# Navigating the DOD Proposal Process Part 2

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# Navigating DOD Proposals

Part 1

  DoD Mission, Leadership, and Organization

  DOD Opportunity Information

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  Submission Systems for DOD Proposals

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Part 2

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  Take-a-Way

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# Navigating DOD Proposals

▶ Department of Defense (DoD) encompasses a myriad of agencies/offices that do funding announcements and accept proposals in many different formats and through different portals.

 ▶ Two largest sources of funding information for DOD are Grants.gov and Sam.gov (discussed in Part 1 of the series).

▶ This session is intended to be an overview of common components with mention of some unique items you may come across.

# Navigating DOD Proposals

▶ When doing a proposal, you MUST pay close attention to the sponsor solicitation.

▶ It may be important to know if you are doing a proposal that will be funded as a grant/assistance agreement or a contract.

  ▶ It may affect where you do the submission or the contents of the proposal.

  ▶ University preference is a grant or assistance agreement (cooperative agreement)

  ▶ Even for a contract, there may be special instructions or options for educational and/or non-profit organizations.

# Navigating DOD Proposals

- In our last session we talked about how guidance normally flows down from Federal rules to general agency guidance to state and local.

- It is not uncommon that many DOD organizations won't have general guidance for their area (they fall under a variety of federal acquisition rules, Office of Management and Budget, Code of Federal Regulation, etc.) – but they don't normally have a general guidance like NSF, NASA or NIH.

- Normally the specific solicitation is all inclusive for the proposal submission, unless there is portal/system guidance available.

- The sponsor may offer webinars or FAQs – sometimes questions have time limitations especially if you are participating in a contract or bid type of submission.

# Navigating DOD Proposals

**Limited Submissions**

▶ Limited Submissions (LS) are common.

▶ If you come across a solicitation that mentions a limited number of proposals are allowed from the organization and you have not seen a posting or competition notice on the OU LS website, then you need to contact ors_limitedsubs@ou.edu

▶ Last proposal submitted is commonly accepted but submitting an uncoordinated proposal can also mean elimination of all submissions if the allowed number is exceeded.

▶ It is also not unusual that some type of documentation from an Authorized Official may be needed.

**Common Entries/Requirements**

**for**

**Proposals**

# Navigating DOD Proposals

Very common to have 2 step process, some have 3

Step 1 -- Common first/initial steps are:
        LOI, White paper, Concept Paper, Random Order of Magnitude (ROM), Preliminary, step 1

Step 2 – Full

At OU, info sheet required at initial submission of anything in writing to sponsor.

Initial step may be just a step in the process or may be a decision point(invite/not invite; encourage/discourage)

# Navigating DOD Proposals

Do not assume that just because an item is called preliminary or notice/statement of interest, etc. that it will be easy and uncomplicated.  Depending on the sponsor or the solicitation they may be as complicated as some full proposals.

# Navigating DOD Proposals

**Statement of Interest**

1-2 pages; may be a form with some blocks to fill in

Eligibility Statement

Organization and possible subcontracts involved

PI and CoPI name(s)

Brief statement of Qualifications (areas of expertise; past experience; relevant past projects; could be short bio sketches)

Brief Statement of capabilities to successfully complete the project

# Navigating DOD Proposals

**White Paper**

- 2-10 pages (page limitation may be for whole white paper but more common if the requirements are extensive the page limitation will be on certain parts like the cover page and the technical portion).
- No classified information (Proprietary may be marked but know that Government Contractors, Organization Personnel, and Consortium members

May have access for administrative and evaluation reasons.

- Cover page (Title, Special info [topic, technical area, key words], Applicant organization, Primary technical point of contact [name, address, phone, email], CoPIs names and institutions, Primary Business POC [name, address, phone, email], Total Solution Rough Order of Magnitude price)
- Abstract, if requested, may range from character or word counts to half page or page.
- Technical Information (Background, Need, Benefits of Solution, Technical Approach, Objectives, Schedule for Deliverables or Milestones)

# Navigating DOD Proposals

**White Paper cont.**

▶ Pricing – may be very detailed (salaries or labor rates, fringe benefits, travel [destination, duration, purpose, cost details), materials, equipment, subcontracts (including pricing details), other direct costs (itemized list including tuition, fees, publications; may include quotes, indirect costs including calculations)

