FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT:

HQ0034-19-FOA-ARP-0001

This publication constitutes a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) in accordance with (IAW) Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 35.016, FAR 6.102(d) (2), Department of Defense Grants and Agreements (DODGARS) Subpart 22.315(a), and the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 2, Part 200. A formal Request for Proposal (RFP), solicitation and/or additional information regarding this announcement will not be issued. This FOA is issued by Washington Headquarters Services, Acquisition Directorate (WHS/AD) on behalf of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (A&S).

WHS/AD will not issue paper copies of this announcement. The Government reserves the right to select for award all, some, or none of the proposals in response to this announcement. The Government reserves the right to fund all, some or none of the proposals received under this FOA. The Government provides no funding for direct reimbursement of proposal development costs. Technical and cost proposals (or any other material) submitted in response to this FOA will not be returned. WHS/AD will treat all proposals as sensitive competitive information and disclose their contents only for the purposes of evaluation.

I. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION:

All responsible sources from U.S. academia, non-profit research institutions and laboratories outside the Federal Government may submit proposals under this FOA. A University Affiliated Research Center (UARC) is a U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) research center associated with a university. UARCs are eligible to submit proposals under this FOA unless precluded from doing so by their DOD UARC contract.

Federally Funded Research & Development Centers (FFRDCs), including Department of Energy National Laboratories, are not eligible to receive awards under this FOA.

U.S. Government schools of higher education, Navy laboratories and warfare centers as well as other Department of Defense and civilian agency laboratories are also not eligible to receive awards under this FOA. If any such government organization is interested in performing research described herein, the organization should contact the Technical Point of Contact (TPOC) at arp@nps.edu.

Cost sharing is not required.

All offerors must be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) before submission of applications. Information on SAM registration is available at https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM). All offerors must provide a valid unique entity identifier on their application. All offerors must continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. WHS may not make a Federal award to an offeror until the offeror has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an offeror has not fully complied with the requirements by the time WHS is ready to make an award, the WHS may determine that the offeror is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another offeror.

Note: Proposals for workshops, conferences, and symposia, or for acquisition of technical, engineering, advisory and assistance, and other types of support services for the Government will not be considered.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION:

1. Agency Name: Washington Headquarters Services, Acquisition Directorate

2. Research Opportunity Title and Program: Acquisition Research Program

3. Research Opportunity Number: HQ0034-19-FOA-ARP-0001

4. Response Dates:

Submit White Papers by 20 June 2019.

Submit invited Full Proposals by 16 September 2019.

This announcement will remain open until 16 September 2019 at 11:59 PM Pacific Daylight Time or until replaced by a successor FOA, whichever occurs first. White papers will be accepted until 20 June 2019. Successful Offerors will be invited to submit a Full Proposal by 16 September 2019. After the deadlines, submissions will not be reviewed or accepted. These deadlines, specifically, are the date of WHS receipt of submission.

5. Amendments: Amendments to this FOA will be posted at Grants.gov http://www.grants.gov

6. Questions and Communications:

All questions should be directed via e-mail to the following contacts:

Email: elizabeth.e.fuller2.civ@mail.mil and arp@nps.edu

Questions or assistance needed regarding **Grants.gov's** registration process, system requirements or submittal process shall be directed to:

Grants.gov
Phone: 1-800-518-4726
Email: support@grants.gov

III. RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION:

The Acquisition Research Program (ARP) (www.acquisitionresearch.net) conducts and supports research in academic disciplines that bear on public procurement policy and management. These include economics, finance, financial management, information systems, organization theory, operations management, human resources management, risk management, and marketing, as well as the traditional public procurement areas such as contracting, program/project management, logistics, test and evaluation and systems engineering management.

The ARP is interested in innovative proposals that will provide unclassified and non-proprietary findings suitable for publication in open scholarly literature. Studies of government processes, systems, or policies

should also expand the body of knowledge and theory of processes, systems, or policies outside the government.

