assisting a wide range of businesses that pursue and perform under contracts with the DoD, other federal agencies, state and local governments, and government prime contractors. See www.apexaccelerators.us/ for more information. APEX Accelerators helps businesses:

- Complete registration with a wide range of databases necessary for them to participate in the government marketplace (e.g., SAM).
- Identify which agencies and offices may need their products or services and how to connect with buying agencies and offices.
- Determine whether they are ready for government opportunities and how to position themselves to succeed.
- Navigate solicitations and potential funding opportunities.
- Receive notifications of government contract opportunities on a regular basis.
- Network with buying officers, prime contractors, and other businesses.
- Resolve performance issues and prepare for audit, only if the service is needed, after receiving an award.

Project Spectrum is a nonprofit effort funded by the DoW Office of Small Business Programs to help educate the Defense Industrial Base (DIB) on compliance. Project Spectrum is vendor-neutral and available to assist businesses with their cybersecurity and compliance needs. Their mission is to improve cybersecurity readiness, resilience, and compliance for small/medium-sized businesses and the federal manufacturing supply chain. Project Spectrum events and programs will enhance awareness of cybersecurity threats within the manufacturing, research and development, and knowledge-based services sectors of the industrial base. Project Spectrum will leverage strategic partnerships within and outside of the DoW to accelerate the overall cybersecurity compliance of the DIB.

- www.projectspectrum.io is a web portal that will provide resources such as individualized dashboards, a marketplace, and Pilot Program to help accelerate cybersecurity compliance.

DARPAConnect offers free resources to potential performers to help them navigate DARPA, including "Understanding DARPA Award Vehicles and Solicitations", "Making the Most of Proposers Days", and "Tips for DARPA Proposal Success". Join DARPAConnect at www.DARPAConnect.us to leverage on-demand learning and networking resources.

Pitch Days: Periodically, DARPA may endeavor to hold a Pitch Day(s). A Pitch Day entails DARPA soliciting proposals for a specific, targeted aspect under one or more thrust areas. During a Pitch Day, proposers pitch their proposals to DARPA via oral presentations. Any Pitch Day established under this PS would be advertised via a separate Special Notice announcement associated with this PS and posted on www.sam.gov, which will include specific instructions therein.

DARPA has streamlined the office wide solicitation mechanism and is interested in your feedback on this new format. Please send any comments to DARPAsolicitations@darpa.mil.