▶ Data Rights Assertations

▶ Key Personnel (may include description of contributions and significance, bio sketch (ranging from few sentences to 1-2 pages), Current and Pending info

▶ Bibliography

▶ Security Requirements

▶ Facilities

▶ Affirmation of Business Status Certification (name, NAICS Code, Cage Code, SAM expiration date, address, Business POC [name, title, phone, email]

# Navigating DOD Proposals

## Full Proposals

SF 424 Forms

Abstract

Narrative (Technical)

Bibliography

Facilities

Bio sketches/CVs

Budget and Justification (Cost Proposal)

Conflict of Interest

Other Attachments

Slide

Cover Page

Table of Contents

Equipment

Current and Pending

Data Management Plan

Letters

# SF 424 Family of Forms

▶ May be used or may not

▶ If used, 424 form is most common

▶ Research and Related Other Project form may be used or may be partially used (abstract and narrative common)

▶ ORS will normallydo these forms for you.

# Navigating DOD Proposals

# Navigating DOD Proposals

**Abstract**

- Usually one page or a character/word count limitation (count may include spaces).

- Publicly releasable (and may require that statement).

- May have required entries (key words, PI and/or team names, special sections, etc.)

- May have a special form (could be interactive).

- Normally will not include graphics.

**Slide/PPT**

- May be a quad chart

- If required solicitation usually gives example or framework

- May be part of the full submission or a preliminary submission.

- May be requested via email.

# Navigating DOD Proposals

## Quad Chart Content and Format

*Document Marking*

**BAA Number:** *BAA Announcement Number*
**Proposal Title:** *Short title to describe proposed effort/solution*

Submitter Company Name
Date

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### Title or label as appropriate

Graphic image, photograph, or artist's concept of the proposed solution or prototype.

Use labels or descriptive text as needed for clarification.

Ideally, this will convey the prototype concept, use, capability, and any relevant size or weight relationships.

### Operational and Performance Capabilities
Describe any basic, new, or enhanced operational or performance capabilities the system will provide to meet the requirements.

In bullet form, list key aspects of:
* Performance
* Capability
* Operational use
* Relevant software or hardware specifications
* Interface and/or compatibility

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### Technical Approach:

Specifically, describe the technology involved, how it will be used to solve the problem, actions done to date, and any related on-going efforts.

Briefly describe the tasks to be performed for each phase if applicable. Bullet list acceptable.

**Document Marking**

### ROM an Schedule: List by phase or task; include costs and period of performance POP for each.
Total cost and POP
Proposed exit criteria for each phase.

### Deliverable:
List, by phase, all prototype hardware and software along with the required data; include cost data for the minimum report requirements and additional data deliverables. Additional reporting that is required in performance of the effort could include test plans, test and technical reports, technical data, specifications, requirements documents, computer programs or software, use manuals, drawings, or other data appropriate for the work to be performed.

### Corporate Information:
Provide the submitter's company name, point of contact, address, phone number, and email information. Include significant teaming partners (company or agency name and location) if needed to successfully complete program.

*This data is informational only, refer to the published BAA package for the latest guidance on submission preparation*

*September 2007*

# Navigating DOD Proposals

## Narrative or Technical Proposal

▶ Usually has a page limit – watch what is and isn't included in count.

▶ Format instructions: commonly font size of 11, margins one inch, tables and charts can be smaller font as long as they are readable – page limit. Single space is most common.

▶ May be a separate file.

▶ May be a file with narrative and then appendices of other component such as CVs and Current and Pending.

▶ May have a file size limit.

▶ Normally there are required entries or sections – follow the flow of what the sponsor wants to see and <u>use section headings</u>

  ▶ There can be unusual requests – "describe your record of integrity and business ethics"

  ▶ Milestones or Project Schedules are common

# Navigating DOD Proposals

**Cover page**

▶  If requested, specific requirements are normally given.

▶  Usually, one page.

▶  May have specific label for the page (like Technical Proposal)

▶  Title of Proposal

▶  Identity of Prime Offeror and complete list of sub awards (if applicable)

▶  Technical contact (name address, phone/fax, email

▶  Administrative/business contact (name, address, phone/fax, email

▶  Period of Performance (base years, options, fiscal, calendar, etc.)