The following research areas are of special interest:

- Leading-edge techniques in data collection, management, visual analytics and decision-making
- Robust risk modeling techniques
- Performance metrics and methodologies
- Collaboration and cross-functional teams
- Model-Based Acquisition

Offerors bear prime responsibility for the design, management, direction and conduct of research. Researchers should exercise judgment and original thought toward attaining the goals within broad parameters of the research areas proposed and the resources provided. Offerors are encouraged to be creative in the selection of the technical and management processes and approaches and consider the greatest and broadest impact possible.

Presentation of Research Findings:

A. End of Project Deliverables: Awardees must deliver an unclassified project abstract and Technical Report, authored by the awardees and submitted to arp@nps.edu, as a Microsoft Word File no later than 30 days after the end of the period of performance.

(1) Awardees should expect that the project abstract and technical report will be published and made available to the general public, senior managers, and policymakers in the Government.

(2) The Technical Report should follow a typical academic format (i.e., background, scope, literature review, methodology, analysis, results, recommendations and conclusion). A status report or published papers should not be submitted as the Technical Report.

(3) Samples of completed Technical Reports can be found under publications at www.acquisitionresearch.net.

B. ARP Symposium Deliverables: An academic paper suitable for academic conference proceedings, not to exceed 20-pages, authored by the awardees and submitted in April for the Proceedings of the Annual Acquisition Research Symposium to be scheduled in May 2020 or May 2021 (identify the date in the white paper and proposal).

(1) Presentation by the awardees at the Annual Acquisition Research Symposium to be scheduled for May 2020 or May 2021.

(2) Submission requirements for symposium deliverable can be found at www.researchsymposium.com .

C. Awardees must agree to discuss research progress with the Government sponsor via a video / teleconference at a time to be determined during the period of the award.

IV. AWARD INFORMATION:

Anticipated Number of Awards: There is no set limit to the number of proposals an institution can submit to this FOA. The funding amount and period of performance of each selected proposal will vary depending upon the technical approach to be pursued by the selected Offeror(s).

Anticipated Range of Individual Award Amounts: The Government anticipates making multiple awards up to $120,000 each for a basic research period of twelve (12) months. Estimated funding amounts may increase or decrease at any time based on current and future appropriations.

Anticipated Period of Performance: The period of performance (POP) for an award may exceed twelve months if the symposium paper and presentation will be made at the 2021 ARP Symposium. .

Instrument Type:

The type of funding instrument selected by the Government may be a contract, grant or cooperative agreement. Award may be made consistent with 10 U.S.C. 2358, 10 U.S.C. 2361, and 10 U.S.C. 2374(a) and 31 U.S.C. 6304. Contract type and funding arrangements are at the discretion of the Government.

V. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

1. **Address to Request Announcement Package:** This announcement may be accessed at the Grants.gov website (http://www.grants.gov).

2. **Application and Submission Process:**

a. White Paper

Initial submissions must be a white paper. Therefore prospective Offerors are encouraged to submit white papers to minimize the labor and costs associated with the production of detailed full proposals. If an Offeror DOES NOT submit a white paper, the Offeror is NOT ELIGIBLE to participate in the remaining full proposal submission process and or to receive funding through this FOA.

Submit "White Papers" to arp@nps.edu

White papers must be submitted electronically to arp@nps.edu . The subject line of this email shall read "Offeror (Organization), Lead Researcher (s) Last Names - White Paper Submission." The white paper must be a Microsoft Word document attachment to the email. White Papers must be submitted by 20 June 2019. Do not group proposals or emails in the case of multiple submissions. Instead, submit a unique email and white paper, with the subject line identified above, for each submission.

Each white paper will be evaluated by the Government to determine whether the proposed research appears to advance knowledge in the field, enhance understanding, and provide a direct benefit to the public.

Notifications of results from the white paper review will be issued via email by 5 August 2019. This information is only an estimate and does not obligate the Government in any way.

b. Submit Invited Full Proposals to www.grants.gov:

Detailed Full Proposals (Volume 1: Technical Proposal, Volume 2: Cost Proposal, and Volume 3: Original White Paper submission) will be subsequently requested from those Offerors whose proposed research has been rated highly in the technical evaluation. However, email notifications are not assurances of a subsequent award.

