

**Utilizing Public-Private Partnerships to Advance Tipping Point
Technologies Appendix
80HQTR18NOA01-18STMD_001
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

As of: May 29, 2018

- 1. Q:** Must I submit a preliminary proposal to be able to submit a full proposal?
A: Yes. As stated in section 4.0, “In order to submit a Full Proposal an offeror must submit an MPP (Mandatory Preliminary Proposal) and be invited to submit a Full Proposal.”
[Added December 5, 2017]
- 2. Q:** Can I submit a proposal to a technology topic other than those described “as of particular interest”?
A: Yes. As stated in section 1.3, “For this Appendix, offerors have the option to address the broader STMD Strategic Thrust (ST) areas outlined below. These ST areas do include descriptions of some technologies of particular interest to NASA. However, offerors are not limited to the technologies of particular interest and may address technologies that align with broader aspects of the ST areas.” However, proposals must only address one ST, as stated in section 3.0 which reads: “A proposal can only be submitted to one Strategic Thrust area. An offeror can only be a lead on one proposal per Strategic Thrust area. An offeror can act as a team member on multiple proposals.”
[Added December 5, 2017]
- 3. Q:** I noticed February 28, 2018, appears in two places in Section 4.0, Step 2 Full Proposal, sub-paragraph 5 Price, second and third sub-bullets. This date seems to be incorrect.
A: You are correct, the date should be February 28, 2019. An amendment has been processed to correct.
[Added December 5, 2017]
- 4. Q:** Has In-Space Resource Utilization (ISRU) been removed from this Appendix?
A: Yes, Amendment 2 has been processed to remove the reference to “in-space resource utilization” in Section 1.3, ST1 description.
[Added December 8, 2017]

5. **Q:** We have ideas for potential bids for the tipping point and would like to discuss them with a NASA POC before making a decision to write a proposal. Is there someone that I can meet with to discuss our ideas?

A: In order to ensure that all offerors are treated fairly, all STMD personnel are in a communications blackout regarding this Appendix and are not permitted to engage in technical discussions. The communications blackout is designed so that no offeror gains a competitive advantage. Therefore, we cannot advise offerors regarding NASA's interest in a particular technology for submission of proposals in response to this Appendix. The decision of whether or not to submit a proposal is solely that of the offeror. We encourage you to review the Appendix carefully to determine if your technology effort meets the intent and requirements.

[Added December 11, 2017]

6. **Q:** Is it correct that the Relevance Criteria with the Alignment, Commercial Impact, and NASA/OGA impact sub-criteria apply only to the MPP and not to the Full proposal?

A: Yes, that is correct.

[Added December 13, 2017]

7. **Q:** NASA solicitations often set a minimum type size of 12, but some have allowed type as small as 10 point. Is there a minimum type size for the Tipping Point proposal?

A: Although the Appendix does not specifically state the font size requirements, it does refer to REDDI Section 4.1, which states: "All information needed to respond to Appendices issued in accordance with this solicitation is contained in this solicitation, the relevant Appendices and in the *Guidebook for Proposers*, located at <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/nraguidebook/>. Proposers are responsible for understanding and complying with the procedures in this Guidebook before preparing and submitting proposals."

Therefore, proposers should refer to Section 3.6 of the Guidebook, which states: "- Proposal must be single-spaced, typewritten, in English-language text, formatted using one column, and use an easily read 12 point font. The font size for symbols in equations must consistent with this guideline. Proposers may not adjust or otherwise condense a font or line from its default appearance." Refer to Guidebook Section 3.6 for additional guidance.

[Added December 20, 2017]

8. **Q:** The solicitation outlines only 3 main thrust areas. However, we are aware through STMD that there are more thrust areas. Our technology fits into Thrust Area 1 in a general context; however, it fits better into a thrust area that has been left out of the current tipping point solicitation. Could you comment on whether our technology

would be appropriate for Thrust Area 1 to submit a proposal or would there be another tipping point solicitation specific to other thrust areas that is more relevant?

