

Defense Industrial Base Consortium (DIBC)

Request for White Paper (RWP)

RWP-MIC-24-01

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RWP Q&A Closes: 10 April 2024 at 5:00 PM ET

RWP Closes: 26 April 2024 at 5:00 PM ET

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1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 General Information

This is a competitive announcement, RWP-MIC-24-01, is being released under the Defense Industrial Base Consortium (DIBC) managed by the Consortium Management Organization (CMO) Advanced Technology International, Inc. (ATI) and in partnership with the Manufacturing, Capability Expansion, and Investment Prioritization Directorate (MCEIP) for the specific critical sector detailed in Attachment 1 Problem Statement. Any agreements will be awarded as prototypes under 10 U.S.C. § 4022.

The Government will not reimburse for costs associated with the development of Enhanced White Papers (EWPs), Statement of Work (SOW), or additional steps such as a pitch presentation. The Government may cancel the RWP at any time. If the RWP is canceled, EWPs will not be evaluated and will not be retained for future consideration under this announcement.

The Government reserves the right to contact all, some, or none of the Proposer's after evaluations are complete and prior to award.

The Government reserves the right to make a single or multiple awards under a problem statement. The Government may consider EWP submissions for up to 24 months after submission deadline. Submission of an EWP does not guarantee award of an agreement.

Projects are anticipated to include controlled unclassified information (CUI) and therefore are subject to security requirements in the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Special Publication (SP) 800-171r2, "Protecting Controlled Unclassified Information in Nonfederal Systems and Organizations."

All submissions will be treated as "source selection information" as defined by 41 U.S.C. § 2101(7), and contents will be disclosed only in accordance with 41 U.S.C. § 2102. During the evaluation process submissions may be handled by the Government, Government support contractors, and ATI personnel for both administrative purposes and to support technical evaluations. All persons performing these roles are bound by appropriate nondisclosure agreements (NDAs).

1.2 Eligibility

Consortium membership is not required for the submission of an EWP in response to this announcement. However, membership will be required for EWP's that are selected for award.

To join DIBC, please visit: <https://www.dibconsortium.org/how-to-join/>

2.0 ENHANCED WHITE PAPER SUBMISSION FORMAT

EWPs that deviate from or that omit parts or sections from the following guidelines may be determined unresponsive and eliminated from further consideration for award.

2.1 RWP Questions

Any questions regarding the RWP should be emailed to the CMO at DIBC.Contracts@ati.org prior to the Q&A deadline of **10 April 2024 at 5:00 PM ET**. The CMO will coordinate with the Government and

responses will be provided at <https://www.dibconsortium.org/rwp-mic-24-01/> to all Proposer's. The Government reserves the right to not provide responses to all questions. The status of any submissions after the announcement closes, even that of their own EWP, or the evaluation timeline will not be discussed until the evaluation process is complete. Upon completion of the evaluation process, Proposer's will receive feedback on their EWP as discussed in Section 4.

2.2 BIDS Submission

All EWP's shall be submitted using BIDS in accordance with section 3.0, at <https://ati2.acqcenter.com/DIBC/BIDS.NSF/Start?ReadForm> no later than, **26 April 2024 at 5:00 PM ET**. An automated BIDS receipt confirmation will be provided by email.

If the Proposer fails to upload the EWP prior to the deadline, the submission will not be accepted. Exceptions will not be made for issues encountered due to system interfaces.

Submissions can be made in advance of the deadline and updated (or files replaced) up to the deadline.

Note: BIDS registration and Quick Card information is available on the DIBC members-only website at: <https://private.dibconsortium.org/resources/>

2.3 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

10 U.S.C. §4021(i), as amended, provides that disclosure of the information listed below is not required, and may not be compelled, under FOIA for a period of five years if a party submits the information in a competitive or noncompetitive process having the potential for an award of an Other Transaction Agreement:

- i. a proposal, proposal abstract, and supporting documents;
- ii. a business plan submitted on a confidential basis; or
- iii. technical information submitted on a confidential basis.

