

## Countering IEDs by Novel Technology and Techniques: Frequently Asked Questions

### General questions

**Q: For this competition, would DASA accept more than one proposal, e.g., one proposal for challenge 1 and another separate proposal for challenge 2?**

A: Multiple proposals are welcome. We would advise that you ensure you have the capacity to carry out the work of all bids submitted in the event that more than one is successful.

**Q: We have an idea which spans a number of challenges. How should we proceed?**

A: Each challenge will be assessed independently so it is better to submit multiple bids which focus on the specific requirements of each challenge. Where multiple bids are submitted please make sure all submissions are able to stand on their own merits.

**Q: Are bids requesting less funding, or a shorter duration, than the maximum limits acceptable?**

A: Yes. We are open to bids requesting funds and durations up to the values listed in the competition document. Value for money is a consideration in the assessment and selection processes.

**Q: Who forms the judging panel?**

A: Proposals are assessed against the DASA assessment criteria (Desirability, Feasibility and Viability) by subject matter experts and then independently moderated. Proposals are then discussed internally at a Decision Conference attended by Dstl representatives. Based on the assessments, budget and wider strategic considerations, a decision will be made on the proposals that are recommended for funding.

[DASA assessment criteria.](#)

**Q: Who owns hardware/software procured under the funding?**

A: Any non-consumable hardware or software licensed purchased with MOD funds would become MOD property as soon as it is purchased, and loaned to the contractor for the purposes of conducting the contract. The contract focuses on the purchase of any high value items (greater than £10K), which will need to be registered as Government Furnished Equipment.

**Q: Will equipment purchased for this IFA over £10k be taken back?**

A: The MOD would not necessarily take back equipment purchased for this IFA unless there is a compelling need to do so (eg the equipment is needed to support another

## OFFICIAL

project). However the equipment will be registered as a Government Asset and described as such in any future proposal where it is being used.

### **Q: Who owns and who can access/use under licence the Intellectual Property (IP) generated?**

A: The IP condition for this competition is DEFCON 705, meaning the supplier owns it. MOD has user rights, they can share, in confidence, with other government departments, with third parties for the purpose of UK Defence or Security agreements (as are defined in the IP condition) and can share with other governments, under established memoranda of understanding. All details are in the competition terms and conditions.

### **Q: What exactly can the DASA Innovation Partners say/do?**

A: Your DASA Innovation Partner can give guidance on scope and requirements and find out answers to your questions. They cannot review and comment on drafts. The service is open to everyone.

### **Q: Can we collaborate with other companies/entities?**

A: Yes, we accept proposals from multiple collaborators. There must be a lead supplier who submits the proposal and the other suppliers will need to be included as subcontractors. We contract with one legal entity, the lead supplier.

Please describe the work packages the subcontractors will be doing and what value they will be adding to the proposal. It would also be helpful to highlight any risks associated with contracting out the work.

### **Q: Do you require a letter of support from stakeholders/users?**

A: A letter of support is not required for this comp. Letters of support are useful for our open all competition when a proposal is addressing a user need that we are unaware of. However, in this instance the anticipated need is clear and articulated by the end customer.

### **Q: What should I do if my idea doesn't fit in to your call but could have benefits to defence and security?**

A: If an idea does not meet our requirements we would encourage you to submit to the DASA open call (non-IFA submission). Please contact an Innovation Partner for guidance on the best route.

## **Security Questions:**

### **Q: What is the highest level of security classification we can include in our proposal? Is there a risk innovative ideas may be ignored or missed if the details needed to articulate the benefits do not exceed OFFICIAL?**

A: All DASA competitions are run at OFFICIAL classification, therefore we can only accept submissions that do not contain classified information. It is recognised that requesting OFFICIAL bids makes it challenging to communicate certain details, however if your proposal is successful there is scope for the contract to be placed at a higher

## OFFICIAL

classification if necessary and achievable. This will be dealt with on a contract-by-contract basis.

If you are not able to describe your proposal at OFFICIAL please consider other [ways to sell to or work with Dstl](#).

Further support may also be available by contacting DASA via [accelerator@dstl.gov.uk](mailto:accelerator@dstl.gov.uk).

### **Q: Do people involved in this activity need to be security cleared, and do supplier organisations need to be X-Listed?**

A: It is not necessary for suppliers to be security cleared to enter the competition. If successful competitors are not already security cleared they will need to complete a Researcher's Personal Particulars form (FORM 388). Note that completing form 388 does not in itself grant you Security Check (SC) clearance. Any non-UK Nationals involved in the research will also need to be vetted via the Vetting Agency (this is covered on the DASA website and in our clarification emails issued to the funded suppliers).

Where contracts are deemed to need to be upgraded from OFFICIAL to a higher classification, these are dealt with on a contract-by-contract basis.

### **Q: Do you have any concerns with technologies which may involve US Government International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) restrictions (or other export controls)?**

A: We would like any export restrictions for this proposal or future exploitation to be highlighted in the bid to ensure that this is understood by the assessors. The impact of these restrictions would need to be considered on a case by case basis, although one of the key aspects we are keen to address is maintaining our freedom of use for the technology we are funding.

## **Scope Questions:**

### **Q: Are use cases available for the technology you seek?**

A: We will not be providing any further use cases beyond those we have already provided in the competition document. However, we are interested in a variety of techniques for use with a multitude user roles and requirements.

### **Q: How is 'novel' defined for this competition?**

A: Funded projects are expected to achieve at least TRL 5/6 by the end of the contract.

Systems currently at or above TRL 6 in a civilian environment may be eligible for funding where the technology requires development to operate in a Defence and Security environment (potentially lowering the TRL).

**Q: Are you interesting in proposals that explore ways of identifying where IEDs are? It could have a connection to being able to neutralise the device or ancillary equipment.**

## OFFICIAL

A: Yes, we are interested in non-conventional RF effects and the detection, identification and location of IEDs through the use of the RF spectrum.

**Q: What is the frequency range over which the system should be capable of detection?**

We are currently interested in a range of technologies operating over a wide range frequencies typically from the tens of MHz to the lower end of tens of GHz. Primarily, techniques that can be employed wherever in the spectrum potential threats may appear.

**Q: What are the typical bandwidth and signal strength of the signal sources which will need to be detected?**

We will not be releasing any specific spectrum information. We are interested in novel approaches (narrowband and broadband). Please send in your technical proposals and Dstl's subject matter experts will then decide whether your proposal is desirable, feasible and viable based upon this information.

**Q: Is there an expectation or need for platform size considerations/transportability?**

A: We are interested in a range of weight & size requirements for a variety of platforms, typically for Mounted systems (vehicle based systems), Dismounted systems (equipment carried by service personnel) and small wearable technology, carried by individual soldiers.

**Q: Are there any specific requirements for things like temperature ranges, reliability, weather-proofing etc.?**

A: No, we are not at the stage of setting these specifications. However, it would be useful if you can articulate the specification or the proposed future specification of your system in your proposal.

**Q: Are initiatives to de-risk the software environment – including elements of the Land CEMA (Cyber Electromagnetic Activities) Architecture (LCA) – within the scope of this call?**

A: Development and de-risking of the LCA or its constituent elements is out of this competition's scope. Proposals are assessed in part for their exploitation potential, which is of increased relevance for proposals relating to techniques and technologies at higher TRLs. LCA-compliance is not a prerequisite for proposals.