Upon favorable technical review of a submitted white paper, Offeror will receive an email inviting them to submit a full proposal. Full proposals are due 16 September 2019. Only invited full proposals will be considered for funding.

The only acceptable method for submission of full proposals is via http://www.grants.gov. Notice of Government-recommended awards based on full proposal submissions will be issued via email.

c. Format and Content of White Papers/Full Proposals:

White papers and full proposals submitted are expected to be unclassified. The research proposed is also expected to be unclassified. Proposal submissions will be protected from unauthorized disclosure in accordance with, applicable law, and government regulations. Offerors are expected to appropriately mark each page of their submission that contains proprietary information.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Titles given to the white papers/full proposals should be the same. The title should be descriptive of the research the offeror plans to cover and not be merely a copy of the title of this solicitation or the area of research interest.

A. WHITE PAPER

Format

- Paper Size - 8.5 x 11 inch paper
- Margins - 1 inch
- Spacing – single spaced
- Font - Times New Roman, 12 point
- Copies - One (1) electronic copy in Word 2007 or higher delivered via email. Electronic (email) submissions should be sent to arp@nps.edu . The subject line of the email shall read: "Offeror (Organization), Lead Researcher (s) Last Names - White Paper Submission".

Content

- **Cover Page:** The Cover Page This should include the words "**WHITE PAPER**", and include

the:

- FOA number, "HQ0034-19-FOA-ARP-0001"
- Title of proposal that is descriptive of the research to be conducted
- Identity of Offeror
- Technical contact (name, address, phone, email address)
- Administrative/business contact (name, address, phone, email address)
- Length of proposed period of performance.
- Proposed budget total

- **Supporting Letter:** Include a supporting letter through the appropriate institutional official. (i.e., the applicant's Department Chair, Dean, or other official who speaks for the institution regarding support for and commitment to acquisition research). This supporting letter should state whether or not the applicant holds a tenure track position (where applicable) or a permanent position within the Offeror's institution.
- **Statement of Research Issue/Results:** Concise (shall not exceed fifty (50) words) statement of the problem the proposed research will address and anticipated results.
- **Public Purpose:** Concise (shall not exceed two hundred (200) words) statement of how the proposed research might fulfill a public benefit beyond the needs of the Departments of Defense. *Please contact the arp@nps.edu if you are unsure what is meant by public benefit or purpose.*
- **Technical Concept:** Concise (shall not exceed ten (10) pages single spaced) proposal which includes;
  (1) A clear description of proposed research and associated risk areas;
  (2) A statement on how the proposed effort is relevant to the described research areas;
  (3) Research questions and objectives;
  (4) Research technical approach (methodology) that will be pursued to meet the objectives; and
  (5) References
- **Relevant Research Summary:** Concise (shall not exceed one (1) page single-spaced) summary of recent relevant research.
- **Biographies:** Concise (shall not exceed one (1) page per person) biography of the principal investigator and other key researchers.
- **Cost Estimate:** Concise (shall not exceed one (1) page single-spaced) cost information. White paper submissions shall include a cost summary showing requested funding for the proposed period of performance. The cost summary shall be organized by salary, equipment, travel, tuition and other student related costs, other direct costs and indirect costs with a project total.

B. FULL PROPOSALS

The invited full proposal shall expand on the research topic and technical concept proposed in the submitted white paper. Full proposals must be submitted electronically at http://www.grants.gov using the application template package found there and associated with this FOA. Detailed format and content instructions follow.

The period of performance (POP) should be twelve (12) months from effective date of award. Exceptions to increase the length of the POP, will be approved on an individual basis during the white paper process.

Assume that grant performance will start no earlier than four (4) months after you are notified your full proposal has been recommended for award.

