



Strategic Catalyst Announcement

for

AI□BTO

Biological Technologies Office (BTO)

DARPA-SCA-24-01

September 11, 2024

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Attachment A – White Paper Template

Attachment B – Submission Portal Registration Guide

1 Overview Information

- **Federal Agency Name** – Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), Biological Technologies Office (BTO)
- **Funding Opportunity Title** – AI BTO
- **Announcement Type** – Strategic Catalyst Announcement (SCA) Solicitation
- **Funding Opportunity Number** – DARPA-SCA-24-01
- **NAICS Code:** 541713, 541714, 541715, 541720; Small Business Size: 1000
- **Dates** (All times listed herein are Eastern Time.)
 - AI BTO East & West Promotional Events: September 13, 2024, San Francisco, CA and September 20, 2024, Cambridge, MA
 - Initial Announcement Posting Date: **September 11, 2024**
 - Questions Submission Deadline: **September 25, 2024**
 - White Papers Due Date and Time: **October 9, 2024**
 - Invitation to present Pitch Day Presentation (PDP): **TBD**
 - PDP Due Date: **TBD**
 - AI BTO Pitch Day Presentations (In-Person): 5-6 December 2024
 - Submission Portal: https://usg.valideval.com/teams/aibto_2024/signup
- **Purpose:** This represents the solicitation for the AI BTO Strategic Catalyst Announcement (SCA).
- **Description of the funding Opportunity:** The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) solicits innovative ideas to develop novel capabilities for national security. DARPA’s Biological Technologies Office (BTO) wishes to catalyze future efforts in the topics of Prediction and Health, Autonomous Science, Simulation, Biomanufacturing and Synthetic Biology, Challenges with Scale, and Frontier topics through the generation and/or processing of data sets. AI BTO employs an acquisition strategy to encourage participation by new or non-traditional proposers that bring Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) innovations to BTO. The Government seeks Limited Rights to the technical data produced through the AI BTO opportunity. Performers will retain ownership for commercial use of the intellectual property and data sets created during performance under this solicitation.
- **Anticipated individual awards:** Multiple awards are anticipated on the allocated \$4.5M funding.
- **Types of instruments that may be awarded:** Research Other Transactions (OT) agreements under the authority of 10 U.S.C. § 4021.
- **Funding Scope:** Proposers may provide up to three different pricing scenarios in \$100,000 increments. Each scenario must build on the previous scenario for a total funded effort not to exceed \$300,000. Government funding will only cover the proposed labor and required materials, equipment, and Other Direct Costs. Under no circumstances will profit be authorized. No travel or publication costs are permitted. No sub-awardees are permitted. It is expected that maximum period of performance for all work will be 6 months, but shorter periods of performance are equally encouraged.
- **Registration/Award Requirements:** In order to be awarded a Research Other Transaction agreement under this solicitation, proposers must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and

a complete SAM.gov registration. More information can be found at <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>. Proposers must also have an active registration in the Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment at <https://piee.eb.mil/> to invoice against any agreement made pursuant to this solicitation. Registration in PIEE is required prior to award.

- **Agency contact:**

Email: General inquiries can be sent to AI_BTO_PitchDay@darpa.mil.

Mailing Address:

DARPA/BTO

ATTN: DARPA-SCA-24-01

675 N. Randolph St. Arlington, VA 22203-1714

2 Funding Opportunity Description

2.1 Introduction

The mission of DARPA is to create and prevent strategic surprise for the United States. We pursue that goal through the funding and development of technologies that transform humanity. In the Biological Technologies Office, we focus on the natural world to inform our thinking, as well as extend it to derive revolutionary capabilities. Within BTO's mission set, we focus on a triad of areas, each critical to the mission: (1) foundational technologies that allow for simulation and prediction of biological systems and outcomes (simulation, foundation models, data generation), (2) warfighter readiness, health, and recovery (medical countermeasures, diagnostics, health IT, and medical devices), and (3) operational support of U.S. forces to enable their execution of missions across the spectrum (i.e. fibers for garments, or distributed forward manufacturing).

