FY25-29 STRATEGIC TRENDS RESEARCH INITIATIVE BROAD AGENCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Strategic Trends Office
HDTRA1-24-S-0003

Disclaimer: The FY25-29 Strategic Trends Research Initiative Broad Agency Announcement solicits white papers for potential future international dialogues, analytical studies, and other research projects and directly supports DTRA's mission to deter strategic attack against the United States and its allies; prevent, reduce, and counter weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and emerging threats; and prevail against WMD-armed adversaries in crisis and conflict.

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I. Introduction

This is a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) soliciting strategic research on challenges related to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) 5–10 years in the future in support of the mission of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). The BAA covers Fiscal Year (FY) 2025–2029 with a total funding amount of $35,880,000, subject to availability of funds. This BAA will remain posted on the Government point of entry, https://sam.gov/content/home until superseded.

Within DoD, DTRA provides cross-cutting solutions to enable the DoD, the United States Government (USG), and international partners to deter strategic attack against the United States and its allies; prevent, reduce, and counter WMD and emerging threats; and prevail against WMD-armed adversaries in crisis and conflict. In pursuit of its mission, DTRA serves two distinct yet complementary roles as a Defense Agency (DA) and Combat Support Agency (CSA). As a DA, DTRA supports strategic policies and priorities to reduce global WMD and emerging threats by deterring potential adversarial acquisition and use of WMD materials/components through nuclear assurance, treaty support, and building partner capacity programs. As a CSA, DTRA leverages its unique capabilities and expertise to identify, develop, and field solutions to counter WMD and emerging threats in direct support of Joint Staff and Combatant Commands.

Within DTRA, the Strategic Integration Directorate (SI), Strategic Trends Office (SI-ST) is responsible for anticipating, understanding, and characterizing WMD trends and threats 5–10 years in the future and delivering timely insights and recommendations on how to adapt/respond.

SI-ST's Strategic Trends Research Initiative (STRI) is a curated research portfolio sponsoring analytical studies and Track 1.5 and 2 international dialogues to generate timely, credible, and actionable insights into challenges related to WMD and emerging technology. SI-ST's research explores a range of challenges related to nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, including the development of materials, methodologies, or technologies with potential to create new or increase the impact of existing WMD threats. SI-ST's primary focus area is on WMD challenges 5–10 years into the future and the associated implications for DTRA, DoD, USG, and U.S. allies and partners in areas of deterrence, crisis and conflict prevention, risk reduction, arms control, escalation management, strategic competition, and prevailing during conflict with chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) possessing adversaries.

With its emphasis on examining and anticipating WMD threats and trends in the future, SI-ST's research reinforces DTRA's priorities of ensuring an actionable, forward-thinking countering-WMD (CWMD) mission focus; shaping the understanding of CWMD challenges across the policy, Military Service(s), and Combatant Command communities; and recommending solutions to those challenges.

SI-ST will update its research priorities via BAA amendments on, at minimum, an annual basis. This BAA and all other informational documents are available for prospective performers on SAM.gov.

II. References

Research conducted under funding from the DTRA Strategic Trends Office is considered applied research. It is not considered development.

According to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 35.001 – Definitions:

> *Applied research* means the effort that (a) normally follows basic research, but may not be severable from the related basic research; (b) attempts to determine and exploit the potential of scientific discoveries or improvements in technology, materials, processes, methods, devices, or techniques; and (c) attempts to advance the state of the art. When being used by contractors in cost principle applications, this term does not include efforts whose principal aim is the design, development, or

testing of specific items or services to be considered for sale; these efforts are within the definition of "development," given below.

Development, as used in this part, means the systematic use of scientific and technical knowledge in the design, development, testing, or evaluation of a potential new product or service (or of an improvement in an existing product or service) to meet specific performance requirements or objectives. It includes the functions of design engineering, prototyping, and engineering testing; it excludes subcontracted technical effort that is for the sole purpose of developing an additional source for an existing product (https://www.acquisition.gov/far/part-35#FAR_35_001).

The results of strategic research funded under this BAA are expected to be fundamental without restrictions, in accordance with National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) 189, National Policy on the Transfer of Scientific, Technical, and Engineering Information and in agreement with the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) 252.204-7000 – Disclosure of Information, but may be subject to restrictions at the discretion of the DTRA Director. According to NSDD 189:

Fundamental research means basic and applied research in science and engineering, the results of which ordinarily are published and shared broadly within the scientific community, as distinguished from proprietary research and from Industrial development, design, production, and product utilization, the results of which ordinarily are restricted for proprietary or national security reasons.

This BAA has been prepared in accordance with applicable federal acquisition regulations as referenced below.

Federal Acquisition Regulations System (FARS)

6.102(d)(2) – (i) Use of Competitive Procedures (https://www.acquisition.gov/far/6.102)

9.5 – Organizational and Consultant Conflicts of Interest (https://www.acquisition.gov/far/subpart-9.5)

15.305 – Proposal Evaluation (https://www.acquisition.gov/far/15.305)

25.7 – Prohibited Sources (https://www.acquisition.gov/far/subpart-25.7)

31.205-46 – Travel Costs (https://www.acquisition.gov/far/31.205-46)

35.001 – Definitions (https://www.acquisition.gov/far/part-35#FAR_35_001)

35.016 – Broad agency announcement (https://www.acquisition.gov/far/35.016)

Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS)

204.1603 – Procedures (https://www.acquisition.gov/dfars/204.1603-procedures.)

206.1 – Full and Open Competition (https://www.acquisition.gov/dfars/subpart-206.1-full-and-open-competition)

206.102 – Use of Competitive Procedures (https://www.acquisition.gov/dfars/subpart-206.1-full-and-open-competition)

207.103 – Agency-head responsibilities (https://www.acquisition.gov/dfars/207.103-agency-head-responsibilities.)