The full proposal has three (3) volumes which should be clearly marked and submitted as attachments in the Grants.gov submission. These volumes are:

- Volume 1: Technical Proposal
- Volume 2: Cost Proposal
- Volume 3: Original White Paper submission

Volume 1: Format

- Paper Size - 8.5 x 11 inch paper
- Margins - 1 inch
- Spacing - single-spaced
- Font - Times New Roman, 12 point

Volume 1: Content

- **Cover Page:** This should include the words "**TECHNICAL PROPOSAL**" and the following:
  - FOA number, "HQ0034-19-FOA-ARP-0001"
  - Title of the proposal (use the same title from the white paper)
  - Identity of Offeror
  - Technical contact (name, address, phone, email address)
  - Administrative/business contact (name, address, phone, email address)
  - Length of proposed period of performance.

- **Table of Contents**: A listing of the section numbers and corresponding heading titles within the proposal, including corresponding page numbers.
- **Supporting Letter:** Include a supporting letter through the appropriate institutional official. (i.e., the applicant's Department Chair, Dean, or other official who speaks for the institution regarding support for and commitment to acquisition research). This supporting letter should state whether or not the applicant holds a tenure track position (where applicable) or a permanent position within the Offeror's institution.
- **Project Abstract**: The concise (shall not exceed one (1) single-spaced page) project abstract should be appropriate for public release and should describe the research project in terms that the public would understand. The project abstract should summarize the research project. Specifically, identify the principal investigator and offering institution; research problem and objectives; technical approaches and anticipated outcome of the research.
- **Statement of Research Issue/Results:** Concise (shall not exceed fifty (50) words) statement of the problem the proposed research will address and anticipated results.
- **Public Purpose:** Concise (approximately two hundred (200) words) statement of how the proposed research might fulfill a public benefit beyond the needs of the Government. The public-benefits statement is an important part of the evaluation and award process.
- **Statement of Work (SOW):** Concise (shall not exceed six (6) pages single-spaced) statement of

work. This severable, self-standing SOW should include;

(1) A clear description of proposed research

(2) Research scope

(3) Research questions and objectives

(4) Proposed technical approach (methodology) that will be pursued to meet the research objectives

This discussion should also provide the technical foundation/justification for pursuing this particular approach and why one would expect it to enable the research objectives of the proposal.

It is anticipated that the severable, self-standing SOW without any proprietary restrictions, will be incorporated in the agreement award.

- **Project Schedule and Milestones:** A concise (shall not exceed one (1) page single-spaced) summary of the schedule of research and reporting activities and milestones should be included in table or bullet-list form. Because the date of award is not known at time of application, we recommend a "month 1," "month 2," format, as opposed to naming specific months and dates.
- **Management Approach:** A concise (shall not exceed two (2) single-spaced pages) discussion of the overall approach to the management of this effort at the organization level. Include planning, scheduling and oversight practices. Identify which personnel will be involved and the value they bring to the proposed research effort. Include a description of the facilities that are required for the proposed effort with a description of any Government-furnished equipment (GFE), hardware, software or information required, by version and/or configuration.
- **Offeror Qualifications:** Provide the following concise (shall not exceed one (1) page single-spaced page) discussion;
  - Previous accomplishments and research by the principal investigator/ institution in this or closely related areas.
  - Qualifications of the proposed principal investigator and other key personnel.
- **Biographies:** Concise (shall not exceed one (1) page per person) biography of the principal investigator and other key researchers.
- **Current and Pending Project and Proposal Submissions:** The principal investigator is required to provide information on current and pending support for ongoing projects and proposals.

  Concurrent submission of a proposal to other organizations will not prejudice its review:

  1. Title of Project (s)
  2. Identify the source and amount of funding received or anticipated.
  3. Period of performance of each project, if awarded. Use anticipated period of performance on pending proposals.
  4. Report labor hours per year to be devoted to the project(s) by the principal investigator and key research personnel.
  5. Identify how the project is related to the proposed research effort and degree of overlap.

Volume 2: Cost Proposal

The cost proposal, which is a *narrative* explaining and justifying budget figures in enough detail so the government can determine reasonableness. It must include *all figures, calculations, and supporting documentation for determining cost allowability, allocability and reasonableness.* Justifications for costs must be explicitly stated.