As part of this mission, BTO makes extremely high-risk, high-reward investments in science and technology that have the potential to truly disrupt current understanding and/or approaches. BTO does not fund incremental development work but rather the transformative early work that enables an entire field to leap forward. The pace of discovery in both science and technology is continuing to accelerate worldwide, resulting in the emergence of new capabilities, and convergence of formerly disparate fields as just a few examples of disruption and evolution. To capitalize on these new opportunities and further accelerate the pace of scientific and technological discovery and development, BTO looks to include targeted and limited-scope investments via this AI BTO solicitation.

AI BTO's goal is to fund proposals that catalyze the formation of future research projects by clarifying opportunity space and de-risking technical barriers to achieving high impact. Toward this goal, AI BTO's objective is to (1) produce novel datasets and/or (2) demonstrate innovative AI/ML approaches in the following five (5) Technical Areas that, if compelling, will serve as a springboard for further program development at DARPA:

1. Prediction and Health

Develop transformational tools that improve health outcomes through early exposure risk models, predictive disease assessments, personalized counterfactual prediction and explanation based on fine-grained individual data, and rapid, safe interventions that avoid human or animal subject research. Devise novel experimental approaches to validate that AI tools perform as intended. Formulate models to envision potential risks and benefits of future AI democratization.

2. Autonomous Science

Enable multiple areas of autonomy that increase data generation and curation by orders of magnitude (OOM) – minimally 3 OOMs, ideally 6+ OOM – compared with standard techniques, including disruptive autonomy, new cloud lab instances, and improved human-machine teaming.

3. Biomanufacturing/Synthetic Biology

Discover new techniques and algorithms to design bespoke proteins and other biomolecules based on desired material properties, function, or enzymatic activity. Improve protein and biomolecule design using closed loop inferences that link sequence, structure, and function. Design tools to scale and accelerate bioproduction that prioritize both biofidelity and economy.

4. Challenges with Scale

Devise mechanisms to handle challenging or sparse data sets for predictive models (including ecosystem-scale data across disparate databases or extreme environment data with limited availability in space and time) and develop digital twins across size and complexity scales from microbes to mammals.

5. Exciting Frontiers

Create biomolecules with ‘new to nature functionality’ such as novel mechanisms of catalysis or fluorescence. Predict and design new multicellular communities to generate and maintain desired collaborative functions. Develop capabilities that allow for modeling and prediction in entirely new areas of AI and biology, from biological data validation and constraints to explainability and trustability. Develop operational analyses to assess the tactical or strategic impact of biotech capabilities in DoD scenarios. Promote development of unique biomimicry capabilities through advanced models of biological systems.

The following technology areas or approaches are considered out of scope for this solicitation:

- Any efforts that include Human or Animal subjects research.

Reporting Requirements

Performers will be expected to provide at a minimum the following reports:

- Milestone Reports. These reports should include documentation describing the extent of accomplishment of payable milestones along with a high-level financial summary and a progress plan.
- Data Sets. All data sets, including negative data, training data, etc., generated as part of the effort must be curated, annotated (including all relevant meta data) and provided to DARPA according to the data rights provisions defined in [Section 5.3](#).
- Final Report. The final report serves as an overview of the effort that discusses the accomplishments and findings, along with an outline of potential future research directions.

More information about BTO’s technical domains and research topics of interest may be found at <http://www.darpa.mil/about-us/offices>.

2.2 AI BTO Structure

The structure of the AI BTO project acquisition and execution is consistent with the goal of rapidly exploring multiple new technical solutions while enabling individuals and organizations to focus on creative ideas. The culmination of this acquisition will be the AI BTO Pitch Day, scheduled to take

place 5-6 December 2024 in the National Capital region. Successful White Paper proposers will be invited to AI BTO Pitch Day to present the details of their idea individually and in-person to a panel of BTO Program Managers who may choose to select their solution at time of pitch for funding. If selected for funding, proposers will promptly meet with an Agreements Officer to begin the contracting process, with the goal of awarding a Research OT within a few hours of selection.

AI BTO Structure:

1. Optional Promotional Events in September 2024.
2. Required White Papers submitted and evaluated October 2024.
3. In-person, invitation only proposal presentations during AI BTO Pitch Day December 2024.
4. Same day or next day OT awards issued during AI BTO Pitch Day December 2024.
5. Up to 45 revolutionary catalyst projects kick-off with DARPA/BTO in December 2024 and run up to six months.

