

Microsystems Technology Office (MTO) Pitch Day Solicitation

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

as of 04/14/2025

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: 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.

Q10: While FFRDCs are not eligible as prime for the MTO Pitch Day DARPA proposal could we be subrecipients?

A10: Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDC), University Affiliated Research Centers (UARCs), and Government Entities are not eligible to propose to this solicitation, DARPA-PA-25-01. In addition, as stated within the solicitation, no sub-awardees are permitted.

Q11: Are Pitch Day and Spark Tank the same event or two separate events?

A11: They are separate events. MTO Pitch Day is occurring in conjunction with MTO Spark Tank. The invited proposers of Pitch Day have the option of attending Spark Tank.

MTO Spark Tank (see special notice, [DARPA-SN-25-40](#)) on July 24-25 is open to prospective proposers, designed to expand DARPA's engagement with stakeholders across the innovation ecosystem – particularly small businesses, startups, and others who haven't worked with DARPA before and are looking to catalyze transformative advances in microsystems. Spark Tank is an opportunity for interested teams and organizations to engage with MTO leadership and program managers.

The invitation-only MTO Pitch Day (see solicitation, [DARPA-PA-25-05](#)) on July 25 will be hosted for select proposers. To be considered for Pitch Day participation, interested parties must submit a short abstract consisting of a technical description of the proposer's idea in response to one of the focus areas listed within the solicitation. If an abstract is selected for participation, DARPA will notify the proposer by email with an invitation to present at Pitch Day.

Q12: What is the registration fee?

A12: As stated in the Pitch Day special notice [DARPA-SN-25-52](#), the registration fee for all attendees of the Spark Tank event is \$450.00 and is solely for the purpose of covering the cost of the event. DARPA will not provide reimbursement for costs incurred to participate in MTO Pitch Day and/or MTO Spark Tank.

Q13: Can you please let us know how to sign up for the DARPA Pitch Day?

A13: Proposers are not required to sign up to participate in Pitch Day; however, proposers must submit an Abstract consisting of a technical description of their idea in response to one of the Thrust Areas listed in DARPA-PA-25-05 Section I.A. If the Abstract is selected for participation at Pitch Day, DARPA will

notify the selected proposer by email with an invitation to present their idea at Pitch Day. If the proposer would like to accept DARPA's invitation to Pitch Day, the proposer must register for MTO Spark Tank (see Q11 and Q12). Participation in the MTO Spark Tank event is optional and not a requirement for submitting an Abstract to this solicitation and/or attending the invitation-only Pitch Day. The MTO Pitch Day funding opportunity description, instructions, and dates are outlined within the solicitation (<https://sam.gov/opp/b2507ad585714764b454127163debc88/view>). See Section III: Submission Information.

Q14: As the solicitation says "no subawardees are permitted," does this mean that the submission needs to be from a single institution (rather than a multi-institution collaboration)?

A14: No subawardees are permitted. This means there will only be one Prime proposer (i.e., a single entity/institution) where all team members are part of the same entity/institution.