▶  Budget estimate

▶  May need PI and/or Authorized Organization Representative signature

▶  How long cost proposal is good

▶  May have special codes that need to be listed such as research topic, area, or number.

# Navigating DOD Proposals

**Table of Contents**

- May or may not be allowed

- If allowed, sponsor may provide a preferred template.

- Do not assume it won't count in page limits.

**References/Bibliography**

- Usually, no page limit.

- Usually, will say not part of Technical page limit.

- Occasionally will say don't be excessive.

# Navigating DOD Proposals

**Equipment/Facilities**

► Usually in reference to what you have on hand to do the projected work.

► There are some solicitations specifically for equipment purchase but it is not uncommon that equipment purchase is limited (they expect you to be able to do the work).

► Don't forget what may be available locally.

► Usually, no page limit but don't include things that aren't applicable to the proposal.

► Usually two separate files.

► Is there anything that makes you stand out in this area in regards to being able to do the proposed work -- be sure to mention it.

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# Navigating DOD Proposals

**Data Management Plan**

▶ Normally 2 pages but can be more or no limit prescribed.

▶ Watch guidance on what they want to see – can be very specific and detailed

▶ Security of data may need to be covered

▶ Access of data and how it will be shared (may be open or controlled)

▶ Data Management is a high audit interest item.

## Bio Sketch/CV

▶ Watch directions on content and length – may vary greatly and may be required in preliminary submissions and full submissions.

▶ Usually, they will say specific entries they want or will just give a page limit (one or two pages is most common).

▶ Sometimes they will say NSF type of format but so far more common is to specify the entries they want or to be silent or just give desired length.

▶ So far they have not had the push for sciENcv and ORCID that NSF, NIH, and DOE have -- but they will comply with the persistent identifier requirements in the Presidential Memorandum so ORCID is coming. ONR is likely to be among first to encourage SciEN because of their involvement in Federal Demonstration Partnership.

# Current and Pending

▶ Watch directions on content and length – may vary greatly.

▶ Sometimes they will say NSF type of format but so far more common is to specify the entries they want or to be silent or just give desired length.

▶ Big push for disclosure

▶ So far, they have not had the push for sciENcv and ORCID that NSF, NIH, and DOE have -- but they will comply with the persistent identifier requirements in the Presidential Memorandum so ORCID is coming. ONR is likely to be among first to encourage SciENcv because of their involvement in Federal Demonstration Partnership.

# Navigating DOD Proposals

**Letters of Support**

► For many solicitations, not common or very limited; usually not endorsement

► Fellowships or Career may have recommendation letters (follow instructions for how to submit)

► Cost share documentation

**Conflict of Interest**

► Usually a section in the proposal (if covered at all) and not a form.

► If you have a conflict and nothing seems to ask about it, try to go ahead and declare it somewhere and take care of an internal management plan.
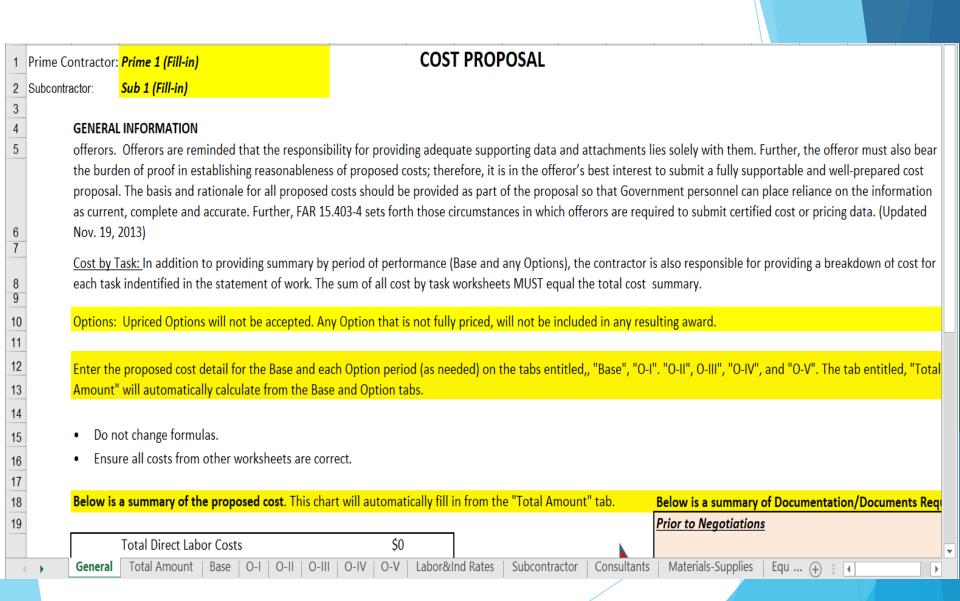
**Other Attachments**

► There may be places to put them but DON'T unless you know it is OK.