There are no specific follow-on acquisitions planned within the AI BTO structure, however, the goal of this initiative is to fund research that may lead to a revolutionary new capability. At the conclusion of the AI BTO effort, the Government may elect to issue a new OT agreement, and or modify the existing agreement to continue research.

Additional AI BTO details are provided below to facilitate this solicitation:

- DARPA will host East and West Promotional Day events, one in San Francisco, CA on September 13, 2024 and one in Cambridge, MA on September 20, 2024, where attendees can learn about our AI BTO priorities and goals, ask questions in real time, and receive immediate responses where possible. Registration information for these events for in-person and virtual attendance can be found [here](#). A comprehensive list of questions and answers from these events will be posted online at <https://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/opportunities> and <https://www.sam.gov/>. Participation in these events is optional and not a requirement for submitting a White Paper. Additionally, DARPA will respond to relevant questions via email before the final white paper due date, with all Q&As consolidated and available on the DARPA Opportunities page and SAM.gov. Questions related to this Announcement may also be emailed to AI_BTO_PitchDay@darpa.mil until the due date specified in the [overview section](#).
- DARPA will host the AI BTO Pitch Day on December 5-6, 2024, in the National Capital Region to select and award AI BTO catalyst projects. To be considered for AI BTO Pitch Day participation, offerors must submit a short (up to five pages) White Paper consisting of a technical description of the proposer's idea in response to one of the Technical Areas listed above.
- Proposers selected for further evaluation will be invited to submit a Pitch Day Presentation (PDP) for an in-person presentation to a panel of BTO program managers at the AI BTO Pitch Day event. White Papers submitted in response to this solicitation will be evaluated and selected in accordance with Section 4 of this solicitation.
- If selected for award at Pitch Day, DARPA will issue a Research Other Transaction (OT) agreement and require a countersignature from the authorized signatory for one of three pricing scenarios - \$100,000, \$200,000, or \$300,000. The maximum amount of Government funding given to any single proposer will be \$300,000. Once issued, awardees will have a maximum of approximately 2 hours to sign and return the agreement to DARPA. DARPA

does not expect to negotiate changes to the terms and conditions of this agreement in any OT issued to an awardee.

- DARPA will not reimburse proposers responding to this solicitation for the costs associated with White Paper submissions or PDP packages.

2.3 Award Instrument Information

The flexibility of the OT agreement is beneficial to AI BTO because the performer will be able to apply its best business practices, which may be outside of traditional Government requirements, to carry out the research project. DARPA will use streamlined practices, such as prespecified milestone-driven performance measures, which are intended to reduce time and effort on award administration tasks and permit performers to focus on the research effort. OTs provide the Government and the proposer the flexibility to create an award instrument that contains terms and conditions that promote commercial transition, reduce administratively burdensome regulations, and meet AI BTO project catalyst goals.

AI BTO Research OT agreements will allow the performer to retain ownership of the intellectual property created during performance under this solicitation. The Government will require that all performers provide limited rights in any intellectual property developed or generated under these agreements. Limited Rights is defined in [Section 5.3](#) of this solicitation. Intellectual property rights will not be negotiated in the award. Any proposer who is not prepared to grant the Government a limited rights should not submit a proposal under this Announcement.

The Government will only award Research OT agreements under this solicitation and will not consider any other award instruments. The model OT agreement will be provided in the PDP invitation. Specific milestones will be based on the Project Objectives detailed in the solicitation and the proposed solution. No other negotiated changes to the OT terms and conditions are expected. The milestone payments will be contingent on the proposed individual(s) continuing work on the proposed solution for the entire Period of Performance.

Please see <http://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/contract-management> for more information on OTs and DARPA's OT authority.

3 Guidelines for White Papers and Pitch Day Presentations

3.1 General Guidelines

- Proposers may submit a White Paper in response to one or more of the Technical Areas described in [Section 2.1](#). Proposers may only submit one White Paper to each Technical Area. Each White Paper must only address one Technical Area.
- Do not include elaborate brochures; only include information relevant to the submission requirements or evaluation criteria.
- Use of a diagram(s) or figure(s) to depict the essence of the proposed solution is permitted.
- All White Papers and pitch day presentations shall be unclassified.
- 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.