217.2 – Options (https://www.acquisition.gov/dfars/subpart-217.2-options)

225 – Foreign Acquisition (https://www.acquisition.gov/dfars/part-225-foreign-acquisition)

234.005-1 – Competitive Selection Of A Proposal Resulting From A BAA (https://www.acquisition.gov/dfars/234.005-1-competition.)

235 – Research and Development Contracting (https://www.acquisition.gov/dfars/part-235-research-and-development-contracting)

235.006-71 – Competition (https://www.acquisition.gov/dfars/235.006-71-competition.)

235.015-70 – Special use allowances for research facilities acquired by educational institutions (https://www.acquisition.gov/dfars/235.015-70-special-use-allowances-research-facilities-acquired-educational-institutions.)

235.017 – Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (https://www.acquisition.gov/dfars/235.017-federally-funded-research-and-development-centers.)

252.204-7000 – Disclosure of Information (https://www.acquisition.gov/dfars/252.204-7000-disclosure-information.)

252.227-7013 – Rights in Technical Data—Other Than Commercial Products and Commercial Services (https://www.acquisition.gov/dfars/252.227-7013-rights-technical-data%E2%80%94other-commercial-products-and-commercial-services.)

Department of Defense Issuances

DoD Instruction 5230.24 – Distribution Statements on Technical Documents (https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/523024p.pdf?ver=JiZUVfNZrPKmcRMim_UnHg%3d%3d)

DoD Instruction 5230.27 – Presentation of DoD-Related Scientific and Technical Papers at Meetings (https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/523027p.pdf?ver=2019-04-04-095230-883)

Other Guidance

National Security Presidential Memorandum – 33 on United States Government-Supported Research and Development National Security Policy (https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/presidential-actions/presidential-memorandum-united-states-government-supported-research-development-national-security-policy/)

III. Overview of Research Opportunity

Federal Awarding Agency Name
Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA)
Strategic Integration Directorate, Strategic Trends Office (SI-ST)
8725 John J. Kingman Road
Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-6201

Funding Opportunity Title
DTRA Strategic Trends Research

Announcement Type
Broad Agency Announcement

Funding Opportunity Number
HDTR1-24-S-0003

North American Industry Classification System Codes (NAICS)

541690: Other Scientific and Technical Consulting Services
541713: Research and Development in Nanotechnology
541714: Research and Development in Biotechnology (except Nanobiotechnology)
541715: Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Nanotechnology and Biotechnology)
541720: Research and Development in the Social Sciences and Humanities
541990: All Other Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
611310: Academies, College or University Including Military Service (college)
927110: Space Research and Technology

IV. Detailed Information About Research Opportunity

A. **Program Mission and Objectives.** To inform and support the Agency's mission and programs, DTRA requires analytic research products focused on characterizing the battlespace, particularly aspects pertaining to WMD and related emerging technologies, in the 5–10-year future timeframe to enable DTRA and DoD to shape operations, activities, and investments in ways that will mitigate, delay, or eliminate anticipated threats. SI-ST seeks analytic, threat-forecasting research products that provide insights into the future battlespace in mission-relevant areas and identify credible and timely recommendations for how (in priority order) DTRA, DoD, and the broader USG can address the identified challenges, threats, and issues, including in cooperation with allies and partners. The unique value proposition of SI-ST-sponsored research contributes to the DTRA mission in the following ways:

1. With its emphasis on examining and anticipating WMD threats and trends 5–10 years in the future, SI-ST-sponsored research reinforces DTRA's priority of implementing an actionable, forward-thinking CWMD agenda.

2. SI-ST-sponsored research supports DTRA's unique position in shaping the understanding of CWMD challenges across the Agency, policy, Service, and Combatant Command communities and in recommending solutions to those challenges.

3. As the only DoD program sponsoring strategic Track 1.5 and 2 dialogues on the WMD problem set, the Strategic Trends research program enables DTRA to perform a distinct role in cultivating trust, enhancing credibility, and increasing collaboration with U.S. allies and partners to strengthen integrated deterrence and effectively counter adversaries.

B. **Program Enduring Characteristics.** SI-ST-sponsored research pursues a consistent set of principles across all projects, regardless of topic or contracted researcher. These aims are enduring characteristics of all projects in the research portfolio:

1. Promote nonpartisan, intellectually honest endeavors to achieve results with lasting impacts, ensuring balanced project participation regarding ideology, gender, orientation, ethnicity, religion, and age to embrace diversity of thought on critical future challenges.

2. Balance current priorities articulated in existing strategic guidance with as-of-yet uncharacterized future threats that could be integrated into future strategic guidance. This includes maintaining situational awareness of current threats while focusing on threat trends and emerging technologies up to 10 years into the future and ensuring all research priorities are appropriately traced to Agency strategic guidance and CWMD key stakeholder requirements and interests.

3. Balance geopolitical issues and technical issues for a robust understanding of CBRN threats and emerging technologies that can shape WMD outcomes.

4. Foster integration of researchers between individual projects to share expertise, research results, and methodologies to create a comprehensive portfolio.

5. Embrace new and innovative approaches to solving problems and achieving results, allowing opportunities for unconventional approaches and methodologies to foster novel thinking about future concepts that are not yet well characterized.

6. Involve key stakeholders to ensure the portfolio is pursuing relevant topics and achieving useful results. This includes curating relationships with stakeholders to further enhance the portfolio's impacts across the USG and with allies and partners as well as promoting transparency and informed discourse on WMD-related topics by widely disseminating research reports to decision makers in U.S., allied, and partner governments.