The Offeror **must** use the Grants.gov budget forms (including the Standard Form (SF) Research and Related (R&R) Budget Form) from the application package template associated with this FOA on the grants.gov website located at http://www.grants.gov/. A separate Adobe PDF document shall be uploaded with the online application materials, providing appropriate verification and/or supporting documentation for each element of costs proposed.

Costs proposed must conform to the following principles and procedures:

- Educational Institutions: 2 CFR §200 - Uniform Guidance, Subpart E
- Non-Profit Organizations: 2 CFR §200 – Uniform Guidance, Subpart E*

** For those Non-Profit Organizations specifically exempt from the provisions of Appendix VII to 2 CFR §200, FAR Part 31, and DFARS part 231 shall apply.*

The cost proposal must include the following:

- Direct Labor: Individual labor categories or persons, with associated percent of annual effort and unburdened direct labor rates by annual salary (alternatively, number of total hours and hourly rate may be provided). If proposal period crosses fiscal years, then provide escalation rates for each fiscal year period. Clearly state any escalation rates used in calculations. Provide supporting documentation verifying individual labor rates for each known individual; this may include a recent payroll receipt for individuals or a signed statement of salary rate or hourly rate and level of appointment from the Offeror's Sponsored Programs Office or Human Resources Office. For persons yet to identified, provide general tables or schedules by labor category, which labor category will be used and why that labor category is appropriate.
- Administrative and Clerical Labor: Salaries of administrative and clerical staff are normally indirect costs (and included in an indirect cost rate). Direct charging of these costs may be appropriate when a major project requires an extensive amount of administrative or clerical support significantly greater than normal and routine levels of support. Budgets proposing direct charging of administrative or clerical salaries must be supported with a budget justification, which adequately describes the major project and the administrative and/or clerical work to be performed.
- Fringe Benefits: The cost proposal narrative should include the rates and calculations of the costs for each labor category/person, the salary amounts to which they are applied, and the sum total for each labor category/person.

- Travel: The proposed travel cost should include the following for *each* trip:

    - The purpose of the trip
    - Origin and destination, if known
    - Estimated duration
    - Number of travelers

- Estimated cost per trip

The costs must be justified based on the organization's historical average cost per trip or other reasonable basis for estimation. Such estimates and the resultant costs claimed must conform to the applicable Federal cost principles. Explain why travel is a necessary and/or cost-effective component of the technical approach/methodology, as well as why the travel destination was chosen. Provide a copy of the institution's travel policy. Provide documentation for proposed airfare costs (such as internet quotes from a travel website).

- Subawards: Not allowed in this FOA.

- Consultants: Not allowed in this FOA.

- Materials and Supplies: Provide an itemized list of all proposed materials and supplies including quantities, unit prices, proposed vendors (if known), and the basis for the estimate (e.g., quotes, prior purchases, catalog price lists). Include supporting documentation for the estimates. Provide a copy of your organization's purchasing policy/processes.

- Recipient-Acquired Equipment or Facilities: Equipment and/or facilities are normally furnished by the Recipient. If acquisition of equipment and/or facilities is proposed, a justification for the purchase of the items must be provided. Provide an itemized list of all equipment and/or facilities costs as well as the basis for them and supporting documentation for the estimate. (e.g., quotes, prior purchases, catalog price lists). Allowable items normally would be limited to research equipment not already available for the project. General purpose equipment (i.e., equipment not used exclusively for research, scientific or other technical activities, such as personal computers, office equipment and furnishings, etc.) should not be requested unless they will be used primarily or exclusively for the project. For computer/laptop purchases and other general purpose equipment, if proposed, include a statement indicating how each item of equipment will be integrated into the program or used as an integral part of the research effort.

- Other Direct Costs: Provide an itemized list of all other proposed direct costs such as graduate assistant tuition, laboratory fees, report and publication costs, and the basis for the estimate (e.g., tuition schedules, quotes, prior purchases, catalog price lists). In addition to stating the basis for the cost estimates, include supporting documentation where possible.