- f. Questions regarding White Papers should be sent to [AI BTO PitchDay@darpa.mil](mailto:AI_BTO_PitchDay@darpa.mil) by **September 25, 2024**, at 4:00 PM (ET) to guarantee a response prior to the White Paper submission deadline.
- g. Upload White Papers to the [Valid Eval Portal](#) before the due date and time specified in the [overview section](#) of DARPA-SCA-24-01.
- h. Submissions sent through other mediums, channels, or after the prescribed Strategic Capability Announcement deadline will not be considered, reviewed, or evaluated.
- i. Proposers who provided White Papers that are not invited to the Pitch Day Presentation will be notified in writing as soon as practical.

3.2 White Paper Content

Proposers must submit a White Paper against this solicitation by the deadline specified on page 3 to be considered for an award. DARPA will only accept unclassified White Papers. Proposers must clearly mark and identify their White Paper as responding to one of the Technical Areas identified in [Section 2.1](#). Proposers must use the White Paper template provided as Attachment A (also available for download at the [Valid Eval Portal](#)). The submitted White Paper must consist of the following sections and is limited to five (5) pages in length. White Papers that do not include the list of items below will be deemed non-conforming and removed from consideration.

- a. **Title page:** Proposer Name, Title, AI BTO Technical Area, Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), Date, Point of Contact Name, E-Mail Address, Phone, and Address. The Title Page does not count against the five (5) page limit.
- b. **Cover Letter:** The proposer must certify that if invited, the Principal Investigator will present the PDP in-person and an authorized signatory will be available during the AI BTO Pitch Day event held in the National Capital Region. The proposer shall also include a statement that no individuals in the proposer's organization work for DARPA as Scientific, Engineering, and Technical Assistance (SETA); Advisory and Assistance Services (A&AS); or similar support service contractors, as DARPA has a policy prohibiting such individual from working as a technical performer. The proposer should also confirm that they have either completed or have started their SAM and PIEE registration. The cover letter does not count against the five (5) page limit.
- c. **Executive Summary:** Provide a summary of the technical problem the White Paper seeks to address. This summary shall be stated in the proposer's own words without any "copy and paste" of this solicitation. The goal is for the proposer to demonstrate clear and quantitative understanding of the AI BTO Technical Area they are responding to and a concise description of their proposed effort. The Executive Summary shall be no more than one (1) page and is not included in the five (5) written page limit.
- d. **Proposed Approach:** Provide a summary of the proposed technical approach to achieve your stated goals as aligned to one of the AI BTO Technical Areas. Methods to address risk must be provided. Highlight the novelty and uniqueness of the proposed work with respect to prior efforts. What are your innovative claims? Clearly state the proposed impact of this effort against the current state of the art.
- e. **Technical Ability and Proposer Qualifications:** Detail why the proposer believes their

team has the ability to be successful at achieving the goal(s) of the proposed effort. The proposer may include past experience, organizational capabilities, team members’ qualifications, or anything else that demonstrates competence in designing and demonstrating desired outcomes.

- f. **Fixed Support Amount:** Include the total labor, estimated materials, equipment, and Other Direct Costs. Proposers must present three pricing options in \$100,000 increments up to \$300,000. These options must build on each other so that total costs do not exceed \$300,000 of Government funding. This may be presented as no more than half a page narrative or table and is included in the five (5) written page limit.
- g. **References:** Provide a list of citations, references, or end notes. References are not included in the five (5) written page limit.

Proposers may attach a maximum of two technical papers to the submission and are not counted towards the five (5) page limit. A cover page for Proprietary Information is not counted towards the five (5) page limit.

3.3 White Papers – Basis of Evaluation

White Papers will be evaluated by DARPA using the evaluation criteria and sub criteria listed below in descending order of importance, with each criterion and its associated sub criteria being more important than those that follow, and not against other White Papers submitted in response to this solicitation. As stated above, proposers are required to submit a White Paper for evaluation by DARPA to be considered for an award. DARPA will provide feedback to all submitted White Papers. Only White Papers selected to present a Pitch Day Presentation will be invited to AI BTO Pitch Day for the opportunity to receive government funding via a Research OT agreement.

