

Questions and Answers
ARA-STAR-FISH CALL #008
Space Strategic Technology Institute (SSTI)-In Space Operations (ISO)
As of 1 June 2023

No.	Questions	Answers
see Amendment 001 for changes to CALL 008 regarding white paper submission date and POC updates		
1	Can traditional large business partner with universities to mature their tech through a partnership with an academia team?	No. Large businesses may not participate as either offerors or sub-contractors under this CALL according to Section III.7 of the CALL 008 instructions.
2	Can an industrial partner have employees more than 1000 people?	No. Large businesses may not participate as either offerors or sub-contractors under this CALL according to Section III.7 of the CALL 008 instructions. The standard definition of a small business under NAICS Code 541715, the small business size is capped at 1,000 employees.
3	Does there have to be 3 academia partners, or can it be less than 3 with a small business / non-traditional to fill out the rest of the team?	All are eligible under Section III.7 of the CALL 008 instructions. The lead must be a university with total of 3, or more, partners. See Section A of the Statement of Objective for more details.
4	What is the target TRL at the end of the contract? Do the performers have to identify DAF transition customers during the contract performance?	There is no requirement specified, however Technology Readiness Level six would be likely the maximum TRL achievable under this contract. The technology is intended to transfer to customers, but the performer does not have sole responsibility.
5	Is there any mandatory split between the percentage of work between Research Institutions and SBC(s)?	No. See Section A of the Statement of Objective for more details.
6	Did you say that either a university or a company can lead the proposal? You mentioned it but I just want to confirm. Thanks.	No. See Section A of the Statement of Objective for more details.
7	Is there a required size of team proposing or can it go to a sole prime?	Yes. See Section A of the Statement of Objective for more details.

8	Thank for the clarification-- the 3-academia requirement is slightly confusing as written in the call (there looks to be conflicting guidance).	See answer 3 above.
9	Are Letters of Support or Letters of Technical Merit considered in the proposal evaluation process?	No. There is no benefit to letters of support or technical merit in the STAR-FISH Evaluation Criteria.
10	Is there a minimum number of objective areas that should be included in a response.	No minimum areas. Areas identified in the Statement of Objective are suggestions as possible topics.
11	Can you please clarify the expected collaboration (if any) with AFRL?	Collaboration with AFRL is expected post award.
12	what is defined as a US institution or company? i.e., what is defined as 'foreign owned' for this call?	<p>22 CFR Parts 120-130 are specified under Section III.5 of CALL 008. Under 22 CFR Part 120.65, <i>Foreign Ownership</i> is defined as “more than 50 percent of the outstanding voting securities of the firm are owned by one or more foreign persons.”</p> <p>Additionally, per Section III.5 – they “must be incorporated (or otherwise formed) under the laws of a state or territory of the United States.”</p> <p>eCFR :: 22 CFR Part 120 -- Purpose and Definitions</p>
13	Is there a size standard restriction?	See answer to question 2 above.
14	Can large businesses participate and submit whitepapers	See answer to question 2 above.
15	Does the lead university team already need to have the security infrastructure in place to handle classified and CUI information?	Please see Section I.3.L in the full text announcement.
16	Will security clearance be required to perform?	Please see Section I.3.L in the full text announcement.
17	Are there expected review meetings at an AFRL facility / location or will interactions be at academia locations?	To be determined depending on award.

18	Can a company be on multiple teams/awards	Yes, a company may submit on multiple teams if a) they meet all eligibility requirements and b) can support the work if all teams potentially are awarded concurrently.
19	If a particular project requires a security clearance, can AFRL sponsor the SBCs get clearances?	Please see Section I.3.L in the full text announcement.
20	Will there be any restrictions on publications in academic journals/conferences?	Any publication will need to be reviewed for Foreign Disclosure, Classification, ITAR/Export Control, and OPSEC among others.
21	Can companies who partner with universities submit classified addendums as to the delineation between unclassified and classified applications?	No.
22	Will any preference be given to proposals that might have joint utility (i.e. NASA or NOAA in addition to AFRL)?	Please see Evaluation Criteria in Attachment 3.
23	(a) Will data rights be negotiated at the time of contracting? (b) Will preferred data rights be taken into consideration as part of the evaluation criteria?	(a) Yes. Offerors are responsible for disclosure of data rights at the time of contracting negotiation. (b) Please see Evaluation Criteria in Attachment 3.
24	What are the scoring criteria for the white paper?	Please see Evaluation Criteria in Attachment 3.
25	The Statement of Objectives states "The lead institution is responsible for evenly distributing funds to team member institutions via subawards." Does this imply that all members must equally split the dollar amount?	See answer 5 above.
26	Are Teaming Agreements or IP Allocation of Rights agreements required at the time of proposal submission?	Teaming Agreements and IP allocation of Rights agreement are not required for submission of white papers.
27	Do all or any of the proposed schools need to have an existing USSF affiliation? (UPP, ARC, etc.)?	No.
28	Is dual-use of interest?	Please see Evaluation Criteria in Attachment 3.
29	Will contracts as well as grants be awarded?	See Section II.2 of CALL 008
30	Is dual-use of interest? Commercial and DoD	Please see Evaluation Criteria in Attachment 3.
31	When do you expect to release revised, final draft based on the number of questions that need to be resolved?	No updated draft will be posted.