A: The Government is unable to provide guidance as to which Thrust Area an offeror should submit its proposal. Currently there are not additional tipping point solicitations.

[Added December 21, 2017]

9. Q: If we are a U.S. for-profit entity, but 100% foreign owned, are we eligible to submit a proposal?

A: Section 3.0 states: "Proposals submitted under this Appendix must be led by a United States (U.S.) for-profit entity. A "U.S. for-profit entity" is a **commercial firm or business incorporated and operates** in the United States of America. However, this does not preclude U.S. for-profit companies that are incorporated and operate in the U.S. and also have an affiliation with a foreign entity." This paragraph goes on to state: "The System for Award Management (sam.gov) will be reviewed to determine an offeror's country of incorporation."

Therefore, these requirements must be met in order to be eligible to propose.

[Added December 21, 2017]

10. Q: The proposed award date of February 2019 is roughly midway through our planned schedule for our project. For the Attachment 1, should we provide both the ROM cost of the full project as well as the smaller ROM cost of the project from February 2019 onward? Or just from February 2019 onward?

A: The ROM provided on the MPP Attachment 1 should reflect what you intend to propose for the Full Proposal. As shown in Attachment 3: Full Proposal Price Instructions and Forms, it is intended to be for the cost for the award period.

[Added December 22, 2017]

11. Q: For the Mandatory Preliminary Proposal (MPP), can we provide a Table of Contents that is limited to no more than one full page and that does not count towards the overall page limit, as is utilized for the Full Proposal?

A: Yes. An amendment will be processed to permit, **but not require**, a Table of Contents limited to one page that does not count towards the overall page limit.

[Added January 9, 2018]

12. Q: Can the Mandatory Preliminary Proposal (MPP) page limits be changed to allow up to 2 pages in the MPP to introduce the technology and provide a brief statement of work?

A: No amendment to the current language. As the Tipping Point solicitation states in Section 4.0 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION, page 12, an Introduction/Executive Summary is specifically addressed, but does count toward the overall page count for

Relevance. **“Step 1: The Mandatory Preliminary Proposal (MPP) shall include the following, in the order listed...NOTE: If an Introductory or Executive Summary page is provided in the MPP it will count against the Relevance page count.”**

We leave the offeror with full flexibility as to how best to divide the pages used to describe the sub-criteria under Relevance, including the option for an Introduction/Executive Summary or a brief summary of the work intended. However, all must be incorporated within the required page limits.

[Added January 9, 2018]

13.Q: For the Mandatory Preliminary Proposal (MPP), I would like to suggest that you state the page requirement as "eight pages total" between "Relevance" and "Price and Industry Contribution" and provide the writer the flexibility to utilize the page count appropriately.

A: No amendment to the current language. As the Tipping Point solicitation states in Section 4.0 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION, for the Mandatory Preliminary Proposal (MPP), the offeror is provided up to a maximum of 6 full pages for the Relevance description and up to a maximum of 2 full pages for the Price and Industry Contribution description.

[Added January 9, 2018]

14.Q: Can a foreign company be a prime offeror (that has a division incorporated in the US) and/or provide the 25% cost contribution?

A: See response to question 9 for Eligibility information. Additionally, the Tipping Point solicitation states that: “In order to count towards the 25% Industry Contribution requirement, contributions must come from U.S. for-profit, non-profit and other non-government entities that are incorporated and operate in the U.S. However, this does not preclude U.S. for-profit, non-profit, and other non-government entities that are incorporated and operate in the U.S. and also have an affiliation with a foreign firm.” It is up to the company to determine if eligibility requirements are met and if the intended industry contribution requirements have been met. The Government cannot advise on how to structure a submission to this Appendix.

[Added January 9, 2018]

15.Q: Is it possible to work with the STMD Flight Opportunities Program to leverage a possible flight on a proposal submission?