- Indirect Costs (i.e., F&A, Overhead, G&A, etc.): Describe the rates and calculation of the costs for each rate category, listing the base on which the rate is applied. **If the rates have been approved / negotiated by a Government agency, provide a copy of the memorandum / agreement.** If the rates have not been approved/negotiated, provide sufficient detail to enable a determination of allowability, allocability and reasonableness of the allocation bases, and how the rates are calculated according to applicable OMB Circulars or FAR/DFARS provisions.

  Offeror's disclosure should be sufficient to permit a full understanding of the rate's content and how it was established. At a minimum, the submission should identify:

  - All individual cost elements included in the forecast rate(s)
  - Bases used to pro-rate indirect expenses to cost pools, if any
  - How the rate(s) was calculated

- Distribution basis of the developed rate(s)
- Bases on which the overhead rate is calculated, such as "salaries and wages" or "total costs"
- The period of the Offeror's fiscal year

Additional information may be requested, if needed. If composite rates are used, provide the calculations used in deriving the composite rates. A Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) may be required in order for an awardee to invoice for indirect costs. If the Offeror does not currently hold a NICRA, describe the current status of the organization's request for such an agreement with its cognizant agency.

IAW 2 CFR §200.414(f), any non-Federal entity that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, except for those non-Federal entities described in Appendix VII to 2 CFR §200, may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely.

- Fee/Profit: Not allowed.

NOTE: *Failure to adequately provide detailed cost data will require the Grants Officer to contact the proposing organization for the requisite information. All Offerors are required to submit a thoroughly detailed cost breakdown. The Grants Officer must be able to determine that all proposed costs are allowable and reasonable. A detailed budget will facilitate this cost analysis.*

Volume 3: A copy of the original whitepaper submission.

VI. INFORMATION ON EVALUATIONS:

All proposal submissions will be evaluated through a technical/scientific/cost decision process with technical and scientific considerations being more important than cost. Even though cost is of less importance than the technical and scientific factors combined, it will be considered in the overall evaluation. The degree of its importance will increase with the degree of equality of the proposals in relation to the other factors on which selection is to be based, or when the cost is so significantly high as to diminish the value of the technical superiority to the Government. Evaluation Criteria 1-3 are listed in descending order of priority. Any sub-criteria listed under a particular criterion are of equal importance to each other.

(1) Potential contributions to the public and the Defense Acquisition Research body of knowledge.

- The degree of innovation
- The soundness and feasibility of technical approach
- The offeror's understanding of the problem and the technical effort needed to address the problem

(2) Offeror's capabilities, related experience, and past performance, including the qualifications, capabilities, and experience of the proposed personnel

- The quality of technical personnel proposed
- The offeror's experience in relevant efforts with similar resources

- The ability to manage the proposed effort

(3) The realism of the proposed cost

- Total cost relative to benefit
- Realism of cost levels for staffing, travel, supplies and equipment

VII. NEGOTIATION AND AWARD OF PROPOSALS:

The Government may award/select proposals with or without negotiations. The Government may ask for additional information/clarification of the proposal at the discretion of the Government. Awards may be made subject to availability of funds IAW FAR 232.18, Availability of Funds and FAR 232.19, Availability of Funds for the Next Fiscal Year. No further awards will be made after August 5, 2020 or sooner if this FOA solicitation is amended to change the final date. Proposals submitted in response to this FOA will not be returned. The Government will notify offerors of unselected/unaccepted white papers and full proposals via email. Offerors are hereby informed that the submitted proposal(s) will not be considered nor accepted for award after one year (12 twelve months) from the date of submission cutoff date unless notified otherwise by the Government. After evaluation of final proposals, if any are determined to be awarded, the Government will send offerors a notice of intent to award. This notification is not an award, and the Government reserves the right to not award, even after a notice to award has been sent. The notice of intent to award is not an authorization to begin work; work may only be started after an award is signed by a Government Grants Officer, which will be provided some time after the notice of intent is provided.