

Upward Falling Payloads (UFP) DARPA-BAA-13-17

Questions and Answers

February 7, 2013

Note 1: Detailed design choices, technical metrics, and cost is up to the proposer and should be proposed to maximize compatibility with other subsystems, and should support an overall system design to achieve the metrics and attributes outlined in the Metrics Addendum.

1. Q: Is a seafloor release system, with its inherent power and C2 requirements, considered to be a part of the overall UFP system design?
A: Yes
2. Q: Security – Universities as US Contractors: Would university students or a University be able to be subcontracted to supply components to a prime contractor?
A: See the BAA: Section 3.1, Eligible Applicants, and Section 6.2.4, Publication Approval.
3. Q: Are SCI-level proposals acceptable?
A: Yes – See Section 4.2, Security and Proprietary Issues, of the BAA
4. Q: Marine Mammals protection: Who will be required to obtain permits from Marine Fisheries/NOAA for acoustic sources?
A: Proposers will be responsible to obtain the permits with the assistance of DARPA.
5. Q: How many awards are expected in each phase?
A: Unspecified
6. Q: What is the exact number of hard copies / CDs for abstracts and proposals?
A: See Amendment 1 of the BAA.
7. Q: What happens to node after 5 years relative to environmental impact?
A: Favorable designs will have low to no environmental impact as cited in the Metrics Addendum.
8. Q: How do we address delivery of UFP nodes to the seafloor? Ex: UUV
A: The program will not develop delivery systems. Subsystem design should consider the flexibility to accommodate a range of delivery options.
9. Q: Is jamming considered a weapon?
A: Not for the purposes of this BAA.
10. Q: Is ASW still a part of this?
A: Yes this is an important and viable mission area.
11. Q: Do you have a cost goal in mind for each node? For what volume?
A: See Note 1 above.
12. Q: Will the surfaced payloads be required to operate or be triggered under ice or in a sea ice environment? A specific maximum sea state?
A: See Note 1 above.
13. Q: Schedule slide: When does payload trade study occur?

A: In Phase 1

14. Q: Can system concepts accommodate or depend on multiple nodes at a single UFP location?

A: Yes

15. Q: Are multiple payloads per riser permitted?

A: Yes.

16. Q: Once deployed, how long does the payload have to operate? Assume it's an underwater surveillance system.

A: See Note 1 above.

17. Q: Please speak to limitations of involvement of allied foreign companies.

A: Eligibility requirements are in Section 3.1 of the BAA.

18. Q: How contingent upon/related to sequestration is program funding?

A: Unknown.

19. Q: Will DARPA accept classified proposals that are hand carried?

A: Yes, See 4.2, Security and Proprietary Issues.

20. Q: Do systems have to be designed to account for classified communications, processing, and storage?

A: This will be application dependent but is an important design consideration for some classified missions.

21. Q: Does the payload need to break free of the riser when the riser reaches the surface?

A: The payload must "reliably launch or operate after being released". The riser is responsible for releasing the payload. Risers that complicate payload launch are less desirable.

22. Q: What is the start time for the latency requirement?

A: The two hour response time begins when the node is commanded. This includes the time to communicate to the seafloor node, the time to rise to the surface, and the time to create the desired effect within the coverage. Delays associated with decision making in the command structure is not included in this metric.

23. Q: What subsystem is responsible for communications after launch?

A: The payload subsystem is responsible for providing its own communications if any are needed.

24. Q: Can we inspect the nodes with UUVs/AUVs over the five year period?

A: This is a design approach for health monitoring that is your choice.

25. Q: What is the standoff requirement outside of the UFP coverage area to trigger UFP nodes?

A: There is no standoff criterion. "Communications must be capable of commanding any node in the coverage area nearly simultaneously....Overt communications that operate within the coverage area, and which are vulnerably exposed are acceptable but less attractive than methods that permit standoff from outside of the coverage area, or which have a low-probability of intercept."

26. Q: Is the UFP program interested in ocean payloads that may be concealed in other ways for this BAA?

A: The UFP program has a depth requirement central to its approach. Any concealment strategy that also achieves this criterion is appropriate.