► Most common use is for responses to questions from R&R Other Project form questions.

# Navigating DOD Proposals

**Budget Categories**

► Personnel

> ► labor rates; loaded rates; OU doesn't use labor rates

► Fringe Benefits (may want breakdown, may include with labor)

► Equipment

► Travel (Fly American; prior permission, details)

► Participant Support (limited)

► Materials and Supplies

► Publication/Dissemination

► Tuition

► Other – fees, vendors

► Subcontracts

► Consultants

► Indirect Costs

► Cost Share

# Navigating DOD Proposals

**Budget**

▶  Regardless of what the sponsor wants or doesn't want the OU template is required for all proposals.

▶  May be wanted in more than one format (fiscal year, base and options, timeline/milestone)

▶  Basis of Cost or Basis of Estimate (BOC BOE) usually required.

▶  PI prior experience (if allowed), catalog, online searches (keep copies, may need to be submitted)

▶  Some budget templates are very complicated; ORS help may be limited due to what is requested

# Navigating DOD Proposals



ONR Budget Form

# Navigating DOD Proposals

## Unusual items

► Institutional capacity//PI capacity statements (experience and capability of managing grants/contracts)

► Prior contracts or awards information of PI and/or organization (may include PO or GMO contact info, amount)

► Audit info (not just a link—copies and different types of audits)

► Special business forms, registrations in financial systems, wire transfer information.

► Fiscal operation certifications and/or statements

► Assertions of Data Rights (involve OU Office of Technology and Commercialization)

► Statement on personnel and organizational conflict of interest; statement that we have a COI policy and procedures

► Research and Related Personal Data (demographic information, if in your application will be voluntary to fill out; is accessible by the reviewer but is not to be used for review considerations – used for statistical purposes)

## Special Submissions

- ▶ CDMRP
- ▶ Career
- ▶ Internships
- ▶ STEM education
- ▶ Limited types (DEPSCORE, SBIR/STTR)
- ▶ OTA
- ▶ Classified

# Navigating DOD Proposals

▶ **[https://cdmrp.army.mil/](https://cdmrp.army.mil/)**

▶ The **Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP)** submission proposal contents are patterned after NIH so many of the forms and terminology is the same.

▶ Right now, there are about 20 solicitations posted but they routinely post new ones in different health areas. If you look at closed postings it can give you an idea what might be coming around again if not exactly at least in an area of interest.

▶ We have been told at conferences that the funding level for CDMRP proposals is actually higher than NIH as there is less volume of proposals for the available forms.

# Navigating DOD Proposals

**CAREER**

▶ DOD has a great interest in developing skilled faculty to do research and to develop the future scientist that will support the DOD mission in future years.

▶ For faculty and researchers, opportunities exist in Army, Navy, Air Force, and DARPA (possibly others) –offered as Early Career programs (frequently called Young Investigator Programs [YIP]). Some are cyclic (one or two times a year) and some are open year- round.

▶ OU Center for Faculty Excellence(CFE) may be able to assist.

▶ News: Best and Brightest: ONR's 2022 Young Investigators - Office of Naval Research (navy.mil)

**INTERNSHIPS**

▶ To develop researchers and faculty a variety of internships are offered including some that are during the summer specifically focused on being available for 9-month faculty to participate in.

▶ Internships are available year-round and different ones are open to undergraduates, graduates, master's students, post-docs, faculty, and research scientists.

▶ National Security Education Program

▶ U.S. Department of Defense Internship & Fellowship Programs (orau.gov)

# Navigating DOD Proposals

- DOD provides significant funding in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education areas https://dodstem.us/about/ and https://www.defense.gov/news/ (funding for school/kid/student program operation, program/curriculum development, internships with various labs/departments; scholarships [undergraduate, graduate, masters).

