DARPA-PA-25-05

Microsystems Technology Office (MTO) Pitch Day Solicitation

Questions & Answers (Q&A)

as of 04/03/2025

Q1: Are large businesses like Raytheon still eligible to submit an abstract for MTO Pitch Day?
A1: Research OTs are governed by 10 U.S.C. § 4021 and therefore are not subject to the same stipulations with respect to eligibility that Prototype OTs are subject to under 10 U.S.C. § 4022. DARPA notes one of the goals of the MTO Pitch Day is to encourage participation by new and first-time or non-traditional proposers. However, all responsible sources capable of satisfying the Government's needs, including both traditional defense contractors and non-traditional defense contractors, may participate.

Q2: What is the target TRL (technology readiness level) in this program? Would a STTR Phase 1 type of topics (e.g., feasibility study about an innovative or revolutionary solution, TRL 1~3) be suitable for this program, since the POP is short?
A2: There is no TRL target. The scope should be commensurate with the estimated total cost of phase ($200k or $400k).

Q3: In Thrust Area 1, it is mentioned "*quantum computing is explicitly excluded* from this thrust area." Can quantum computing be considered for Thrust Area 2, e.g., DNA based quantum computing? A3"
A3: Quantum computing can be considered for Thrust Area 2 – Biologically inspired microsystems (BIMs), but the proposer must detail how the effort would be electronic microsystems centric.

Q4: It's mentioned that "the aim is to explore alternative physical, logical, and mathematical frameworks that could provide new ways to process information." Would theoretical formulation, numerical analysis and computational studies be of interest to this program if proposing an entirely new computing paradigm where the relevant hardware may not be available or exist at all?
A4: Theoretical formulation and numerical analysis are of interest, but the proposer must discuss relevant hardware properties, requirements, or characteristics in detail.

Q5: In Section III.B "Proposers must clearly mark and identify their Abstract as responding to one (1) of the Thrust Areas identified in Section 1.A. Proposers may only submit one (1) Abstract." Can a proposer / organization only submit an abstract in total, or do you mean submitting an abstract to either Thrust Area is sufficient and allowed while multiple would also be fine?
A5: Proposers may only submit one (1) Abstract per Thrust Area. Multiple Principal Investigators (PIs) from the same entity/company may submit separate abstracts to the other thrust areas. However, the separate abstracts must be technologically distinct.

Q6: We would like to submit an abstract under the category of: Commercially Catalyzed Defense Deployment.
Does innovation at component level also fit into this program? In other words, developing components that when put into larger functioning sensors could provide significant improvements to the performance of the system.
A6: Yes.

Q7: Can multiple PIs at the same company submit separate abstracts?
A7: Proposers may only submit one (1) Abstract per Thrust Area. Multiple Principal Investigators (PIs) from the same entity/company may submit separate abstracts to the other thrust areas. However, the separate abstracts must be technologically distinct.

Q8: Could you please confirm whether a traditional defense contractor can still be eligible to bid on this program?
A8: Research OTs are governed by 10 U.S.C. § 4021 and therefore are not subject to the same stipulations with respect to eligibility that Prototype OTs are subject to under 10 U.S.C. § 4022. DARPA notes one of the goals of the MTO Pitch Day is to encourage participation by new and first-time or non-traditional proposers. However, all responsible sources capable of satisfying the Government's needs, including both traditional defense contractors and non-traditional defense contractors, may participate.

Q9: Would our company only be able to submit a maximum of three abstracts, one per TA? And each of those must come from a different PI?
A9: Correct. Maximum of three (3) abstracts, one (1) per thrust area, each with a different PI.