7. Sponsor emerging CWMD researcher efforts every year, in partnership with senior CWMD/Defense community mentors, to cultivate scholarship, innovation, and leadership in the CWMD community through opportunities to research topics of interest.

8. Expand the performer-base across the university, think tank, and non-government organization (NGO) ecosystem with the aim of cultivating a community of researchers prepared to tackle emerging threats and to promote a diverse, yet integrated, cadre of CWMD community leaders.

9. Ensure research insights and recommendations are shared broadly and communicated directly to those responsible for adapting and responding to future threats, including leaders, program managers, planners, strategists, and operations personnel.

C. **Program Expectations**

1. **General**

   i. Given the complexity of WMD and emerging technology challenges, the diversity of topic areas, and the need to consider and incorporate a wide range of viewpoints and analyses, SI-ST seeks to partner with the expert community on sponsored research projects and analytic research products for broad consumption by USG, DoD, and DTRA. SI-ST does not have the personnel, full spectrum of technical expertise, or professional networks available to the broader research community (academia, NGO organizations, think tanks, federally funded research and development centers [FFRDC], and university-affiliated research centers [UARC]), which are required to monitor and assess the myriad of possible future threats and advise the Agency and CWMD community in a timely fashion. This partnering arrangement also increases SI-ST's ability to raise and examine sensitive defense-related topics with external audiences.

   ii. SI-ST acquires research services through a variety of arrangements, including contracts with private think tanks, companies, and universities; military interdepartmental purchase requests (MIPR) for research services from other DoD entities; and interagency orders (IO) for services from FFRDC or UARC associated with federal agencies other than DoD. Eligibility requirements are described in Section V.A (Eligibility for Competition). Award information is described in Section V.G (Award Type) and V.H (Number of Awards). **SI-ST does not award grants.**

2. **Program Management**

   i. DTRA will work closely with all project awardees to ensure smooth and successful execution of research. All projects will have a dedicated SI-ST program manager (PM) who serves as the technical point of contact for the Principal Investigator (PI) and facilitates interactions with leadership and other staff in DTRA. For contracted projects, this PM also serves as the contracting officer's representative (COR). The PM/COR will communicate technical guidance, facilitate review of deliverables, and work with the PI to schedule required briefings. The PI is

responsible for fulfilling specified obligations under the contract, MIPR, or IO, including, as applicable, timely provision of data requirements detailed in the Contract Data Requirements List (CDRL), fulfillment of tasks specified in the Statement of Research Work (SoRW), and timely submission of invoices and cost vouchers. SI-ST expects PIs to maintain close, proactive contact with the PM/COR and to respond promptly to all communications.

ii. Invoices and cost vouchers for SI-ST contracts shall be submitted through the Wide Area Workflow (WAWF) system in the Procurement Integrated Enterprise Environment (PIEE, https://piee.eb.mil/) without exception. Performing organizations must have or obtain an active PIEE account prior to the start of the contract period of performance. Performing organizations must submit draft invoices and cost vouchers to the PM/COR for review and approval prior to entering them into WAWF.

iii. For interagency acquisitions (e.g., MIPRs, IOs) financial transactions are initiated in the Intragovernmental Payment and Collection System (IPAC). Please see the Government Call for further information.

3. **Deliverables**

i. All research projects awarded under this BAA will result in the same core deliverables. The contractor should submit all deliverables to the PM/COR for review and acceptance.

Item	Deliverable	Requirements
001	Project abstract and keyword list	• The contractor shall provide a succinct abstract, of no more than 15 lines, outlining the scope and intent of the research project as well as a keywords list to support DoD research reporting requirements in the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC) and Unified Research and Engineering Database, and to support project descriptions in other DTRA papers, products, and briefs. • The keyword list should include no more than 20 keywords to facilitate efficient and accurate search queries and to support optimal promulgation of the report in DoD databases. • The report shall be provided within 30 days of the start of the period of performance (PoP).
002	Monthly Progress Report (MPR)	• The contractor shall provide a monthly summary (MPR) of the reporting period's technical and financial activities, critical issues, technical accomplishments, engagements (include participants, date, location, summary of discussion and implications for the project), and plan for the next 30-day reporting period. • The contractor shall submit one document covering the technical and financial elements. The contractor must use the DTRA template, which will be provided following the kickoff meeting. All content should be UNCLASSIFIED. • Reports shall be submitted no later than (NLT) 15 days after the end of each one-month period following the date of award (DOA) and shall cover the previous month's progress. MPRs should be submitted at the same time as the monthly invoices. Invoices will not be approved in WAWF without the corresponding MPR.

Item	Deliverable	Requirements
		• Information provided in MPRs, including but not limited to, images, figures, and text, will be used by DTRA in programmatic briefings. • MPRs are intended to provide DTRA with regular updates on project progress. They are not substitutes for emails that provide time sensitive information requiring decisions or action by DTRA or the contractor.
003	Technical Briefings (Kickoff, Midpoint, and Outbrief)	• The contractor shall provide three technical briefings: a project kickoff briefing, a midpoint in-progress review (IPR) briefing, and a project close out briefing (outbrief). These briefings are opportunities for the sponsor and contractor to discuss the project, assess progress, and exchange questions and answers (Q&A). • The **kickoff briefing** should describe the project objective, key research questions, and technical methodology, as well as highlight any questions or issues requiring USG guidance and decisions. • The midpoint **IPR** briefing should describe the status of implementing the project plan (including any changes) and highlight key findings, next steps, and key questions or issues requiring USG guidance and decisions. • The **outbrief**, or project closeout brief, should provide a summary of the project objective, approach, and key findings and recommendations for a USG audience. The content should align with the draft/final technical report. • Additional IPRs (i.e., formal touch points) are to be conducted as needed. • The audience for the kickoff and midpoint IPR briefing is SI-ST and DTRA staff (including PM/COR and contracts office staff). Briefings may also be organized for other USG personnel by DTRA or the performer. • The contractor shall provide briefing slides in Microsoft PowerPoint format using their preferred template. The title slide shall include the contract number, project title, date of meeting, PI name(s), and briefing type (kickoff, midpoint IPR, or outbrief). It shall also include the following language: ***"DISCLAIMER: The views expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, the DoD, or the United States Government."*** • Unless otherwise indicated in the SoRW, all briefing materials shall be unclassified and suitable for sharing within the USG. Each slide deck should contain no more than 15 slides. • The contractor will coordinate meeting dates with the PM/COR via email. The contractor shall provide briefing slides to the PM/COR no later than 48 hours prior to each meeting. The email subject line