- **Defense Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (DEPSCoR)** aims to increase the number of university researchers and improve the capabilities of institutions of higher education in eligible jurisdictions to perform competitive basic research in science & engineering relevant to the DoD mission and reflect national security priorities. This program is limited to certain states to improve research in various areas of the country. Oklahoma is an EPSCOR/DEPSCORE state.

- DEPSCoR Funding Opportunities: Capacity Building & Research Collaborations | OK EPSCoR

# Navigating DOD Proposals

▶ DOD does both **Small Business Innovative Research awards (SBIRs)** and STTR proposals under main DOD areas of operation and all the military branches and some other offices

▶ Defense SBIR/STTR Innovation Portal – (DISP)

  ▶ BAA schedule, FAQs, countdown, help contact

  ▶ https://www.dodsbirsttr.mil

▶ Area of concern with SBIR/STTR is conflict of interest between OU PI and company. If you have any ties (whether financial, organizational, or relational) you need to declare them and establish a management plan. Company should have their own COI policy and should exist in its own right.

# Navigating DOD Proposals

**OTA**

► May be listed in guidelines as an option.

► Most come through consortiums or coordination organizations (you must be a member to access the opportunity and submit a proposal)

► Often white paper or concept paper required for evaluation to proceed to full proposal (usually a decision step).

► As part of consortium membership or working with the sponsor to submit the white paper and/or full proposal there may be some preliminary discussions to help resolve questions/issues so that if selected for award agreements and funding can move quickly.

► It is not uncommon for the timeframe between award notification and expected acceptance to be less than 5-10 days (3 was mentioned by several in a recent class we attended).

# Navigating DOD Proposals

**Classified Proposals**

- ▶ Require special handling such as encrypted files and special submission portals/methods.

- ▶ DD254 – Security Classification Specification form needed

- ▶ Defense Security Service Facility Clearance

- ▶ Involve OU Office of Export Control early in process

- ▶ Many things need to be considered – security clearances for personnel doing the work, secure lab or other facilities, special computers or data storage, controlled access, etc.

# Navigating DOD Proposals

- **Submission Systems for DOD Proposals**

    - Grants.gov

    - Sams.gov

    - Fedconnect (limited; possibly phasing out)

    - Agency/Office specific portal

    -  Email or fax


    Per instruction by solicitation or program officer (also called Portfolio Manager)

# Navigating DOD Proposals

Many times, the solicitations will make references to setting up accounts in SAM.gov, Grants.gov, etc. and other accounts. These should be ignored unless you talk with your PDS, and they tell you otherwise.

OU cannot do any accounts for your CoPI/team members at other organizations.

# Intro to DOD Proposals

▶ Periodically check for amendments/modifications of solicitations; if able to sign up for update notices you should do so.

▶ Deadlines vary by agency/office involved.  It is not uncommon for deadline to be Eastern time.  Due date deadline is usually 11:59pm Eastern (late proposal accepted at discretion of PO but usually rejected w/o review).  ORS closes at 5:00pm local and is also closed whenever the University is closed.

▶ Cost share may not be required and specifically may be excluded from review consideration; however, if offered it may be claimed (especially if it is in the budget area).

# Intro to DOD Proposals

**ODDs and ENDs of interest continued:**

**Foreign Entities:**

▶ Depending on the DOD organization involved it is likely that there will be restrictions on foreign involvement or at the least that any involvement must be clearly disclosed.

▶ This includes subawards and travel to conduct research or present at conferences.

# Take-a-Way

▶ Budget's may take time, especially if complex requirements are needed and/or multiple formats.

▶ Allow extra time to pull all the submission items together.

▶ Read the guidelines and watch for updates/modifications.

▶ We recommend seeing if there is a checklist (make sure it is correct) to help with the submission contents. If the solicitation doesn't have one many times the PDS can share one with you (but it does not replace reading the guidelines).

# Contact Information

▶ **Fran Stephens, Director, Office of Research Services**

   **fran@ou.edu**


▶ **Cindy Clark, Assistant Director of Research Information Services**

   **ris@ou.edu**

# Navigating DOD Proposals

# Questions??