A: Due to current Tipping Point firewalls, all STMD programs and program personnel are prohibited from exchanging information with a potential offeror who plans to respond to this solicitation.

[Added January 11, 2018]

16. Q: I had a question regarding the language around “participants” for proposals as it relates to the submittal process. Specifically, I am referencing the following language found in Section 4.6 (Statements/Letters of Commitment and Letters of Resource Support): “Every Co-PI, Co-I, and Collaborator identified as a participant on the **proposal’s cover page and/or in the proposal’s Scientific/Technical/Management plan** must acknowledge their intended participation in the proposed effort. This acknowledgement of commitment is done through NSPIRES.” Does this requirement apply to both the Mandatory Preliminary Proposal (MPP) and the Full Proposal (if invited). The motivation for this question comes from the fact that the MPP does not ask for a Scientific/Technical/Management plan, and also a cover page is not required. As such, will we need to have all participants (including those that might provide resource support) acknowledge their intended participation for the MPP, or just for the full proposal (if invited)?

A: To clarify, the information referenced above is only required for the Full Proposal submittal. For the MPP, only the PI must acknowledge participation.

[Added January 17, 2018]

17. Q: Do all technologies have to be > TRL 4 for a proposal to be compliant? Or is TRL 4 a max? That is, the least developed technology in the proposal cannot be higher than TRL 4?

A: The minimum system TRL at time of MPP submission must be at least TRL 4. As stated in Section 2.1, the overall TRL of the system is determined by the TRL of the lowest TRL subsystem/component. No, TRL 4 is not a max.

[Added January 17, 2018]

18. Q: On page 17 of the Appendix 80HQTR18NOA01-18STMD_001 the document states:

Contributions coming from U.S. state, local, and federal government organizations WILL NOT count towards the 25% requirement (U.S. state, local, and federal government contributions may count for contributions in excess of the 25%). Contributions may include any aspect of the total project costs such as contributions of equipment, property, facilities or services.

but later states:

Contributions include, but are not limited to: (1) donated equipment/property/facilities by an external source, (2) third party funded non-cash contributions, (3) funding from a third party other than a government entity, (4) Internal Research and Development (IRAD) funding. When the contribution is in the form of personal services, the contributor must certify that the amount contributed is comparable to the individual's regular rate of compensation. When contributions are for other than personal services, the provider must state the fair market value of the item.

We are having some trouble distinguishing what is meant by local government organizations vs third party funded non-cash contributions. Does this mean that no contribution from a local government entity or development corporation will count, or is that only for the first 25% contribution?

A: As stated in the Appendix, contributions coming from U.S. state, local, and federal government organizations WILL NOT count towards the 25% requirement. ISS contributions will not count toward the 25% requirement. However, they may count for contributions in excess of the 25%.

[Added January 17, 2018]

19.Q: The description of the Strategic Thrust area ST2 states:

Efforts resulting in ground or flight tests of prototype stages/subsystems with a direct linkage to a small launch vehicle architecture are of interest.

We want to be clear that a ground test of a subsystem is of interest?

A: Yes, efforts resulting in ground or flight tests of a subsystem with a direct linkage to a small launch vehicle architecture are of interest.

[Added January 17, 2018]

20.Q: The funding is for up to \$2Million of STMD funding, that there is no bar to a proposal at \$1Million of STMD funding?

A: There are two STMD Funding levels as shown in Section 2.1. One from \$0 to \$2M and over \$2M up to \$10M.

[Added January 17, 2018]

21.Q: In section 3.0, it clearly specifies that an offeror can only be a lead on one proposal per Strategic Thrust area. Can you clarify if this one per STA per company applies to the Mandatory Preliminary Proposal (MPP, step 1) not just the Full Proposal (step 2)?

A: An offeror can only be a lead on one proposal per ST area. This applies to both the MPP and the Full Proposal.