Criteria	Sub Criteria	Description
Problem/Solution	Problem you Solve	Deliver a clear and concise description of the problem you are attempting to address with your technology or service.
	Solution Description	Fully describe what you are offering in your solution and describe the scientific basis for the solution and how it solves the problem statement identified.
	Final Outcome	Describe the final outcome(s) resulting from successful completion of your catalyst award. What are the resulting data (e.g., datasets, capabilities to produce new datasets, or new knowledge points created from novel analysis of existing datasets)? How does the data connect to your solution?
	Problem Alignment	How well does your solution align to one of the five AI BTO technical areas: (1) Prediction and Health, (2) Autonomous Science, (3) Biomanufacturing / Synthetic Biology, (4) Challenges with Scale, (5) Exciting Frontiers.
Revolutionary Impact	Solution's Impact	DARPA wants to invest in technology with a very high return-potential. In fact, the target is orders of magnitude better than today's state of the art (SOA). Use this section to describe your technology's impact and improvement upon the SOA.

	Performance Metrics	Provide your metrics to the proposed solution and explain how these metrics effectively measure and demonstrate how the effort will be accomplished.
	Catalyst	What are the follow-on technical leaps that will be catalyzed if this project is successful?
Technical Risk	Scientific Feasibility	Is the science behind the solution sound? Convince DARPA that your innovation is built atop sound scientific and engineering principles.
	Enabling Technology	Point to the foundational technologies that you rely on to deliver your solution. Do the required enabling technologies introduce added risk?
	Alternative Approaches	Describe why your technical approach is superior to alternate approach(es) that have been tried to solve your problem.
	Risks and Mitigations	Prove that you understand the technical risks that exist between you and your solution. Describe how technical risk can be mitigated and/or acknowledge the risk inherent to your idea.
Team	Relevance of Skills and Background	Describe how your team possesses the relevant skills and experience to successfully execute your proposed solution.
	Past Execution	Discuss how your team has successfully accomplished efforts for either the Federal Government or private sector. Provide an example(s) of milestones your team has achieved.
Programmatic Risk	Plan	Present a compelling vision for your plan to execute your solution in the timeline proposed.
	Fixed Support Amount	Describe how the proposed fixed support amount is realistic and the practical use of the requested funding and provides value to DARPA.
	Risks	Describe how the programmatic and management risks of your project are realistic. Explain how your mitigation strategy will enable the successful execution of the proposed timeline and budget.
Submission Quality		Write clearly. Argue convincingly.

3.4 Pitch Day Presentation (PDP) package

This Announcement solicits for White Papers only. If DARPA expresses interest in a PDP, proposers will be asked to provide further details on their proposed effort. Specific instructions, including content submission guidelines, will be provided in the invitation to participate in AI BTO Pitch Day.

The following information is provided to ensure potential proposers know the anticipated content and format of the PDP. If the invitation to submit includes deviations from this content and format, the invitation to submit will take precedence. Proposers whose PDP does not include the list of items below, will be deemed non-conforming and removed from consideration. Proposers will be notified and provided feedback regarding the missing elements. Proposers will then have an Opportunity to

resubmit through the open office wide Biological Technologies Broad Agency Announcement [HR001124S0034](#) should they desire.

AI BTO Pitch Day will occur on 5-6 December 2024. Upon receipt and review of your PDP package, proposers will be notified if their submission conforms to the solicitation. Proposers with complete PDP packages will be contacted to schedule their pitch at a specific time on 5 December in the National Capitol Region. Proposers will be scheduled for a Pitch Day Presentation and a tentative block for award finalization. For Pitch Day Presentations selected for funding, it is DARPA's intention to execute same day or next day awards on 5 December 2024. Proposers must have an authorized signatory available during the AI BTO Pitch Day event.

The Pitch Day Presentation submission package will consist of:

1. *Pitch Day Presentation*

Pitch Day Presentations will be conducted individually (per applicant organization) and in-person in the National Capital Region at AI BTO Pitch Day. Key personnel must be available to present in-person, or the PDP will be deemed non-conforming. Pitch Day Presentations should be planned for 10 minutes of presentation time and should include at a minimum the following information:

- a. Proposed Solution/Idea:** A concise description of the idea and your specific approach. Give a brief overview of what you plan to accomplish in your \$100,000, \$200,000, and \$300,000 options. Restate which Technical Area you are proposing against.
- b. Technical Overview:** This is the key section of the PDP. The overview should include a scientific analysis of the proposed idea, potential limits, and the research plan for the 6-month effort.
- c. Proposer overview:** Provide information regarding the individual(s) dedicated to the program and how their past efforts and qualifications will contribute to achieving AI BTO goals. This must contain enough details to assess the capability of the proposer to the proposed work. Provide information on non-key personnel.
- d. Fixed Support Amount:** Provide a breakout of each \$100,000 increment you are offering to include total labor cost, estimated materials, equipment, and Other Direct Costs, and include a program plan in Gantt form.
- e. Milestones:** Include a slide for milestones from "Task Description Document" below. This slide must match word for word the Milestone Description table that will be submitted as part of the TDD and not a summary.

Proposers must propose fixed payable milestones relevant to their technical approach. Milestones are based on key observable events in the critical path to accomplish program objectives. Fixed payable milestones are fixed payments based on the successful completion of the milestone accomplishments agreed to in the milestone and payment plan.

Milestones for all Pitch Day awards shall include the following:

- Kick-off meeting: Define the technical approach and steps going forward.
- Midpoint status meeting: Briefing to include detailed progress towards all research objectives, progress to plan, and discussion of next quarter's objectives.
- Final Milestone: Opportunity outbrief to summarize all work completed on the project and delivery off all data products.

The performer is encouraged to add detail to the required milestones above and propose additional milestones. The \$100,000 pricing scenario is limited to the three required milestones above. The \$200,000 pricing scenarios may propose one additional milestone for a total of four milestones. The \$300,000 pricing scenarios may propose three additional milestones for a total of six milestones.

2. *Supplementary Documents (not to be briefed during the Pitch Day Presentation) include:*

- Attachment B* - Administrative Requirements
- Attachment C* - Fixed Support Amount Proposal
- Attachment D* - Fixed Support Amount Spreadsheet
- Attachment E* - Model Research Other Transaction (OT)
 - OT ATTACHMENTS* – Task Description Document (TDD), Schedule of Milestones and Payments, Certifications for Agreement, Wide Area Work Flow Instructions, Intellectual Property Assertions

*Attachments B/C/D/E and instructions on completing OT ATTACHMENTS will be provided in the invitation to submit a PDP

3.5 Pitch Day Presentation – Basis of Evaluation

Pitch Day Presentation evaluation criteria will be provided in the invitation.

3.6 Review and Selection Process

DARPA’s policy is to ensure impartial, equitable, and comprehensive evaluations based on the evaluation criteria listed above and to select the source (or sources) whose proposal meets the Government's technical, policy, and programmatic goals.

DARPA will conduct a review of each conforming White Paper and PDP. All White Paper evaluations will be based solely on the evaluation criteria in [Section 3.3](#) of this solicitation.

Using the applicable evaluation criteria, the Government will evaluate each White Paper and PDP in its entirety, documenting the strengths and weaknesses relative to the evaluation criteria. Based on the identified strengths and weaknesses, DARPA will determine whether a White Paper or PDP is selectable. DARPA will not evaluate White Papers and PDPs against each other during the scientific review process, but rather evaluate the White Papers and PDPs on their own merit to determine how well the proposal meets the criteria stated in this solicitation.

DARPA will make an award to a proposer whose White Paper and PDP are determined to be selectable by the Government, consistent with instructions and evaluation criteria specified in this solicitation and the Pitch Day invitation, as applicable, and based on availability of funding. Given the limited funding available for AI BTO, not all proposals considered selectable may be selected for a potential award.

For the purposes of this evaluation process, DARPA defines a “selectable” White Paper or PDP as follows:

Selectable: A selectable White Paper or PDP is one that the Government has evaluated against the evaluation criteria listed in this solicitation and the Pitch Day invitation, as applicable, and the positive aspects outweigh the negative aspects.

For the purposes of this evaluation process, DARPA defines a “non-selectable” White Paper or PDP as follows:

Non-Selectable: A White Paper or PDP is considered non-selectable when the Government has evaluated it against the evaluation criteria listed in this solicitation and the Pitch Day invitation, as applicable, and the positive aspects do not outweigh the negative aspects.

4 Award Information

4.1 General Award Information

DARPA anticipates multiple awards. The Government reserves the right to communicate with proposers if it is later determined to be necessary.

