

**ARMY RESEARCH LABORATORY
BROAD AGENCY ANNOUNCEMENT**

Questions and Answers for Proposers

FOR

**Collective Judgment Formation
Collaborative Research Alliance**

Fiscal Year 2024



W911NF-24-S-0010

ISSUED BY:

**U.S. Army Contracting Command
Aberdeen Proving Ground
Research Triangle Park Division
P. O. Box 12211
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2211**

Q1: Our professors will be submitting a proposal to W911NF-24-S-0010, their white paper was accepted. The proposal will be a collaborative with two other schools. How do we link the proposals in grants.gov?

A1: The two other universities will be subawards to your university, so they do NOT need to be linked through grants.gov as it will be a single submission from your university. As subawards, they will need to provide your university with the same documents at the same level of detail as the proposing university that you will need to review, approve, and include with the submission.

Q2: Ref: BAA W911NF-24-S-0010, xi. Proposal Budget, (page 35) "Each budget year and the cumulative budget for the full term must be documented on Summary Proposal Budget (ARO Form 99)..." which is attached to the grants.gov Attachments form. The Grants.gov Workspace for this BAA provides a mandatory R&R budget form for the submitting organization and available R&R subaward budget forms for subaward organizations.

Is it acceptable for the lead to provide each subaward budget on their individual R&R subaward budget form and to attach only one ARO Form 99 summarizing the entire project?

If not, shall each subaward organization provide its own ARO Form 99 instead of the R&R subaward budget form, or must they provide both forms?

If we are submitting through grants.gov, is the R&R budget allowable in lieu of the ARO99 budget since the categories are the same?

A2: For multi-institution awards, the submitting institution (the Prime) should submit a full budget, to include the total amount for subawards within their budget on the "subaward" lines. The subaward institutions should submit their own full budgets (and budget justifications) where the total amounts for each year and the cumulative page matches exactly the amounts listed by the Prime.

All ARL-ARO Forms can be found at:

<https://arl.devcom.army.mil/resources/baa-forms/>

The use of the R&R budget is allowable in lieu of the ARO Form 99, and must include budgets from subaward institutions if applicable.

https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/RR_MP_Budget_3_0-V3.0.pdf

Please round all amounts to whole dollars, and do not include any cents in your budgets.

Q3: For TA1 and TA2, this is a 3-year proposal with 2-year option. The ARO Form 99 only has three years. How do we present the optional years?

A3: You may use the Word version of ARO Form 99 which is now available on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and [sam.gov](https://www.sam.gov). Once filled out, it can be converted to PDF for submission.

Q4: Can you please confirm the documents needed for subawards?

A4: Subaward institutions need to submit to their Prime institution the same documents at the same level of detail that the prime will review and submit to include. (1) ARO Form 99 Budgets (or R&R Budgets) – signed by institution official and co-PI and (2) Budget Justifications explaining how the funds in the budget will be spent. For TA3 only: subawards should also include a Statement of Work to detail their specific tasks for the contract.

Q5: Do the sub awardees need to fill out the R&R forms?

A5: Yes

Q6: The BAA states on page 18 that " All funding is expected to be expended within the fiscal year of performance." and gives a max number for FY25, but since the project will only start around June it won't be possible to expend all the first year expenses in four months. Could you please clarify how the funds should be allocated? My assumption was that they would match the performance years.

A6: Write your budgets as performance years. Given that awards may be started in the middle of our Fiscal Year (FY runs Oct 01 to Sept 30). That said, the award will likely be allocated funding in 6-month increments and you are expected to spend your funds as you go and not try to "hold them over" into future years of performance. Please plan accordingly.

Q7: On biographical sketches: Under proposal preparation instructions, the BAA states (on page 33) that: “The biographical sketches should be two (2) pages per investigator and other individuals that merit consideration. All Biographical Sketches must be submitted on the ARL form available at: <https://arl.devcom.army.mil/resources/baa-forms/>.”

Q7(a) Can we add to the resume information that is not explicitly required by the form? A case in point: The form has a section on “Research and Professional Experience” and a section on “Additional Information”, defined as (A) papers, (B) collaborators, and (C) advisor/advisees. Is there a prohibition against including additional information, such as (D) Awards and Honors, or (E) Synergistic Activities, space permitting?

A7(a): There is no prohibition against including additional information that is relevant to demonstrating your expertise and qualifications to complete the work you are proposing. Do not exceed the 2 page limit unless A7(c) applies.

Q7(b) The form says that the collaborator information “is used to help identify potential conflicts or bias in the selection of reviewers”. Does that mean that we do not need to include say, (domestic or foreign) undergraduate collaborators, since they will not be invited to review? Or do all collaborators without exception are to be declared?