To request protection from FOIA disclosure as allowed by statute, Proposer shall mark business plans and technical information with a legend identifying the documents as being submitted on a confidential basis.

EWPs and supporting documents shall not include classified material.

2.4 EWP Format

EWP's shall be submitted in the following format:

- Written in English with a 12-point font size in Times New Roman. Smaller font may be used for figures, tables, and charts. If photo reduction is used for tables, charts, and drawings, their presentation must be clear and legible.
- Single-spaced, 8.5 by 11 inches (21.6 x 27.9 cm) in Portrait orientation, with no less than one-inch margins on all sides.
- Hyperlinks are prohibited.
- Files shall be submitted in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format.
- Files shall not be larger than 5MB each.
- All files shall be print-capable, without a password
- Filenames must contain the appropriate extension and shall not contain special characters*.
- Appropriate files extensions are:

Application / File

Portable Document Files (Adobe Acrobat)
Microsoft Word (MS Word)

Valid Extensions

.pdf
.doc / .docx

- *Apple users must ensure the entire filename and path are free of spaces and special characters.
- *BIDS is not accessible via a foreign Internet Protocol (IP) address.

EWP’s shall be considered valid for 24 months after submission unless explicitly stated otherwise by the Proposer. EWP’s should be submitted as separate files as indicated in the below chart:

File Title	RWP Ref.	Max Pages	File Type
Enhanced White Paper (<i>page limit excludes cover page</i>)	3.1	15	MS Word or PDF
Affirmation of Business Status Certification	3.2	No Limit	MS Word or PDF
WP Quad Chart (Optional)	3.3	1	MS PPT or PDF

3.0 ENHANCED WHITE PAPER SUBMISSION CONTENT

3.1 Enhanced White Paper

Proposers shall complete the EWP template as instructed in Attachment 2.

3.2 Affirmation of Business Status Certification

Proposers shall complete the Attachment 3: Affirmation of Business Status Certification (ABSC). The Government will assess the eligibility for award based upon the response provided.

3.3 EWP Quad Chart

Submission of Quad Charts are optional. Proposers may complete the optional EWP Quad Chart as instructed in Attachment 4. The EWP Quad Chart is not to be included as a part of the EWP evaluation but should illustrate the value of the proposed effort to potential customers. If the Government places an EWP in the basket, the associated EWP Quad Chart will be made available to the Government for review and consideration for a future award. The EWP Quad Chart will be available on a separate website with access restricted to Government Only.

3.4 Statement of Work

Based upon the Government’s evaluation of the EWP in accordance with section 4.0 if the EWP is of interest, the Government will request a SOW and cost/price data. A template of the SOW will be provided. The Government reserves the right to negotiate revisions as necessary.

4.0 ENHANCED WHITE PAPER EVALUATION PROCESS

This is a two-step process:

- Step One – EWPs will be evaluated as specified in Sections 4.1 and 4.2.

- Step Two – If the EWP is selected for award as specified in Section 5.0, the CMO at the request of the Government, will request a SOW and price proposal for evaluation as specified in Section 6.0.

EWPs will be evaluated on the basis of the merit of the proposed prototype solution in addressing the problem statement and the criteria below, not against other EWPs submitted under the announcement. The Government reserves the right to seek additional information by requesting updated or more detailed information, including a pitch from selected Proposers, which would entail an updated evaluation.

4.1 Evaluation

The Government will evaluate the EWP to assess each Proposer’s understanding of the work and the ability to accomplish and successfully deliver a prototype(s). All EWPs will be evaluated by a team of Government evaluators against the following criteria:

1. Does the EWP present a prototype solution (i.e. plans) that meets the requirements of the problem statement?
2. Does the proposed prototype solution present a capability and/or capacity advancement?
3. Does the proposed prototype solution present a technology and/or technological process approach that is feasible, economically viable, and competitive?
4. Does the EWP provide a ROM and schedule/timeframe that is realistic and feasible?
5. What are the Pros, Cons, and Associated Risks for the proposed prototype solution and are they addressed in the EWP?

