

DIU ON-RAMP QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES
1	Are national laboratory FFRDCs eligible to apply for this opportunity? Going one step further, even if technically eligible, would you consider it an appropriate fit?	Please see the eligibility language in the NFO. If no prohibition is provided, then the applicant is eligible. WHS will not comment on specific applicants.
2	<u>Budget</u> : Is the \$30-40M in year 1 funding meant to include operating budgets for the individual onramp hubs themselves (e.g., staff, programming, travel, infrastructure and crucially – real estate) or should we view this as only for the national umbrella effort?	The funding may be used to support overarching administrative expenses, the OnRamp Hub program, along with other efforts DIU is pursuing to build out the broader National OnRamp.
3	<u>Size</u> : To the extent that the budget should cover operating costs of onramp hubs, how many hubs are we looking to cover? The solicitation mentions 5 current hubs but also notes that “DIU is planning to stand up additional Hubs in the next year, and to grow the types of activities and impact at these Hubs, as well as continue to optimize other regionally-driven efforts.” Is there guidance, at a minimum, on the anticipated number of new hubs that would fall under this budget? Also, is it anticipated that “other regionally-driven efforts” will be funded out of this same pool of capital and, if so, can you provide any color on what types of efforts, outside of those managed by the regional hubs, might be included?	The NFO describes the number of hubs and anticipated effort, the government cannot provide more specific detail at this time.
4	<u>Infrastructure</u> : Is there a view to whether or not proposals should a) detail IT services likely required by the physical hubs footprints and/or b) whether proposers should plan to provide those services (and, if so, is there a preference for seeing an IT service provider as part of the proposing team)?	Please refer back to the text within the Notice of Funding Opportunity for the intent of this award.
5	<u>Teaming</u> : Would DIU be amenable to proposal teams that include target communities (e.g., capital allocators, universities, companies, talent pools, etc.)?	Please see the eligibility language in the NFO. If no prohibition is provided, then the applicant is eligible.
6	<u>Small businesses</u> : Given that the NOFO does not contain any small business set asides, is DIU open to making a single award to a small business, or would small businesses be best served by teaming with larger, traditional providers?	The government will not comment on specific application strategies.
7	<u>Success</u> : What metrics of success is DIU hoping to measure to gauge the success of this effort over the next 12 months?	Please refer back to the text within the Notice of Funding Opportunity for the intent of this award.
8	Will we be required to manage and run all existing OnRamp hubs in Wichita, Dayton, Honolulu, Seattle, and Phoenix in addition to 3-5 more? Can we propose new Hubs in other cities? Can we iterate within the 5 year period of performance and focus efforts on Hubs producing the best ROI and close under-performing hubs (if there are any)	Please propose to the requirement as detailed in the NFO.
9	What are the existing costs (operational and programmatic) associated with existing physical hubs that DIU operates today? How do those costs break down?	Prices on current government contracts are not releaseable.
10	What is the cost of running a digital hub and what associated programming is involved there? If applicable in existing DIU digital hubs.	Prices on current government contracts are not releaseable.
11	We are a venture investor as well. Can we invest private capital in companies going through OnRamp Hubs that it manages? Can we access and provide services to companies also going through these OnRamp Hubs? What does an OCI look like here?	The government will not comment on specific application strategies. We recommend contacting legal counsel for information on OCIs.
12	Can we augment OnRamp Hubs with localized funding and support from local city, state and federal partnerships and incentives?	The government must review the specific circumstances before providing any guidance.
13	Can we co-bid on this with another partner org? We would be the prime and they would be a sub-contractor.	Please see the eligibility language in the NFO. If no prohibition is provided, then the applicant is eligible. WHS will not comment on specific applicants.
14	Could we put in more than one proposal-- we may be able to partake in another organization as a sub-contractor under them in their team. So we are thinking of submitting two proposals, one where we are a Prime and one where we are a Sub-Prime to a different organization. We are more than happy to just submit one, but want to make our chances best and then allow DIU to select which is best to move forward with.	Please review the NFO for any prohibitions on applications.
15	Can we propose new Defense Innovation OnRamp locations under this solicitation or is this solicitation only for the design, develop and management of the existing OnRamp Hubs and the additional Hubs which DIU will stand up on its own accord?	The award may be used to support overarching administrative expenses, the OnRamp Hub program, along with other efforts DIU is pursuing to build out the broader National OnRamp.
16	Delivery partners for your 5 locations have already been announced. Will those relationships be maintained and the expectation is that the recipient of this award will work with those 5 delivery partners (and future delivery partners with newly announced locations)?	Please propose to the requirement as detailed in the NFO.