A7(b). You do NOT need to include undergraduate collaborators in your submission.

Q7(c) A follow-up to the above is that (for some PIs) the list of collaborators is very long. What happens if the resume does not fit in 2 pages because of the length of the list of collaborators? What accommodations can be made?

A7(c): In the event a PI has an extensive list of collaborators, at a minimum, begin the list at the halfway mark of the second page, and continue to the third page for listing collaborators only. Name and affiliation are sufficient.

Q8: On budget: On page 18, the BAA has a table that specifies a budget for each TA. The text says: “1. Anticipated Funding: Pending availability of funds, we anticipate that one award will be made for each TA and that they will have the following funding profiles (\$k)”. Later, after the table, it says: “In addition to the three core performers selected through this BAA announcement, it is anticipated that this Program will support one or more 3-year efforts for TA1 and TA2 starting in FY27”. Could you please confirm that numbers in the table (say, for TA2, \$1.4M in FY27 and \$1.5M in each of FY28 and FY29) are meant to describe the anticipated funding for the *core* awardee only, as the text before the table suggests (and does not include the additional 3-year efforts funded in FY27 and beyond)?

A8: As noted in Q6, the funds listed on the table in the BAA are amounts per PERFORMANCE YEAR, not fiscal year. Any additional performers brought into the program in later years will be brought in with additional funding profile, and will not affect the amounts listed for TA1, TA2, or TA3 in the current BAA.

Q9: Who will be responsible for hosting TA2 models and running them. Will TA2 performers be responsible for bringing their own model running capabilities (“computing”) or, will TA3 be responsible for running any models that TA2 generates?

A9: It depends. Ideally, and if the models are reasonable in size/compute needs, it would streamline the process for TA3 to host/run the models with the experimental platform. However, if they are incredibly complicated, then TA2 may need to host and run them with appropriate API capabilities to allow for streamlined experiments run from TA3. These issues will be discussed at the program kickoff meeting, and throughout the program. ARL has some HPC computing capabilities that can be explored if there is collective interest and benefit to the program for going that route.

Q10: Do you have suggestions for people who are proposing more than one TA in terms of total months across all TAs? Because it is unlikely all are going to be accepted, does it make sense for the work to add up to more than a year for a single person?

A10: As each TA is evaluated independently, please propose the amount of time needed to allocate for that proposal.

Q11: The fillable project description form does not seem to allow images and tables to be pasted in, and the default doesn't seem to allow pasted in text to be Arial 12-point font. Are there suggestions for how to make sure the fillable pdf is used as required, but other constraints are met? The forms we are looking at are here: <https://arl.devcom.army.mil/resources/baa-forms/> . Is there a new form somewhere?

A11: You should be able to upload your proposal as a PDF. Please do NOT use the Project Description form for your proposal writing.

Q12: Is there a requirement that we (any TA) plan for an experiment in Year 5, given that is often a year for transitioning to open source and TS/SCI and writing up and presenting findings?

A12: Per the BAA, "In collaboration with the TA1 and TA2 performers, the TA3 performer will organize, design, and execute at least four experiments (approximately one per year)." The fourth experiment may need to take place early in the 5th year if it cannot be completed in Year 4. Beyond that, it is fair to expect Year 5 to be a capstone year for final analyses, demonstrations of new capabilities, and transitions.

Q13: When you ask about intellectual property owners in the proposal, what is meant by that? Universities often have a complex relationship with their academics in terms of intellectual property, and the US Government rules, depending on the contract/grant, often trumps that. What are the intellectual property rules for this BAA?

A13: Intellectual Property in the context of proposal (See BAA, pages 31-33) relates to the owners of pre-agreement, pre-IP to be used during and for the agreement. Any Intellectual Property that is preexisting and being used shall be asserted at time of proposal.

Any Intellectual Property resulting from the agreement will be governed by the standard agreement clauses and regulations which will be included in the agreement depending on award type. If the agreement is a contract the applicable FAR (and FAR supplement) clauses will govern. If the agreement is an assistance award, the standard DoD terms and conditions and the appropriate US Government regulations will apply.

Q14: We wanted to better understand what the real data was to be used for – does it need to go into the testbed or is it just used to train the AIs?

A14: It will depend on the selected teams, experimental designs, and data availability.

Q15: What are the levels of magnitude for the datasets, would these be GBs or TBs or PBs?

A15: We suspect GBs.

Q16: If TA3 is hosting in a Government approved cloud environment, would this be something that is provided by the Government or would this be something the TA3 performer should provide and fiscally account for?

A16: TA3 should budget for hosting the experiments.