[Added January 17, 2018]

22.Q: Does the program have guidance on how relation to previous work will be reflected in the evaluation criteria? Is it a positive or a negative to be connected to other development efforts such as SBIRs, Tipping Point Awards, or Game Changing Developments?

A: As stated in the definition of “tipping point” within Section 1.2, evidence of previous investments to mature the technology will be evaluated.

[Added January 17, 2018]

23.Q: As the lead proposer for a given proposal, what are the requirements other than the organization submitting the proposal? Are there specific limitations on percentage of work to be performed or dollars spent on behalf of the lead proposer?

A: The Appendix does not provide specific limitations on percentage of work to be performed or dollars spent on behalf of the lead proposer. However, the work performed by the lead offeror will be evaluated within the Price (MPP and Full Proposal) and Management Approach (Full Proposal) criteria.

[Added January 17, 2018]

24.Q: It is not clear as to whether we must specify the award category (2 vs 10M\$) in the MPP. Can you clarify whether this is set after the reviews of the MPP or whether we must decide which one we are "applying to"?

A: The offeror does not need to specify the dollar amount category but must specify the MPP Total ROM dollar amount.

[Added January 23, 2018]

25.Q: Are Letters of Commitment, or other commercial funding source proof, required for the MPP submittal or is it sufficient to describe the potential source(s) in the MPP and submit the commitment letter with the full proposal (in May).

A: Letters of Commitment are not required for the MPP. The MPP shall provide a description of the approach for meeting the proposed Industry Contribution (who, what, when, how).

[Added January 26, 2018]

26.Q: We are confused about the industry contribution. In the equation in Section 4.0, Step 2 Full Proposal, Paragraph 5B, can Y be a combination of cash contribution and in-kind contributions? Can you please provide some guidance?

A: Y is the Industry Contribution (must be at least 25% of the total project cost). Y can be cash or in-kind contributions in accordance with Section 4.0, Step 2 Full Proposal, Paragraph 5B.

[Added February 1, 2018]

27.Q: The feedback we received on our Mandatory Preliminary Proposal included comments on both Relevance and Price. Could you clarify if the decision to invite or not invite Full Proposals was based on only the evaluation of Relevance, or the evaluation of both Relevance and Price?

A: Only the Relevance evaluation criterion was used in determining which proposals were invited to submit a Full Proposal. Price was not considered. Since the ROM costs and Industry Contribution were only estimates, the feedback was merely to identify possible issues that may need to be addressed if invited to submit a Full Proposal.

[Added March 26, 2018]

28. Q: Are minor changes in scope or technology specifications allowed between the MPP and the Full Proposal?

A: Changes in the scope or specifications are acceptable only if they are minor. Significant changes in the technology proposed or in the scope of the work proposed would not be acceptable. In Section 4.0, under Step 2 – Full Proposal, the Appendix states: “The Full Proposal must be submitted within the same STMD Strategic Thrust area as the MPP, and involve the same technological approach described in the MPP. An offeror invited to submit a Step 2 Full Proposal that introduces material changes to the technological approach in its MPP may be significantly downgraded and may be found unacceptable for award due to those changes.”

[Added April 16, 2018]

29. Q: Can organizations be added to the Full Proposal that were not explicitly included in the MPP?

A: There are no restrictions on changes to the organizational team except that the lead offeror cannot change.

[Added April 16, 2018]

30. Q: What rights will NASA have in foreground IP generated in the course of this project? Can contractors restrict the rights NASA will have in foreground IP generated in the course of this project? What rights will NASA have in background IP embodied in “in-kind” contributions for this project? Can contractors restrict the rights NASA will have in background/foreground IP embodied in “in-kind” contributions for this project?