27. Q: Is there a maximum slant range or circular error probability of the risers' position to the surface relative to the starting position on the seafloor?
A: See Note 1 above.
28. Q: Is stealth required while the riser is moving upward?
A: See Note 1 above.
29. Q: Do you have guidance on power requirements?
A: See Note 1 above.
30. Q: Is power to the payload envisioned to be separate from that of the rising body and its release mechanism?
A: A: Yes.
31. Q: Are you seeking novel power generation concepts for this project
A: See Note 1 above.
32. Q: If proposing to multiple TA's, are proposals limited to 22 pages per technical area, or 22 pages total?
A: See Amendment 1 of the BAA.
33. Q: How does one receive a copy of the proposer day slides?
A: Send a request to DARPA-BAA-13-17@darpa.mil mailbox along with a DUNS number (registered with the Central Contractor Registry, <https://www.bpn.gov/ccr/>) or a CAGE code.
34. Q: Is DARPA willing to consider a whole system proposal?
A: Proposers may propose to provide all three subsystems that make up the full UFP system. But, "the technical and cost proposal should be organized into distinct and separable tasks" for each subsystem as defined by each technical area.
35. Q: In Section 2 of the BAA, budgetary amounts are indicated for Phase 2 and Phase 3, but not Phase 1. Can DARPA indicate approximately how many Phase 1 awards are anticipated and the Phase 1 budgetary amount total?
A: Unspecified. Phases 2 and 3 are notional as stated in the BAA.
36. Q: In Section 2, multiple awards for Phase 2 and Phase 3 are indicated. Can DARPA provide information on the approximate number of awards anticipated?
A: Unspecified. Phases 2 and 3 are notional as stated in the BAA.
37. Q: What contract type(s) does DARPA envision for Phase 1, 2, and 3 awards, and will Earned Value be required?
A: See Section 4.4.2.2 – 10 of the BAA.
38. Q: For DARPA's evaluation criteria, Section 5.1.4, how will cost realism for the Phase 2 and Phase 3 ROMs be judged and what detail is required to support your evaluation? Will a brief summary be sufficient?
A: Your proposal will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria contained in the BAA.
39. Q: Section 5.1, Evaluation Criteria for Cost Realism states cost sharing may be a positive factor for likelihood of commercial application. Will cost sharing for non-commercial applications be considered favorably in the evaluation?
A: See BAA Sections 3.2 and 5.1.4. Your proposal will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria contained in the BAA.

40. Q: What is the range of water depths the UFP system is expected to operate during its dormant state (min & max)?
A: The UFP system must survive in a dormant state in water anywhere from 1-6 km deep.
41. Q: Is it the payload or the riser that is expected to fit within common form factors (A-size, 17" diameter sphere, etc.)?
A: There is no requirement for a form factor. Form factors given are just examples.
42. Q: Is DARPA only seeking proposals from Technical Area 1 and Technical Area 2?
A: No. This BAA covers all three Technical Areas.
43. Q: Does the riser need to be able to re-submerge or will it be retrieved after use?
A: See Note 1 above.
44. Q: Does the riser need to be able to be controlled during its ascent in order to surface at a location other than generally above its resting place at the bottom of the ocean or is the slant in reference to rising relatively straight with minimal movement and rotation?
A: See Note 1 above.
45. Q: It seems like Phase 3 should allow more time for analysis and reporting of results by the performers? Can this be accommodated?
A: As stated in the BAA, "The government expects to support at least one major sea test in the Western Pacific for Phase 3 in Q3FY17". Proposers should make a case for an earlier demonstration test if they feel more than three months is needed to conduct final analysis.
46. Q: FOUO is defined by the FOIA which requires any document claiming to be FOUO to clearly state which FOIA exemption applies. Which exemption do you see broadly applying to all unclassified aspects of this program?
A: Only specific unclassified information will be controlled for the program rather than all unclassified aspects. In general, unclassified but restricted technical information will be governed by applicable guidance found in DoD Directive 5230.24 dated August 23, 2012 derived in accordance with the authority in DoD Directive 5134.01.
47. Q: Appendix 1 provides a template for the proposal slides, but the template is 4 pages and not 3. If we are to submit a PowerPoint summary, do we use the 4 page template format? If not, which page is to be cut?
A: See Amendment 1 of the BAA.