

Q 1: It seems that all three Technical Areas are highly interdependent. Do teams bidding to TA3 require work to be completed by teams bidding to TA1 and TA2 prior to performing any TA3-relevant work?

A: Performers in TA3 will require a complete set of neurophysiological and neuroanatomical data from TA1 and TA2, respectively, in order to produce the deliverables specified in BAA Section 1.B.3. However, performers in TA3 need not wait until data collection is complete to begin work. For example, performers in TA3 may develop prototype co-registration algorithms, neural circuit reconstruction techniques, and/or neural data access systems prior to receipt of the final datasets from TA1 and TA2.

Q 2: Are teams bidding to only one TA required to position themselves in a conjectural analysis pipeline that produces and/or depends upon work products by other teams in other TAs?

A: Yes, as described in BAA Section 1.A.5, “success in the MICrONS program will require extensive communication and cooperation between performers in all three TAs within or across teams.” Critical dependencies, restrictions, and interactions that an offeror’s technical approach places on a conjectural analysis pipeline may be specified in the “technical interaction matrix” defined in BAA Section 1.C.4.

Q 3: Are offerors required to bid to all sub-areas of a particular technical area (e.g., machine learning, neurophysiological data collection, etc. in TA1)?

A: Yes.

Q 4: What constitutes a “draft” SSD? A paragraph? An outline?

A: The exact content of draft SSDs will be determined in conjunction with each performer after program kickoff. For planning purposes, offerors should assume that the draft SSD will include most of the content of the final SSD, but with less specificity and less certainty than the final SSD. The Government Team will use the draft SSDs to determine what software or hardware needs to be procured, provisioned, or developed to evaluate the deliverables at the end of each phase.

Q 5: What is the numbering scheme for milestones and waypoints?

A: The character before the dot in each milestone represents the program phase to which that milestone pertains (1, 2, or 3). The character after the dot in each milestone represents the order in which that milestone occurs within the phase (i.e., the first milestone in Phase 1 is 1.1, the second milestone in Phase 1 is 1.2, etc.). Offeror-defined milestones use letters of the alphabet instead of digits as the second character.

Q 6: What is the difference between milestones and waypoints?

A: As described in section 1.B.4, “Program milestones are generally associated with the major deliverables or the end of a phase,” whereas “Waypoints help IARPA assess intermediate progress towards the next milestone(s).”

Q 7: The last paragraph on Page 7 of the BAA suggests that neural fidelity will be assessed based on “data produced in all three TAs.” Does TA3 produce any data?

A: TA3 does not produce primary data but does generate data products in the form of neural circuit reconstructions and co-registrations of structural and functional data.

Q 8: The first paragraph of BAA Section 1.C.1.c says, “Offerors must also describe how they will support the preparation of samples for neuroanatomical data collection in TA2 (Section 1.C.2.a) and enable performers in TA3 to co-register this functional data with the structural data to be acquired in TA2 (Section 1.C.3.b).” Does this mean we need to have specific arrangements with other offerors who are proposing to TA2 and TA3, or do we only need to specify how we would prepare samples and enable co-registration for unknown performers in TA2 and TA3?

A: The latter. Offerors proposing to one or two TAs are not expected to have arrangements with offerors proposing to the remaining TAs.

Q 9: BAA Section 1.B.1.b speaks of connecting computational models to the outputs of TA2 and TA3 in previous phases. Does this require that we have specific arrangements with other proposers in TA2 and TA3 to ensure that there will be TA2 and TA3 data on our tissue?

A: No, offerors proposing to one or two TAs are not expected to have arrangements with offerors proposing to the remaining TAs. However, after the program commences, performers whose scope is limited to one or two TAs should expect to form collaborations with performers in each of the remaining TAs.

Q 10: Has a contractor performed similar work to this for IARPA in the past?

A: No.

Q 11: Will IARPA accept proposals from individuals or organizations outside of the US?

A: Yes, there is no requirement for US citizenship or residency to propose or receive funding.