17	Will there be only one award made? For example, if a new Defense Innovation OnRamp hub location is proposed under this solicitation, could it be that you provide an award just for that OnRamp Hub and fund other recipients for other aspects of this solicitation?	See the NFO for award information.
18	Is there a possibility that the deadline will be extended? With the holiday, the response time for this solicitation is short notice.	The deadline was extended to January 24.
19	For this NFO, has DIU identified any high-priority geographic or otherwise strategic locations for new OnRamp locations? If yes, will you please share the sites?	The government has no additional information to share at this time.
20	Does DIU expect proposals in response to this grant solicitation to cover the design, planning, and management for *new* OnRamp facilities only, or for both *existing* and *new* OnRamp facilities (in the first year and future option years) ?	Please see the NFO for the description of the requirement. The government cannot release current prices on other awards.
21	If the awardee is managing the existing five OnRamp facilities plus the new ones created, does the proposed funding (\$30-40M) include managing the existing facilities? If yes, will you please share the annual costs of the existing sites?	The award may be used to support overarching administrative expenses, the OnRamp Hub program, along with other efforts DIU is pursuing to build out the broader National OnRamp.
22	Please describe the 'infrastructure' expectations (as noted in page 2, paragraph C)? What services (e.g., email, content management, collaboration, video conferencing, web services, etc.) are desired and expected? What services, if any, are government-provided?	Please refer back to the text within the Notice of Funding Opportunity for the intent of this award.
23	Can DIU share any other expectations regarding the non-On-Ramp “network” sites needs to be included in the “infrastructure” that may assist in developing an accurate price forecast?	Please refer back to the text within the Notice of Funding Opportunity for the intent of this award.

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24	The 2025 budget provides \$30-\$40M per year for DIU OnRamp support. We request clarification on which of the following items should be covered in Year One performance based on the funding profile: 1. Existing Regional OnRamp Hub operational budgets? 2. New Regional OnRamp Hub operational budgets? 3. National Hub Operations? 4. Funding for Strategic Impact Projects, Regional Network Teams, etc.?	Please refer back to the text within the Notice of Funding Opportunity for the intent of this award.
25	The NFO states “DoD will only fund salary, fringe benefits and indirect costs on awards under the announcement”, implying that non-labor costs (e.g., travel, work space build-out and furnishings, etc.) should not be proposed. Please indicate if this is a correct interpretation, and how essential non-labor costs should be funded under this grant.	The NFO has been changed to remove that requirement. All reasonable, allowable, and allocable costs will be permitted.
26	The NFO calls for a regional strategy leveraging DIU flagship offices. Does DIU intend for the prime contractor to operate the DIU OnRamp Hubs out of flagship offices themselves or just align flagship offices to the broader DIU strategy?	DIU Flagship offices and OnRamp Hubs are in different locations and serve different purposes.
27	We request additional detail relating to the evaluation criteria being applied during the selection process (e.g., accomplishment of technical or management performance objectives, cost, schedule adherence, etc.)?	The NFO provides the selection criteria.
28	Does the Government intend for Years 2 through 5 to be bid as priced options?	No, not as this time.
29	The link https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/grantors/grantor-standard-language.html provided in the solicitation for details on how to go through this process and information on how to complete the application using Workspace on Grants.gov does not appear to work. Please provide working external links.	We will review the link. If you need additional help, please contact the grants.gov help resources. https://apply07.grants.gov/help/html/help/index.htm#t=GetStarted%2FGetStarted.htm
30	The application form provided in the grant package does not provide any space for or reference to providing subcontractor costs as a component of the overall pricing information. What level of pricing detail does the Government desire to support its financial review process, and what is the preferred method of providing those details? Is it acceptable to provide financial information in the ten-page narrative?	Other than the required forms, there are no specific format or content requirements for identifying costs.
31	We have identified specific regions that are integral hubs for our OnRamp strategy, and we have a detailed approach for bringing these regions onto the team. Would it be acceptable to include these regions in our cost proposal, along with anticipated execution costs and a detailed budget justification?	WHS will not comment on specific regions, and encourages applicants to provide possible solutions as part of the application.
32	Would it be acceptable to leverage existing hubs with a technology focus that aligns with our OnRamp strategy, or is the expectation to establish entirely new or unique hubs? We believe that integrating existing hubs into our strategic ecosystem could reduce startup costs for those regions while accelerating implementation and maximizing impact.	WHS will not comment on specific potential applications and encourages applicants to provide possible solutions as part of the application.