Item	Deliverable	Requirements
		should include the contract number and the briefing type (kickoff, midpoint IPR, or outbrief). • Technical briefings are expected to last 90-120 minutes to include Q&A.
004	Technical Report and Executive Summary	• The contractor shall provide a final technical report (TECREP) not to exceed 15 pages detailing key findings and recommendations from the research, accompanied by a standalone executive summary (EXSUM) not to exceed 3 pages. • The contractor shall provide a draft version of the reports no later than 30 days prior to the end of the period of performance and the final version of the reports no later than 10 days prior to the end of the period of performance. The Government shall provide acceptance of the draft reports within 10 days of receipt and of the final reports within 5 days of receipt. • See Section IV.C.4 (Publications) for complete TECREP and EXSUM requirements.
005	Communication and Engagement Plan	• The contractor shall provide a project communication and engagement plan (not to exceed two pages) detailing: o How the research team plans to engage with USG leadership they have identified at the one-star level or above (Senior Executive Service, General/Flag Officer) as well as regional and functional offices within DoD and Department of State specifically. This includes coordination (briefings, calls, meetings) and engagement with officials pre-, during, or post-project; and o How the research team plans to engage with senior foreign and non-government individuals they have identified (for example, former senior government officials) in support of studies, dialogues, workshops, etc. • The contractor shall provide the plan to DTRA within 30 days of the start of project and preferably by the kickoff briefing. • The contractor shall provide the plan in Microsoft Word format. Contractor template is acceptable.
006	Risk Mitigation Plan	• The contractor shall provide a project risk mitigation plan (not to exceed 5 pages) that: o Identifies potential risks to the project related to rapidly changing geopolitical circumstances, information security, cybersecurity, personnel security, mis/disinformation, and availability of key resources (experts, event space, etc.). o Outlines mitigation measures to address the risks identified as most likely or that might cause catastrophic project failure.

Item	Deliverable	Requirements
		• The plan shall be provided to the Government within 30 days of the start of project and preferably by the kickoff briefing.
		• The plan shall be provided in Microsoft Word format. Contractor template is acceptable.
007	Event invitation language and invitee list	• The contractor shall provide draft invitation language and a proposed invitee list for research events (e.g., dialogue, workshop, expert roundtable, tabletop exercise [TTX]) organized by the contractor no later than 60 days prior to the planned event. The Government shall provide acceptance or rejection within 5 days of receipt. If rejected, the Government shall provide proposed modifications or recommendations within 10 days of receipt.
		• Contractor template for the invitation is acceptable but should clearly state DTRA sponsorship of the event upfront. Suggested language: "This research was sponsored by the Strategic Trends Office, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, under contract HDTRA1-xx-x-xxxx."
008	Event read-ahead package	• The contractor shall provide draft read-ahead materials for research events (e.g., dialogue, workshop, expert roundtable, TTX) organized by the contractor no later than 30 days prior to the planned event. Materials shall include, as applicable, the agenda, participant list, briefs, exercise scenario narratives and game mechanics, facilitator guides, moderator questions, and commissioned papers. The Government shall provide acceptance or rejection within 5 days of receipt. If rejected, the Government shall provide proposed modifications or recommendations within 10 days of receipt.
		• Contractor formats and templates are acceptable but should clearly state DTRA sponsorship of the event. Suggested language: "This research was sponsored by the Strategic Trends Office, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, under contract HDTRA1-x-x-xxxx."
009	Closeout Report	• The contractor shall provide a closeout report that captures the submission date of each required deliverable, the date and amount of all invoices, the total value of the contract, and any remaining funds for deobligation.
		• The contractor should submit the above information in a single document, using the associated Government template, which will be provided following the kickoff meeting. All content should be unclassified.
		• The report shall be provided no later than 10 days prior to the end of the period of performance (PoP).

ii. In addition to the core deliverables described above, SI-ST reserves the right to request additional deliverables during contract negotiation.

iii. FFRDCs, UARCs, and other organizations awarded research projects by SI-ST separately from this BAA have distinct deliverable requirements. Please refer to the Government Call for details.