The Government reserves the right to request any additional, necessary documentation to support the award process. The Government reserves the right to remove a proposal from award consideration should the proposer fail to provide requested additional information in a timely manner or sign the OT agreement as provided.

In order to receive an award at AI BTO Pitch Day:

- a. Proposers must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number and must register in the System for Award Management (SAM). Proposers are advised to commence SAM registration as early as possible.
- b. Awardees will be required to submit invoices for payment electronically via the Wide Area Work Flow (WAWF) module in the Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment at <https://piee.eb.mil/>, unless an exception applies. Registration in PIEE is required prior to any award under this solicitation. For assistance with PIEE, please contact [866-618-5988](tel:866-618-5988) or DARPAInvoices@DARPA.mil.
- c. Proposers must be determined to be responsible by the Agreements Officer and must not be suspended or debarred from award by the Federal Government nor be prohibited by Presidential Executive Order and/or law from receiving an award.
- d. Being invited to submit a PDP package does not guarantee that a proposer will receive an award. The Government reserves the right not to make an award.

4.2 Communications

The following notices will be provided for conforming White Papers and PDPs as applicable:

- Notice of non-selection (not invited to submit a PDP)
- Invitation to submit a PDP and participate in Pitch Day
- Notice of non-selection (for potential award of a Research OT)
- Notice of selection (for potential award of a Research OT)

As soon as DARPA completes the evaluation of White Papers, DARPA will notify Proposers that (1) they are invited to submit a PDP, or (2) they are not invited to submit a PDP. DARPA may elect to invite all, some, or none of the Proposers to submit a Pitch Day Package and participate at Pitch Day. Only Proposers invited by DARPA to submit a PDP and participate at Pitch Day are eligible to make a Pitch. As soon as the evaluation of PDPs and Pitches is complete, DARPA will notify proposers that (1) their PDP package has been selected for funding, subject to OT agreement acceptance, or (2) their PDP package has not been selected for funding.

DARPA will send the above-listed notifications via email to the Technical and Administrative point(s) of contact (POCs) identified on the PDP coversheet. Proposers will be notified of non-conforming determinations via letter.

4.3 Handling of Competition Sensitive Information

It is DARPA’s policy to protect all White Papers and PDPs as competition sensitive information and to disclose their contents only for the purpose of evaluation and only to screened personnel for authorized purposes. During the evaluation process, submissions may be handled by DARPA support contractors for administrative purposes and/or to assist with technical evaluation. All DARPA support contractors are expressly prohibited from performing DARPA-sponsored technical research and are bound by appropriate nondisclosure agreements. Input on technical aspects of the White Papers or PDPs may be solicited by DARPA from non-Government consultants/experts who are strictly bound by appropriate non-disclosure requirements. No submissions will be returned. Upon completion of the evaluation process, DARPA will retain an electronic copy of each submission received and all other copies will be destroyed. A certification of destruction may be requested, provided that the formal request is received within five (5) business days after notification that a proposal was not selected.

4.4 Intellectual Property

Proposers responding to this solicitation should appropriately identify any potential restrictions on the Government’s use of any intellectual property furnished by the proposer. This includes both Noncommercial Items and Commercial Items. Proposers are encouraged to identify these restrictions in a format similar to the table depicted below. If no restrictions are intended, then the proposer should state “NONE.” Intellectual property rights in technical data created during the period of performance will not be negotiated in the award. Any proposer who is not prepared to grant the Government limited rights, as defined in Section 5.1.5 of this solicitation, should not submit a proposal under this solicitation.

Technical Computer Software Data To be Furnished With Restrictions	Summary of Intended Use in the Conduct of the Research	Basis for Assertion	Asserted Rights Category	Name of Person Asserting Restrictions
(LIST)	(NARRATIVE)	(LIST)	(LIST)	(LIST)

4.5 Procurement Integrity Act (PIA)

All awards under this solicitation shall be treated as Federal Agency procurements for purpose of 41 U.S.C. Chapter 21. Accordingly, the competitive solicitation process and awards made thereof must adhere to the ethical standards required by the Procurement Integrity Act.