4.2 Rating

Enhanced White Papers will be assigned the following ratings:

Rating	Description
Met	The proposed solution is responsive to the problem statement, provides technology advancement, and is technically possible. The listed Pros and Cons, and associated risks are identified, understood, and are determined acceptable.
Not Met	The proposed solution is not responsive to the problem statement, does not provide technology advancement, and or is not technically possible. The listed Pros and Cons, and associated risks are identified, understood, and are determined unacceptable.

EWPs rated as Met will be placed in the basket for 24 months and eligible for award during that time. EWPs rated as Not Met, will not be placed in the basket and will not be eligible for a future award.

4.3 Feedback

The Government anticipates evaluating white papers without further communication with the Proposers, though, in rare occasions, additional communication may occur, at the Government’s discretion through the CMO. Upon completion of the evaluation process, the Government will release feedback through BIDS to the Proposers. The information provided in the feedback is based on the results of the DIBC evaluation described in Section 4.1. Nothing presented in the feedback should be considered in any way as a recommendation for participation or nonparticipation in future solicitations. Likewise, there is no relationship intended between the information provided in the feedback and any likelihood of selection or non-selection of any specific submission in any future solicitations. Collaboration with the Government can continue once feedback has been released, but no additional information will be made available for release, including any verbal discussions on the feedback provided for the submission.

5.0 SELECTION PROCESS

An EWP selected for further negotiation does not guarantee an award. It is the Government's intent to select, negotiate, and award prototype projects from this announcement. The Government will document the selection process in accordance with established procedures and the evaluation criteria outlined above.

After SOW negotiations, the Government will request, through the CMO, a price proposal as outlined in Section 6.0 below.

6.0 PRICING PROPOSAL PROCESS

The price proposal shall provide sufficient detail to substantiate that the overall proposed price is realistic, reasonable, complete for the work proposed, and reflects the best price for the proposed solution. The price proposal shall also include a narrative explanation of proposed prices. Upon request by the CMO, a price proposal spreadsheet and supporting narrative shall be submitted by the Proposer(s) within 21 calendar days for evaluation. All monetary references shall be in U.S. dollars. Instructions for submission will be provided with the request. There are no page limits for the cost submissions.

6.1 Pricing Spreadsheet

Provide a spreadsheet (MS Excel) with a breakdown of all cost elements for the project, regardless of agreement type (Fixed Price or Expenditure Based). The spreadsheet shall be editable, not password protected, and include formulas for demonstrating calculations (not hard coded). The data should include the following (as applicable):

- **Direct Labor Rates:** Identify the labor category for all personnel, the unburdened hourly rate for each category, and estimated labor hours per individual for each labor category reflective of the technical solution and SOW.
- **Team Members/Subcontractors:** If applicable, provide a separate cost section for all team member/subcontractors containing the same detailed data itemized in this section. This information must be provided within the Proposer's cost spreadsheet, and not as a separate file. Team Members/Subcontractor proprietary information may be submitted directly to the CMO (please contact the CMO for additional information).
- **Consultants:** If applicable, provide a separate cost section for all consultants containing the same detailed data itemized in this section. This information must be provided within the Proposer's cost spreadsheet, and not as a separate file. Consultants' proprietary information may be submitted directly to the CMO (please contact the CMO for additional information).
- **Material/Equipment:** An itemized list of the proposed material/equipment with the vendor/manufacture name (as applicable), unit pricing, unit of measure (UOM), and associated quantities. Include part/serial numbers, as applicable.
- **Travel:** The proposed travel costs should include the following for each trip: Purpose/Nature of the travel, estimated number of travelers and trips required, origin and destination, mode and cost of transportation (includes mileage, parking, baggage costs, taxis, etc.), and duration of the trip for each traveler.
- **Other Direct Costs:** Provide a detailed description of any Other Direct Costs (ODCs) that do not fit into the cost elements above.
- **Indirect Costs:** Identify all indirect costs (e.g. labor overhead, fringe benefits, material overhead, G&A) and associated rates.
- **Profit/Fee:** Proposing profit/fee is allowable unless cost share is contributed by the Proposer.