4. **Publications**

   i. SI-ST requires analytical research products, specifically a 15-page technical report and a separate 3-page executive summary, as the primary output of all research projects. SI-ST seeks to limit the length of research products to encourage review by a broad audience, including senior Government leaders who experience substantial time constraints. SI-ST will entertain, in coordination with the performer, additional content beyond the specified page limits in the form of appendices. These appendices are optional. If used, they should provide additional detail that is supportive of the main report and may include additional information on methodology, key insights from literature reviews, commissioned papers, or similar. SI-ST provides report templates for both the technical report and executive summary.

   ii. In most cases, SI-ST seeks public release clearance through a standard DTRA process for all reports to promote broad dissemination of the research findings and recommendations. All strategic trends research reports must include the following:

      a. On the cover of the report:

      Disclaimer: This research was sponsored by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) through the Strategic Trends Research Initiative as [contract #HDTRA1-XX-X-XXXX or MIPR or Interagency Agreement #HDTRA12XXXXX] between DTRA and _____ [company, organization]. The views expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of DTRA, the U.S. Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

      b. In an "Acknowledgements" section:

      The Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), through the Strategic Trends Research Initiative, sponsors strategic research projects under Broad Agency Announcement HDTRA1-24-S-0003. DTRA sponsored _____ [company, organization] to conduct this research examining _____. This report [summarizes, identifies, analyzes, etc.] _____. The views expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of DTRA, the U.S. Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

   iii. The above sections are included in the SI-ST-provided report templates.

   iv. Once reports are final and cleared for release, DTRA will publish the reports on the Defense Technical Information Center website (https://discover.dtic.mil) for use across the USG. In addition, DTRA will publish project titles on the DTRA website (https://www.dtra.mil/) along with directions to the DTIC portal for report retrieval. DTRA will also publish full reports on the DTRA intranet for use by the workforce.

   v. After all deliverable requirements have been met, SI-ST generally permits researchers to publish their cleared reports, as well as derivative products such as articles and op-eds, on their own websites and other media and using their own templates. SI-ST requests that PIs consult the PM/COR prior to publicizing findings from the project and to allow the PM/COR to review any products in non-DTRA templates. In addition, all performer-published versions of DTRA-sponsored research must include the standard disclaimer and acknowledgement of DTRA sponsorship included above.

   vi. While SI-ST permits researchers to publicize their research as described above, they may not use USG funds to do so, particularly in publicizing research through non-Governmental media

or to prepare products for publication or promulgation through non-Governmental media. All planned activities that are solely in support of researcher publication (including, but not limited to, editing, graphics, printing, and audio/visual taping), rather than in support of DTRA-required deliverables, may not use USG funds and should be excluded from cost proposals.

D. **Security Considerations**

1. SI-ST expects all contractors, teaming partners, and consultants to give due attention to security considerations related to sponsored research projects including, but not limited to:

   i. Selecting event locations and venues that provide the maximum safety and security possible for all participants and ease of country entry and access for USG personnel.

   ii. Safeguarding DoD information, including the names and contact information of USG personnel, foreign government personnel, and U.S.-based non-Governmental experts who participate in research activities. Report any unauthorized disclosure to the PM/COR within 72 hours.

   iii. Demonstrating responsible cybersecurity practices and conduct, including prohibiting the use of personal computers, data processing equipment, or information storage devices (desktops, laptops, tablets, mobile devices, USB drives, personal email accounts, etc.) for conduct of the research tasks.

   iv. Carefully vetting teaming partners, consultants, and sub-contractors. Contractors are prohibited from associating or partnering (doing business) with the entities listed in Section 1260H of the National Defense Authorization Act 2021 (Public Law 116-283) or with prohibited sources identified in FAR 25.7 – Prohibited Sources and DFARS Part 225 – Foreign Acquisition.

2. In addition, given potential exploitation by foreign malign influence (FMI) actors, it is important for researchers to consider measures to mitigate the risk of FMI campaigns during project planning. FMI is any hostile effort undertaken by, at the direction of, on behalf of, or with the substantial support of, a foreign government with the objective of influencing, through overt or covert means. This includes the use of disinformation and propaganda spread by nefarious actors. Disinformation and propaganda campaigns often target DTRA programs as part of larger efforts aimed at discrediting the United States by undermining alliances, eroding trust in partnerships with beneficiary countries, and deliberately spreading false information. Because most of DTRA's final strategic research reports are made available to the public, it is critically important that the contractor be mindful of the language they use when communicating with potential teaming partners and when selecting names, titles, and sub-titles for projects and research event names. For more information on DTRA's approach to countering FMI, please see https://www.dtra.mil/About/Foreign-Malign-Influence/.

3. Researchers should outline plans to address and mitigate such security concerns in white papers and in kickoff briefs when pertaining to awards.

E. **Research Topic Areas**

1. The DTRA Strategic Trends Research Initiative explores a range of challenges related to nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, including the development of materials, methodologies, or technologies with potential to create new or increase the impact of existing WMD threats. The program's primary focus area is WMD challenges 5–10 years in the future and the associated implications for deterrence, crisis and conflict prevention, risk reduction, arms control, escalation management, strategic competition, and prevailing in case of combat.

The research portfolio has both general and specific areas of interest. The general areas of interest are topics reflecting enduring areas of interest that are anchored in DTRA's core CWMD mission and therefore remain constant from year to year. **Areas of general interest** may be addressed through any of the three thrust areas described in Section IV.F (Research Thrust Areas), and by any eligible prospective researchers described in Section V.A (Eligibility for Competition), including from the private sector, FFRDC, and/or UARC community. Areas of general interest include the following:

i. Future concepts and approaches related to working with allies and partners on WMD-associated topics including, but not limited to, anticipating threats, building capability and resilience, nuclear assurance, and preventing or responding to crises.

ii. Impacts of artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, data science, and uncrewed or remotely piloted systems on the pursuit or advancement of WMD programs, employment options for WMD, and associated risks.

iii. Future trends related to biological warfare, biodefense, biosecurity, and bio preparedness.

iv. Future trends related to chemical warfare including accidental and deliberate releases.

v. Future concepts and challenges to long-held assumptions related to deterrence theory, practice, and implementation.

vi. Changing or evolving drivers of leaders' decision calculus regarding the pursuit of WMD and recommendations for how the international community can address those challenges.

vii. Emerging disruptive technologies (EDT) that may change the characteristics of WMD, shorten timelines associated with pursuing WMD programs, change forensic examination and attribution of WMD use, or increase opportunities to use and employ WMD. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the nexus of cyber and space domains with WMD and the implications for potential future conflicts.