33	Would there be any restrictions or considerations when leveraging existing hubs that are associated with a university or organization with religious or political affiliations? We want to ensure alignment with the program’s requirements and expectations.	Please see the eligibility language in the NFO. If no prohibition is provided, then the applicant is eligible. WHS will not comment on specific applicants.
34	Section III.A: “Disclosures of current and pending support made in this application may render an applicant ineligible for funding. Prior to award and throughout the period of performance, DoD may continue to request updated continuing and pending support information, which will be reviewed and may result in discontinuation of funding.” Can you provide an example or a situation that would “render an applicant ineligible for funding?”	No
35	What is the intended relationship between this cooperative agreement and the existing OnRamp Hubs in Phoenix, Dayton, Honolulu, Seattle, and Wichita? Will these hubs become subawardees under this agreement?	Please see the NFO’s language that describes the requirement.
36	Of the \$40M ceiling, what percentage is expected to support physical infrastructure versus programming and operational activities? Is there a minimum expectation for either category?	The government will not provide specific solutions and encourages applicants to provide their own solutions to the requirement as posted.
37	Are there specific geographic regions or locations where DIU requires new hub presence beyond the existing network? Are there priority regions aligned with specific mission partners?	The government has no additional information to share at this time.
38	What is the expected scope and sophistication of the digital infrastructure required? Should proposals include development of new platforms or leverage existing tools?	The government has no additional information to share at this time.
39	What specific metrics will DIU use to evaluate the success of this program beyond traditional innovation metrics (companies engaged, transitions completed, etc.)? Are there specific impact metrics tied to regional economic development or mission partner needs?	The government has no additional information to share at this time.
40	What level of classified capability is required at the hubs? Should all locations be SCIF-capable or maintain certain security requirements?	Classified requirements may be needed as part of this award, but on a case by case basis.
41	Does DIU expect the awardee to provide direct funding to companies (grants, prizes, etc.) through this agreement, or is funding limited to infrastructure and programming support?	The award may be used to support the OnRamp Hub program and other efforts DIU is pursuing to build out the broader National OnRamp.
42	What is the expected relationship between OnRamp Hubs and other DIU offices/presence? How should the awardee coordinate with existing DIU regional offices?	DIU Flagship offices and OnRamp Hubs are in different locations and serve different purposes.
43	Are there specific expectations around staffing models for the hubs? Should each location maintain full-time staff or can some operate with distributed support?	The government will not provide specific solutions and encourages applicants to provide their own solutions to the requirement as posted.
44	What level of international engagement is expected through this program? Should hubs be prepared to support DIU's international partnerships and agreements?	International engagement will not be allowed for the application process but may be taken up after the award.
45	How should the budget be phased over the 5-year period? Is there an expected ramp-up period?	The government has no requirements for budget phasing at this time.
46	What is the minimum number of physical hubs expected to be operational within the first year?	See the NFO for requirement information.
47	The NFO mentions the government “anticipates only one award” but also notes this could change. Under what circumstances would the Government consider making multiple awards instead of a single award?	No additional information will be provided.
48	Are joint ventures with universities authorized to apply?	Please see the eligibility language in the NFO. If no prohibition is provided, then the applicant is eligible. WHS will not comment on specific applicants.
49	The grants.gov PDF application template is non-editable. Is there an editable version? Or are we authorized to replicate the template in a Word document?	Yes, you may replicate the form in Word.

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50	Does the 30-40M budget include leases, hardware and software licenses in addition to time and materials?	All reasonable, allowable, and allocable costs will be permitted.
51	As we look at the template, question number 8: is a requirement of the grant to manage the Regional Hubs? Our program has worked with a huge variety of organizations in a collaborative style, but we have not managed other university programs, such as the OnRamp Hub. Some of the writeup refers to 'recipient(s)', yet the grants.gov shows 'Expected Number of Awards: 1' as if only one entity will be awarded. Can you please clarify?	Please see the NFO's language that describes the requirement.
52	Budget: Anticipated Range of Award - Is there a ceiling for the entire budget period (up to 5 years)? For the proposed budget, is there a detailed budget form, or specific format that is expected to accompany this initial submission? As for allowable costs - are we able to include costs for new construction of buildings? Please advise if there are any additional funding guidelines in addition to those found on page 8 of the NOFO.	Submission details: you may submit any materials that do not violate the requirements of the NFO.
53	There is no place for a separate Budget Narrative or Budget Justification -- is this required? Or should a budget narrative be included in the 10-page narrative section.	The NFO provides the only format and content requirements, materials may be provided in any manner that does not violate these requirements.