32	You mentioned that the US citizenship is required for this effort. In the STAR-FISH solicitation, it says that a waiver request can be submitted for "rare, highly specialized needed expertise." Do you mean that AFRL does not intend to admit this waiver in the context of this effort?	Please see Section III.5 of CALL 008
33	Are government funded schools such as the US Air Force Academy and the Naval Postgraduate School eligible to participate?	Yes.
34	Can an industry partner be considered a "research institution", not just a university? Since you are saying a business can be the lead proposal offeror while Attachment I also says: "The In-Space Operations (ISO) SSTI will comprise a team of at least three research institutions (including lead university) ...USSF plans to make the full award to the lead research institution submitting the proposal"	See answer 3 above.
35	You mentioned that end result of effort is transitioning to a "prototype". Does this only imply capable to test in orbit?	See Section A of Statement of Objective
36	Can the white paper submission be marked proprietary/company confidential, i.e. not to be distributed outside the government reviewers?	Yes.
37	Can Attachment 2 (white paper template) be provided in Word Doc format, instead of PDF?	No, please convert PDF to Word Doc format.
38	Can one person participate in more than one proposal?	Yes, a person may submit on multiple teams if a) they meet all eligibility requirements and b) can support the work if all teams potentially are awarded concurrently.
39	Are non-citizen graduate students precluding from participating under the advisement of a US citizen faculty member? Vice versa with non-citizen faculty and citizen grad student	Please see Section III.5 of CALL 008
40	What is the anticipated start date of the performance?	As soon as possible after award.
41	Even though there's no exact start date, is there a notional goal? It will help realistically scope a proposal for a university and for a company to have a sense if this starts 3 months, 6 months, 12 months, etc. from now.	Start date depends on award process.
42	How much time between the invitation to submission of full proposals?	That will be determined and clearly stated in the RFP.

43	When RFPs are issued for selected white papers, are those proposals being competed against each other, or is there a type of sole source authority once the white paper is selected?	See Section II.4 of CALL 008.
44	The anticipated Federal funding of \$49M, is that supposed to last all 5 years of the notional PoP?	Yes.
45	Does the waiver for a non-US citizen co-PI participation be in place when submitting the white paper or just when/if the award is made?	Per Section III.5 of the CALL 008, a waiver needs to be requested at the time of white paper submission – but must be in place before award is made.
46	If a company leads a proposal, is there a minimum level of involvement from the university partners? For example, with STTRs that mandate 30% of work must be done by the research institution	See answer 3, above.
47	Section III.5 Foreign Participation: "Foreign-Owned Offerors are not authorized to propose to this CALL as prime offeror."	See answer 3 above
48	Attachment 1 Statement of Objectives A.2: "The In-Space Operations (ISO) SSTI will comprise a team of at least three research institutions..."	The intent is to have teaming to maximize expertise, but the form of the team is up to the team.
49	Can you confirm that AFIT is eligible to participate in this announcement call?	Yes.
50	How many awards are expected out of a total of \$49.9M?	See Section II.4 of CALL 008.
51	What is the expected budget per award?	See Section II.4 of CALL 008.
52	Is there a maximum or expected number of PIs per award?	See answer 3, above.
53	Attachment I mentions that the solicitation requires a team of at least three research institutions. Do they have to be all universities? Or can they include an industry member?	See answer 3, above.
54	What is the TRL level that this call seeks?	See Section A of Statement of Objective.
55	Can US Permanent Resident be the PI?	See Section III.5 of CALL 008.

56	If there was a link for the recording of the webinar or FAQs Several my faculty who wanted to attend were unable to make the timing and it would be great if there was a way to access the recording.	No. The FAQs and answers are being posted.
57	Wanted to see if there are any teaming resources. We are in the process of working to collaborate with other IHEs and access to any list of potential teams would be valuable.	We cannot provide this.
59	What is the definition of "foreign owned"? Reference: Section III.5 Foreign Participation: "Foreign-Owned Offerors are not authorized to propose to this CALL as prime offeror."	Please see Answer 12 above.
60	Can a foreign-owned U.S. subsidiary incorporated in the U.S. with facility clearance, personnel clearance, and approved FOCI mitigation be a prime? Reference: Section III.5 Foreign Participation: "Foreign-Owned Offerors are not authorized to propose to this CALL as prime offeror."	See answer 3 above.
61	Regarding foreign participation, does "participant" mean the prime or all entities (including subcontractors)? Reference: Section III.5 Foreign Participation: "Foreign-Owned Offerors are not authorized to propose to this CALL as prime offeror."	Award terms and conditions will flow down to sub-awardees and sub-contractors, etc.
62	Once the call revisions are made, will STAR-FISH host another Q&A session?	No
63	Based on the 5/15/23 Q&A call, please clarify that the proposal team may also be comprised of commercial entities (not just research institutions). Reference:	See answer 3 above.

	Attachment 1 Statement of Objectives A.2: "The In-Space Operations (ISO) SSTI will comprise a team of at least three research institutions..."	
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