viii. Attempts and activities focused on eroding international WMD norms. This may include foreign malign influence ("FMI," or information operations by foreign countries to spread disinformation, misinformation, and malinformation) to complicate public and elected leaders' understanding of issues related to WMD.

ix. Future trends related to over-the-horizon (OTH) challenges (that is, challenges that can be reasonably anticipated as future challenges but not yet directly observed), including proliferation of materials of concern, technology, and expertise that can be utilized for designing, creating, storing, or employing WMD.

x. The retention of U.S. operational advantage in a multi-polar, geographically dispersed, and/or overlapping crisis or conflict involving WMD.

xi. Future challenges, considerations, implications, and recommendations related to WMD risk reduction and arms control.

xii. Future areas of strategic competition with Russia, China, or other adversaries in any domain, region, or technology area that may impact the ability of the United States to deter, prevent, or prevail against WMD threats.

2. In contrast to areas of general interest, **areas of specific interest** stem from current priorities, special initiatives, leadership guidance, and emerging CWMD community interest. Therefore, they may change from year to year as DTRA seeks to respond and adapt to changes in the strategic environment. Such changes in priority topics of interest to DTRA are released at least once annually through BAA amendments and/or through specific, case-by-case Government Call

requests to eligible members of the FFRDC/UARC community. Specific interests may include requests to leverage the unique capabilities, facilities, and communities of FFRDCs/UARCs. This may include requests for classified-level research, including the convening of classified research events and TTXs with USG participants from the defense and intelligence communities and crafting classified recommendations to address specific challenges. Amendments and specific Government Call requests may also identify particular thrust areas (see Section IV.F, Research Thrust Areas) for specific topics.

3. Amendments remain active and valid until superseded by subsequent amendments. Interested researchers should read the main BAA document and amendments in full to understand SI-ST research interests. DTRA will attempt to notify the research community of new amendments, but it is the responsibility of prospective performers to check SAM.gov periodically for updates.

F. **Research Thrust Areas**

1. SI-ST characterizes its preferred research approaches as "thrust areas," broad research approaches that can accommodate many different types of research methodologies (e.g., workshops, studies, TTXs, interviews, or surveys) but are intended to define the overall character and direction of the project. To that end, SI-ST groups research into three key thrust areas: 1) strategic international Track 1.5 and 2 dialogues; 2) analytical studies to characterize the future battlespace and strategic threat environment; and 3) emerging CWMD researcher projects. (Note: SI-ST will consider white papers that outline alternative approaches to conduct a specific research project.)

2. While the research thrust areas are enduring for the life of this BAA, the specific priorities within each thrust area may be modified at any time to address evolving DTRA mission needs and changes in the geopolitical environment. Changes to these thrust areas, and specific priorities within each, will be articulated in BAA amendments that are issued at least once per fiscal year (FY).

   i. **WMD-relevant strategic international dialogues.** SI-ST seeks research projects that involve the execution and analysis of findings from international Track 1.5 and Track 2 strategic dialogues to provide a venue and engagement framework for structured but informal discussions among subject matter experts, held under the "Chatham House Rule."[1] These dialogues can help provide the United States with strategic insights necessary to develop deeper, more meaningful relationships with existing allies and partners and/or establish new relationships with non-traditional partners as a mechanism to address mutual security challenges. These international dialogues can be bilateral, trilateral, or multilateral. They must include the United States as one of the parties.

      a. Strategic dialogues are unofficial international meetings that provide an opportunity for American experts to discuss important, and sometimes sensitive, strategic issues with their foreign counterparts in a private, welcoming environment outside of official diplomatic channels. Track 1.5 dialogues involve a mix of government officials participating in an unofficial, off-the-record capacity and non-governmental experts. Dialogues can include government personnel on panels and as keynote speakers alongside non-government experts. Track 2 dialogues involve only non-governmental expert representatives, to include former government officials. Current government officials do

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[1] See https://www.chathamhouse.org/about-us/chatham-house-rule.

not participate unless they are providing a keynote address or observing, which may be appropriate depending on the specific dialogue.

b. Because SI-ST-sponsored strategic dialogues serve a unique role in the DoD for cultivating trust and strengthening collaboration with U.S. allies and partners, all proposed dialogues should be international in nature and include participation from at least one (and potentially several) foreign country. For dialogues, SI-ST expects parity among participating countries in terms of participants' titles and rank/seniority and number of each (e.g., a roughly equal number of academics, government, and military representatives from each country with similar titles/rank and roughly equal levels of seniority across delegations). Please note that this requires careful advance planning to ensure that government participants are available.

c. Strategic dialogues and accompanying analysis shall primarily focus on identifying and analyzing points of convergence and divergence in threat perspectives, obstacles, opportunities for further collaboration and cooperation in military-relevant—and especially WMD-relevant—areas, and potential activities that might be undertaken in support of shared security objectives.

d. While the discussions should be strategic in nature and be aligned to DoD and USG priorities, the meetings that inform the larger analytic effort shall include at least one segment focused on topics that fall directly within DTRA's WMD-focused mission. Please see Sections IV.F (Research Thrust Areas) and IV.G (Research Topic and Thrust Area Parameters) for additional guidance on general interest parameters. SI-ST especially encourages dialogue projects that have the potential to build from year to year, advancing discussion and understanding of important strategic issues.

e. Insights and recommendations generated at the dialogue will serve as the basis for the final technical report along with any additional analysis. The final technical report should not constitute a meeting summary or transcript but rather an analysis of the findings with the aim of answering the specified research question(s).

f. If awarded, dialogue PIs are expected to:

(1) Finalize salient research questions and conduct preliminary research to inform the development of the dialogue's agenda in coordination with DTRA and other stakeholders.