5 General Information

5.1 Eligible Applicants

AI BTO Pitch Day is a unique event designed to catalyze the formation of future research projects by clarifying opportunity space and de-risking technical barriers to achieving high impact. Therefore, we are opening eligibility to responsible sources as described in this solicitation. Due to expedited

contracting requirements associated with AI BTO, organizations with organizational conflicts of interests as defined in [Section 5.1.3](#) are ineligible to propose to this solicitation. Potential performers who do not meet this eligibility criteria are encouraged to submit proposals to the BTO Office-Wide Broad Agency Announcement. Research OTs do not require participation by non-traditional performers.

5.1.1. Federally Funded Research and Development Centers, University Affiliated Research Centers (UARCs), and Government Entities

Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDC), University Affiliated Research Centers (UARCs), and Government Entities are not eligible to propose to this solicitation.

5.1.2. Non-U.S. Organizations

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.

5.1.3. Organizational Conflicts of Interest (OCI)

An organization cannot simultaneously provide scientific, engineering, technical assistance (SETA), advisory and assistance services (A&AS), or similar support to DARPA and also be a performer on a DARPA research program.

If a prospective proposer believes a conflict of interest exists or may exist (whether organizational or otherwise) or has questions on what constitutes a conflict of interest, the proposer must send their contact information and a summary of the potential conflict via the specific e-mail address identified in this SCA before time and effort are expended in preparing any submission documentation.

5.2 Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) or Controlled Technical Information (CTI) on Non-DoD Information Systems

Proposers and awardees are subject to the statutory requirements related to protection of CUI and CTI IAW Executive Order 13556, Controlled Unclassified Information, see <http://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/additional-baa> for additional guidance on protecting CUI on Non-DoD Information Systems.

CUI is defined as unclassified information that requires safeguarding or dissemination controls, pursuant to and consistent with applicable law, regulations, and Government-wide policies.

Controlled Technical Information (CTI) is defined as technical information with military or space application that is subject to controls on its access, use, reproduction, modification, performance, display, release, disclosure, or dissemination. The term CTI does not include information that is lawfully publicly available without restrictions.

Examples of technical information include research and engineering data; engineering drawings and associated lists; specifications, standards, process sheets, manuals, technical reports, technical orders, catalog-item identifications, data sets, studies and analyses and related information; and computer software code. Note that such technical information may or may not be controlled (i.e., CTI), depending on whether it has military or space application.

If the proposer is invited to submit a PDP, the proposer's submitted Task Description Document

(TDD) (sample template included as Attachment E to the Model Research Other Transaction (OT)), should distinguish between work proposed to be Fundamental Research versus work proposed to be CUI. Proposers will provide a short explanation for why each subtask should be categorized as Fundamental Research or CUI.

If the proposer includes CUI tasks in the TDD, proposers must provide a plan for protecting Controlled Unclassified Information as part of Attachment B - Administrative Requirements.

Proposers should indicate if they believe their approach will include the need to access or generate CUI or CTI in their proposal. Proposers who believe that their efforts may involve CUI or CTI should provide a plan for protecting it as part of Attachment B - Administrative Requirements. DARPA may also require the submission of a plan. See the attached model OT (Attachment E - Model Research Other Transaction (OT)) for the terms that may be included in each negotiated OT related to safeguarding CUI/CTI and cyber incident reporting. If needed, DARPA will issue a CUI/CTI guide.

5.3 Definition

Limited Rights: The rights to use, modify, reproduce, release, perform, display, or disclose technical data, in whole or in part, within the Government. The Government may not, without the written permission of the party asserting limited rights, release or disclose the technical data outside the Government, use the technical data for manufacture, or authorize the technical data to be used by another party, except that the Government may reproduce, release, or disclose such data or authorize the use or reproduction of the data by persons outside the Government if—

(i) The reproduction, release, disclosure, or use is—

(A) Necessary for emergency repair and overhaul; or

(B) A release or disclosure to—

(1) A covered Government support contractor in performance of its covered Government support contract for use, modification, reproduction, performance, display, or release or disclosure to a person authorized to receive limited rights technical data; or

(2) A foreign government, of technical data other than detailed manufacturing or process data, when use of such data by the foreign government is in the interest of the Government and is required for evaluation or informational purposes;

(ii) The recipient of the technical data is subject to a prohibition on the further reproduction, release, disclosure, or use of the technical data; and

(iii) The contractor or subcontractor asserting the restriction is notified of such reproduction, release, disclosure, or use.