A: Please see section 2.5 of the Solicitation (Intellectual Property). A resulting contract will contain either the clause at FAR 52.227-11 (Patent Rights-Ownership by the Contractor) (for small business firms), or the clause at NASA FAR Supplement 1852.227-70 (New Technology) (for large entities). In general, under contracts, small businesses and non-profit entities will have exclusive rights to inventions they develop under the agreement, subject to the Government’s retained license and specified march-in rights, provided the requirements contained in the agreement are followed: recipients must elect title to inventions, must apply for a patent within one year of such election, and then maintain any issued patent. For a large entity, NASA’s waiver process would need to be followed for the large entity to obtain title since such invention rights vest in the Government.

A resulting contract also will contain the clause at FAR 52.227-14 (Rights in Data – General), along with its Alternates II (limited rights data) and III (restricted computer software). Data rights differ based on whether data is first produced under an award or instead was developed at private expense outside the award. Recipients can protect limited rights data or restricted computer software through the use of these Alternates to the standard clause.

[Added May 09, 2018]

31.Q: What is meant by “qualifying limited rights data” in Section 2.5.1 of APPENDIX NUMBER: 80HQTR18NOA01-18STMD_001?

A: FAR 52.227-14(a) defines “limited rights data” as follows: *means data, other than computer software, that embody trade secrets or are commercial or financial and confidential or privileged, to the extent that such data pertain to items, components, or processes developed at private expense, including minor modifications.*

[Added May 09, 2018]

32.Q: Does all of the information requested with regard to direct labor on page 27 of the enclosed proposal instructions, including BOEs, qualifications and experience for labor categories, and copies of the DCAA or DCMA approval letter need to fit within the 10 page limit allocated for the price section of the full proposal?

A: Yes, the offerors must limit the page count of the price section to a maximum of 10 pages. Reviewers will not consider/evaluate any content in excess of the page limits specified and the excess pages may be removed from the proposal prior to forwarding for evaluation.

[Added May 09, 2018]

33.Q: With regards to Attachment 3: Table 4 – NASA Civil Servant/JPL Costs, if the name of the person providing support is not known at this time, would it be adequate to just list the Area of Expertise?

A: Yes, this is acceptable. If the individuals name is not known, TBD can be used with just the Area of Expertise noted.

[Added May 10, 2018]

34.Q: We are partnering with a NASA Center on the proposed work. Their budget needs to include non-civil servant costs, in particular, for a NASA contractor who works with the group but who is not a civil servant. How should these costs be included?

A: Table 4 may be revised to add an additional column entitled “Other NASA Costs” which can be used to capture NASA contractor costs.

[Added May 15, 2018]

35.Q: Can subcontractors and other partners to a prime offeror send their cost proposals containing proprietary data directly to the Government?

A: Yes, cost proposals containing proprietary data may be sent directly to the Government via email (HQ-STMD-TippingPointAppendix@nasaprs.com) and should be clearly marked as to which prime offeror (company and the proposal number) it is associated with. All required data should be received by the same date and time as that required of the prime offeror. Please note that the prime offeror’s proposal must indicate in the Price section that a subcontractor’s/partner’s cost information will be submitted via email as a separate document. Also, the prime offeror must limit the

page count of the price section, including any cost proposals and Letters of Industry Contribution Commitment submitted by a subcontractor/partner, to a maximum of 10 pages. Reviewers will not consider/evaluate any content in excess of the page limits specified and the excess pages may be removed from the proposal prior to forwarding for evaluation.

[Added May 24, 2018]

36.Q: My question concerns the format of the SOW for the Full Proposal. Page 15, Section 4C of the Appendix, which explains the Statement of Work, refers to Attachment 2 for the SOW template. Attachment 2 on page 24 does provide some guidance but it is light in format. However, on page 25 is Exhibit A which looks like instructions for an entire statement of work. This Exhibit A is not referenced anywhere else in the Appendix and it includes format instructions for sections on Introduction and Management Approach, both of which are discussed in other parts of the proposal, Section 3 and Section 4B, respectively back on page 15. How should we use Exhibit A?

A: Exhibit A in Attachment 2 provides a template for the State of Work (SOW). It is recommended to follow the template provided, but it is not mandatory.

[Added May 29, 2018]