(2) Develop, vet, and coordinate the invitation list and agendas for all meetings connected to the dialogue with SI-ST (please see Section IV.C.3 – Item 007).

(3) Select all participants, including plenary participants, panelists, and keynote speakers, to ensure the dialogue addresses and answers the identified research questions. Ensure panelist and keynote speaker selections reflect parity among all delegations (e.g., seniority and experience).

(4) Promote and honor the enduring characteristics of the research portfolio as described in Section IV.B (Program Enduring Characteristics), including ensuring balance in dialogue participation regarding ideology, gender, age, technical/policy background, and organizational affiliation to avoid bias. This includes ensuring that dialogue events are non-partisan.

(5) Facilitate all dialogue sessions to ensure discussions remain aligned with the agreed agenda, including, but not limited to, introducing concepts, challenging assumptions of

the audience, posing questions to promote thinking about answers or solutions, while also building rapport between participants.

    (6) Lead the development of the final deliverables—the executive summary and full technical report—to ensure they reflect accurate and cogent analysis from the dialogue and put forward key insights and actionable recommendations suitable for a senior-level Government audience.

    g. Because dialogues and other multinational research events are a key method for understanding the perceptions and perspectives of foreign partners and exploring potential avenues of new or deeper defense cooperation with foreign partners, it is important that dialogues include foreign participants with appropriate experience and expertise in defense-related, and, whenever possible, WMD-relevant topics. DTRA desires sponsored dialogue approaches that facilitate clear and effective communication on approved topics, support a substantive exchange of views, and enable collaborative development of actionable recommendations for Government officials from all represented countries. SI-ST will consider language translation services for dialogue projects if appropriately detailed and justified in cost proposals.

ii. **WMD-relevant analytical studies.** SI-ST seeks analytic research studies that explore specific strategic WMD-relevant threats, challenges, and issues of concern to the DoD, Combatant Commands, and U.S. CWMD interagency community. Such studies should not only define and explore the nature of the threat or challenge, but also assess its strategic importance by considering the impact on regional and global stability and the implications for the United States and its allies and partners to maintain operational military advantage and preserve U.S. global leadership and the global international order. Each study—whether regionally or functionally oriented—should specify actions the United States can take, including potentially in cooperation with allies and partners, to address the challenge or threat.

    a. SI-ST will only consider studies that include a clear focus on WMD issues/topics. This includes studies that address the nexus with other warfighting domains (e.g., cyber or space) and/or emerging technologies, although offerors should ensure that such proposed studies are aligned with DTRA's WMD-focused mission.

    b. Studies can include a range of methodologies to inform the analysis (e.g., literature reviews, expert interviews, TTXs, etc.). However, proposed research should offer a contingency plan for any study that depends heavily on access to certain experts in case those experts are unavailable.

iii. **WMD-relevant emerging CWMD researcher projects.** SI-ST seeks to cultivate the expansion of the CWMD research community, including the next generation of scholars and innovators (including, but not limited to, current college students, recent graduates, students at professional military educational institutions, and research assistants at think tanks and FFRDCs) as well as mid-career and seasoned professionals who may be new to the research function and/or the CWMD subject area.

    a. To that end, SI-ST seeks research projects in which an emerging CWMD researcher serves as Primary Investigator (PI) under the direct mentorship of an experienced CWMD researcher, such as a college professor or a senior think tank expert with relevant experience. While SI-ST expects that the emerging CWMD researcher will serve as PI on the project and will conduct the majority of the research activity, mentors will be actively involved in the project through advice and guidance to the PI to ensure that the project

both constitutes a substantive educational experience for the PI and produces quality deliverables for DTRA. The mentor shall assume full control of the mentee's project if the mentee is unable to fulfill the project fully. Additionally, project white papers and proposals should clearly identify each individual and describe their qualifications for consideration during the project evaluation process.

b. SI-ST welcomes college students, including students from Minority Serving Institutions (MSI), including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and Asian American and Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AAPISIs), to submit projects for potential sponsorship.

c. While SI-ST regards emerging CWMD researcher projects (like all SI-ST-sponsored projects) as serious research endeavors, it also considers projects in this thrust area to be educational in nature and therefore expects the proposed scope and scale of such projects to be commensurate with this aim. Emerging CWMD researcher projects will be priced commensurate with the smaller scale and level of effort. The scale of the project should be substantive enough to provide useful insights and recommendations to DTRA and to challenge the PI, but manageable enough to allow the PI and senior mentor a reasonable chance of success. In addition, emerging CWMD researcher research proposals should clearly outline a risk mitigation plan that explains how the identified senior mentor will take responsibility for fulfilling the terms of the research contract if the PI is unable to complete the project as proposed for any reason.

d. Emerging CWMD researcher projects can employ a variety of possible research methods (e.g., desk research, interviews, surveys, workshops, or TTXs). While emerging CWMD researcher projects constitute a separate thrust area, SI-ST requests that all proposed projects align in terms of format and approach with the WMD-relevant analytical study thrust area, while still observing the scope and scale parameters outlined in the above paragraph.

G. **Research Topic and Thrust Area Parameters**

1. In the conduct of research, SI-ST expects and encourages performers to pursue a mix of methodologies and consult a variety of sources and perspectives to test and challenge assumptions and initial findings and to mitigate cognitive biases. To that end, while research projects can take many different forms (as described in Section IV.F, Research Thrust Areas), SI-ST is not seeking the following:

   i. Development of databases or datasets as the sole output of research;

   ii. Development of hardware, software, models, simulations, or technologies;

   iii. Projects that require subscriptions or purchases;

   iv. Projects that solely "data mine," review, and/or provide summaries of the extant literature base; or

   v. Projects that exclusively involve the planning and execution of an event.