6.2 Pricing Narrative

Provide a written narrative (MS Word or Adobe PDF) containing sufficient detail to substantiate the pricing spreadsheet categories as outlined in section 6.1.

The narrative shall state the proposed award type, overall total price for the project, and include (as applicable):

- **Direct Labor Costs:** Provide all supporting documentation for hours and rates. The rationale for the labor categories, hours, and rates used should be reflective of the methodology provided in the WP. Explain how the direct labor costs are considered reasonable. If the proposed rates are based on a Forward Pricing Rate Agreement (FPRA) with Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) and/or Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA), a copy of the Government letter(s) granting the approval should be provided in the proposal.
- **Team Members/Subcontractors:** If applicable, Proposers shall also provide a list of all team members/subcontractors and a total cost for each team member/subcontractor. Proposers shall identify if each team member/subcontractor is a traditional, nontraditional defense contractor, or nonprofit research institution.
 - For proposed team members/subcontractors provide a brief description of work to be performed and a statement on how the costs were deemed acceptable.
 - For proposed team members/subcontractors supporting quotes must be provided and a statement on how the costs were deemed acceptable, if requested.
 - If requested, a detailed proposal broken out by element of cost for each of the team members/subcontractors proposed must be provided in the Proposer's cost proposal submission. Team member/subcontractor proposals must be as detailed as possible, but at a minimum must include the following: labor categories and hours specified, list of material/equipment and other direct costs, travel detail, lower tier subcontractors/consultants identified, indirect costs and fee. The Proposer must also state that a cost analysis for team members/subcontractors over \$2,000,000 and price analysis for all team members/subcontractors has been performed and provide documentation supporting the determination of a fair and reasonable price.
- **Consultants:** If applicable, Proposers shall also provide a list of all consultants and a total cost for each consultant. Proposers shall identify if each consultant is a traditional, nontraditional defense contractor, or nonprofit research institution regardless of proposed cost.
 - For proposed consultants, provide a brief description of work to be performed and a statement on how the costs were deemed acceptable.
 - For proposed consultants, supporting quotes must be provided and a statement on how the costs were deemed acceptable.
 - If requested, a detailed proposal broken out by element of cost (i.e. labor categories, associated hours, travel, other direct costs, etc.) for each of the consultants shall be provided in the Proposer's price proposal submission. The Proposer must also state that a cost analysis for those consultants over \$2,000,000 and price analysis for all Consultants has been performed and provide documentation supporting the determination of a fair and reasonable price.
- **Material/Equipment:** An itemized list of the material/equipment proposed (i.e. a bill of materials) must be provided in the cost proposal. Additionally, a copy of the basis of cost documentation (i.e. detailed vendor quote, catalog pricing data, or past purchase orders) for each piece of proposed material/equipment may be requested.
- **Travel:** The proposed travel costs should include the following for each trip: Purpose/Nature of the travel, estimated number of travelers and trips required, origin and destination, mode and cost of transportation (includes mileage, parking, baggage costs, taxis, etc.), and duration of the trip for

each traveler. **Note:** Proposers are expected to be cost-conscious regarding travel, for example, the costs for travel should be in accordance with the Joint Travel Regulation. Travel costs that are deemed excessive *e.g.* first class airfares, exorbitant hotel room charges, etc., will be adjusted to a reasonable cost.