54	The ONRAMP Application Template (with a page limit of 5 pages) is a .PDF table where the respondent is to fill in answers. Should the 1-inch margin and 12-point New Times Roman font requirements apply to the fillable tables and blocks?	The 12-point Times New Roman Font is required however the margins and table may be adjusted to allow for any necessary formatting.
55	We understand in the NOFO -- that anticipated award size is \$30-\$40M awarded in year one, and period of performance is 5 Years. Should the budget reflect operating for five years on the \$30-\$40 M total. For example, if we know that \$30M must last 5 years, then our 424 Budget will have that allocation described in detail in Year 1, and then the remainder in Section E. 2.b. However, if we anticipate we need those funds of \$30M to only be adequate for the first 3 years of operations, should we only that compressed timeline.	See the NFO language on funding.
57	Is this expected to be a Fixed amount award vs cost-reimbursement?	Cost-reimbursement.
58	3. Do you anticipate an advanced payment schedule?	No.
59	The NFO mentions that "DIU is planning to stand up additional Hubs in the next year, and to grow the types of activities and impact at these Hubs as well as continue to optimize other regionally-driven efforts." How many additional OnRamp Hubs are anticipated to be launched in the next 5 years? What are the overall program goals you are looking to meet?	The government has no additional information to share at this time.
60	5. What evaluation criteria will be utilized in the selection process? Also, is there a specific Technical POC we can reach out to aside from the group email listed (nationalonramp@diu.mil) in the NFO?	The selection criteria is in the NFO. No, there is no additional Technical POC for coordination on applications.
61	Considering this is a cooperative agreement, what kind of substantial involvement is anticipated from DIU?	The government anticipates providing guidance on project objectives and approaches.
62	Can you please clarify if the Project Narrative should include the template and only be 10 pages total or if the narrative (max 10 pages) and the template (max 5 pages) should be separate, making the total 15 pages of content.	No, the project narrative is separate from the template.
63	Funding Restrictions: DoD will only fund salary, fringe benefits and indirect costs on awards under the announcement. Do you know if this is accurate? Or perhaps an error? Typically grants also cover expenses such as travel, equipment, supplies, project-specific costs, training, etc.	The NFO has been changed to remove that requirement. All reasonable, allowable, and allocable costs will be permitted.
64	Our understanding is that the NFO scope includes management of the 5 current DIU OnRamp Hubs, 5 DIU Flagship offices and 30 regionally focused representatives. Regarding the potential new hubs, the NFO states, "DIU is planning to stand up additional Hubs in the next year, and to grow the types of activities and impact at these Hubs, as well as continue to optimize other regionally-driven efforts." Should the additional Hubs also be included in the work scope? If so, can you indicate how many additional Hubs, where will they be located and when within the PoP does the Government expect the recipient to establish them? a.Regarding the DIU Flagship offices, are those the 5 DIU locations (CA, DC, MA, IL, TX) or something else?	The government will not provide any more information on the requirement.
65	Submission Details: Are we able to submit letters of support with this proposal submission? If yes, is there a limit to how many and where should these be uploaded to? Please confirm the submission is due via grants.gov by January 21 at 12:00 AM?	Provided the NFO requirements are observed, additional materials may be provided.
66	Does the Government expect the recipient to establish new leases at each of the existing DIU OnRamp Hub sites or take over the current leases at those sites? Can the Government provide the cost of current leases?	The government will not comment on potential solutions and cannot share current prices.
67	Please confirm the leases are to be managed by the recipient and/or subrecipient (not the DIU).	The government will not comment on possible approaches.

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68	Section I, Program Description, Paragraph C, states, "DIU will expect recipient(s) of this award to provide infrastructure for the Defense Innovation OnRamp." Will this include providing the Information Technology (IT) infrastructure and associated network cyber security?	See the NFO for the scope of the effort.
69	Per Section II, our understanding is that there is structured funding in the amount of \$30M-\$40M in Year 1 to develop and manage the DIU OnRamp Network. What is the expectation for funding in the out-years (Years 2-5) to keep the Defense Innovation OnRamp operating?	The NFO provides all the information available at this time.
70	Section III, Eligibility Information, Paragraph D, states, "This language may be found in the Terms and Conditions included in the award documents." Is a copy of the Terms and Conditions available for review?	This requirement has ben removed.
71	Section IV, Application and Submission Information, Paragraph G, states, "DoD will only fund salary, fringe benefits and indirect costs on awards under the announcement. Funds from an award may not be used to attain fee or profit." Will the Government also allow cost elements required to execute the scope, such as consultants, subrecipients, or other direct costs related to facility/hub management?	The NFO has been changed to remove that requirement. All reasonable, allowable, and allocable costs will be permitted.