

## IARPA-BAA-16-08

### Questions and Answers Round 2

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#### Fun GCAT BAA Questions 9 through 13 – Round 2

**Q9)** On Table 1 (Page 11), the Thrust 1 Phase 2 goal mentions “integration of ‘discovered’ threats”: how is this different from assessment of “uncharacterized sequences” in Thrust 1 Phase 1? The Thrust 1 Phase 2 goal mentions “experimental evidence of accuracy in prediction of function and virulence.” Does this require physical experimentation with biological material? If so, how do you see that interacting with DURC being out of scope?

**A9)** For the purpose of Thrust 1, Phase 2 and 3 Goals, “discovered” threats are not considered to be a distinct category from other “uncharacterized sequences.”

Experimental validation of computational approaches developed in Thrust 1 will be performed by the Government Test and Evaluation team. No physical experimentation with biological material is required for proposers submitting solely to Thrust 1.

**Q10)** On determining species of origin: to what degree is it important to have tight taxonomic classification of benign material? Are we responsible to telling random tunicates, jellyfish, and sponges apart? It would seem more important to focus on classification when sequences are of concern. What if a piece of material is highly conserved or has naturally moved across species via horizontal gene transfer, such that it cannot be reliably assigned to a single taxa?

**A10)** Bioinformatic and computational tools and approaches developed in Thrust 1 are expected to be capable of correctly predicting the identity, function, and threat status of genetic sequences from a variety of diverse origins. These tools and approaches should be capable of classifying all sequences as either a “potential threat” or “non-threat” based on identity and functional characterization to determine when sequences are of concern, regardless of the sequence origin. For all sequences, including those that may be present in more than one species or strain, a probable identity should be assigned at the lowest possible taxonomic classification. It is possible to assign multiple potential identities to a given sequence, provided that each is ascribed an individual probability.

**Q11)** The Government states that it requires GPR rights; does that mean that it would distribute the projects only within the Government? Or does the Government's goal of transition mean that it intends to distribute the solutions outside of the Government?

**A11)** The Government requires at a minimum GPR per 4.B.1.c.E. Ordinarily the Government receives unlimited rights under the standard FAR IP clause that IARPA generally uses (52.227-14). The Government is prepared to exercise its rights to distribute as the contract permits and as circumstances warrant.

**Q12)** The government states that commercialization and commercialization planning are out of scope for this program. The government also allows proposers to support some work via resource share, at no cost to the government. Given the government's goal of transition, is it acceptable to have commercialization or commercialization planning carried out via resource share?

**A12)** The Government is open to cost sharing per BAA section 4.B.1.c.E. Note that BAA Section 4.D prohibits using IARPA funds for commercialization activities.

Efforts associated with commercialization or commercialization planning will not be an allowable cost under any contract or other vehicle stemming from this BAA and will not be reimbursed. Offerors that desire to pursue commercialization or commercialization planning may do so at their own expense and must fully cover all costs associated with these efforts. Please see 4.B.1.c.J.

**Q13)** Does IARPA expect the deliverables to include tools that can be used by DNA synthesis vendors to screen orders in their production pipeline and to help in the evaluation of positive matches?

**A13)** The bioinformatics and computational tools developed in Thrust 1 should enable faster sequence comparison and assess threat potential. These tools may be useful to DNA synthesis vendors and commercialization or licensing of tools is allowable, but is not expected or required under this BAA (see Section 6.B.2 Intellectual Property). As noted in BAA Q&A 11, data to which the Government obtains government purpose rights may be used without restriction by the Government and may be provided outside the Government to authorized persons for Government purpose, but may not be provided to other persons for commercial purposes.