- **Other Direct Costs:** The Proposer must identify and provide a detailed description of any other direct costs that do not fit into the cost categories above. Additionally, a copy of the basis of cost documentation (i.e. detailed vendor quote, catalog pricing data, or past purchase orders) for each piece of proposed other direct cost may be requested.
- **Indirect Costs:** Provide an estimate of the total indirect costs and data to support the indirect cost rates by one of the following methods:
 1. Specify your current indirect rates and provide one of the following methods of support:
 - a. Provide a copy of the certification from a Federal agency indicating these indirect rates are approved by the Federal agency for use in forward pricing (i.e. Forward Pricing Rate Agreement (FPRA)).
 - b. Provide a copy of Government-accepted Provisional Billing Rates from a Federal agency, with visibility of the rates and allocation basis.
 - c. If a current Forward Pricing Rate Proposal (FPRP) exists but the FPRP rates have not been approved by a Federal agency, provide a copy of the current FPRP with the date the proposal was submitted to your Administrative Contracting Officer. If a current FPRA exists, members should disclose this information and also provide a copy.
 - d. If you do not have approved rates, provide detailed supporting data to include indirect costs, by account (pool), for each proposed rate; distribution base used for each proposed rate; including actual base and pool amounts. This information shall be provided in MS Excel and to the extent practicable include working formulas.
 2. Alternately, in lieu of providing your indirect rates, if you can obtain appropriate Government assistance, you may provide a letter from the cognizant Federal audit agency stating that, based upon their review of your proposal, the indirect rates used in your proposal are approved by a Federal agency and were applied correctly in this specific proposal.

Supporting data in one of the above formats must be provided with your proposal. If you elect to rely on Government inputs as discussed above, you are responsible for ensuring any Government agency cooperation is obtained so that your proposal is complete when submitted.

- **Profit/Fee:** Proposing profit/fee is allowable to include in a price proposal when cost share is not being contributed by the Proposer. Provide the rationale for any profit/fee.
- **Accounting System Documentation:** If a cost type prototype project agreement is proposed, the Proposer must include a description of the accounting system they will use for the project to allocate costs appropriately. If available, provide documentation for any existing accounting or purchasing system approved, or deemed adequate, by the cognizant federal agency.

6.3 Cost Evaluation

The CMO will perform an initial cost and/or price analysis of the submitted price proposal and will provide the results to the Government. The CMO may request additional information to complete the initial cost and/or price analysis. The Government is responsible for final review and acceptance of the cost and/or price to determine if it is fair and reasonable.

7.0 POTENTIAL FOR FOLLOW-ON PRODUCTION

Projects selected for award will be funded through a Project Sub-Agreement (PSA) issued by the CMO.

In accordance with 10 U.S.C. § 4022 a prototype project issued under the overarching OT Agreement, if successfully completed and competitively awarded, may result in the award of a follow-on production agreement without the use of competitive procedures. Success metrics for each project shall be defined in the individual prototype project and subsequent PSA(s).

Per DoD Policy, the following definition of “successfully completed” shall apply to any prototype project: ‘A transaction for a prototype project is complete upon the written determination of the appropriate approving official for the matter in question that efforts conducted under an OT prototype project: (1) met the key technical goals of a project; (2) satisfied success metrics incorporated into the prototype project; or (3) accomplished a particularly favorable or unexpected result that justifies the transition to production. Furthermore, successful completion can occur prior to the conclusion of a prototype project to allow the Government to transition any aspect of the prototype project determined to provide utility into production while other aspects of the prototype project have yet to be completed.’

All prototype projects issued under the overarching OT Agreement shall set forth the conditions for successful completion in the SOW.

The language of paragraphs 1 and 2 of this section shall be incorporated into all PSAs in order to allow for the option of non-competitive follow-on production agreement(s) or contract(s).

ATTACHMENTS:

(Attachments 2, 3, & 4 to be completed by Proposer)

Attachment 1 – RWP-MIC-24-01 Problem Statement

Attachment 2 – Enhanced White Paper Template

Attachment 3 – Affirmation of Business Status Certification

Attachment 4 – Quad Chart Template and Instructions