2. While researchers may incorporate literature reviews and data collections into their technical approaches, the project should not solely focus on generating these items. The research products must characterize the extent of the trend or the emergence of a technology and identify the implications to the warfighter. Research products should help SI-ST understand how and when a threat will occur and what will result from its emergence or implementation to best perform its mission.

3. Furthermore, while researchers may conduct one or more research events (e.g., dialogues, TTXs, roundtables, or workshops) to explore and address specific research questions, the project must also incorporate broader analytic activities prior to and/or following those events. The event, by itself, is not considered a deliverable, nor will a summary report of the proceedings satisfy deliverable requirements. Any research events conducted is support of a project should aim to inform the final deliverable analytical research product.

4. Regarding focus areas, SI-ST seeks research that is relevant to the DTRA mission, namely, WMD challenges and related topics. SI-ST is not seeking research that is focused primarily on:

   i. Economic or commercial issues;

   ii. Broad geopolitical issues that do not have direct WMD relevance;

   iii. Threat domains and topics outside DTRA's WMD-focused mission;

   iv. Issues where U.S. agencies other than the DoD have lead responsibility; or

   v. Domestic or foreign policy issues.

5. SI-ST will consider research projects that may result in policy recommendations insofar that DTRA has equities in that policy area and can advocate for changes to policy through normal advisory activities. Likewise, while some analytic research may require examination of other threat domains (e.g., cyber or space), SI-ST is only interested in those research efforts that explore the nexus between those threat domains and the issues that are core to DTRA's WMD mission.

6. ***SI-ST does not fund research that requires use of human or animal subjects in experiments.***

V. Federal Award Information

A. **Eligibility for Competition.** All qualified applicants from the following organizational types are eligible to submit unclassified research white papers in response to this BAA:

1. U.S.-based industrial and commercial entities, including small businesses.

2. Accredited, degree granting public and private colleges and universities in the United States.

3. U.S.-based, not-for-profit research organizations, including think tanks.

4. Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs), including U.S. Department of Energy National Laboratories, unless precluded by their contract. FFRDCs that are precluded from competing with private entities for contracts but are interested in submitting research white papers to SI-ST should refer to the Government Call for special instructions.

5. University Affiliated Research Centers (UARCs) unless precluded by their UARC contract. UARCs that are precluded from competing with private entities for contracts but are interested in submitting research white papers to SI-ST should refer to the Government Call for special instructions.

6. Independent organizations commissioned by the USG to conduct research and develop assessments on behalf of the USG (e.g., U.S. Institute of Peace) unless precluded from submitting to a BAA.

B. U.S. professional military educational institutions, U.S. military laboratories and research centers, and other federally affiliated research institutions that are precluded from submitting to a BAA should refer to the Government Call for special instructions.

C. Submissions from U.S. federal agencies and foreign governments, including sub-contracting efforts, will not be considered under this BAA.

D. **Only U.S.-based organizations may serve as prime contractors on SI-ST contracts.** Foreign research organizations, including colleges, universities, and think tanks, in U.S. treaty ally countries (specifically North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] members, Japan, Australia, and Republic of Korea) are permitted to partner with U.S.-based organizations to submit unclassified submissions in response to this BAA. However, DTRA will only issue a single contract for each individual research project awarded under this BAA. The responsibility for sub-contracting and/or partnering agreements rests with the prime contractor (i.e., recipient of the contract).

E. PIs are limited to U.S. citizens, U.S. green card holders, and citizens of U.S. treaty ally countries (specifically NATO members, Japan, Australia, and Republic of Korea). Subordinate research team members may include non-U.S. citizens from ally or partner nations. However, foreign nationals' access to Government facilities, including DTRA Headquarters, may be restricted for meetings and briefings. Access to information that has not been approved for public release may also be restricted. In this case, PIs should coordinate requirements for access to other than publicly releasable, unclassified information with the PM/COR to obtain pre-approval. All foreign nationals who will participate in the research for any compensation must be clearly identified by name, nationality, and qualifications in the white paper and, if requested, the proposal.

F. Consultants are permitted on research teams. Offerors should clearly identify proposed teaming and consulting arrangements in the white paper and, if requested, the proposal—including consultant name(s) and nationality(-ies), and explain why additional consultation is warranted. Proposed projects with significant consultant activities engender risk if that consultant is unavailable. Offerors shall address how this risk will be mitigated. All proposed consulting services shall adhere to FAR 31.205-33: Professional and consultant service costs (https://www.acquisition.gov/far/31.205-33).

G. **Award Type.** Any eligible private entity that submits a white paper and subsequent proposal that SI-ST selects for award will receive sponsorship in the form of a **CONTRACT.** All contracts shall adhere to the terms and conditions of the contract as well as the requirements of the FAR and DFARS depending on the type of instrument awarded. **Grants or cooperative agreements will not be considered.** DTRA will only award one contract per research project. Prime and sub-contractor arrangements are authorized. However, DTRA expects that the prime contractors will perform at least 50% of the proposed work (in labor hours) in keeping with the spirit of FAR 52.219-14: Limitations on Subcontracting (https://www.acquisition.gov/far/52.219-14).

   1. Unless specifically indicated, cost sharing is permitted but not required; however, the Government may not accept volunteer services. All contributions to the Federal award must be recognized as either Government or Contractor share.

   2. All awards for Dialogues will be made as Firm Fixed Price for labor and Cost Plus for Other Direct Costs and Travel contract line item numbers (CLIN). All awards for Studies and Emerging CWMD Researcher projects will be made as Firm Fixed Price for all CLINs.

   3. FFRDCs and UARCs that are precluded from competing with private entities for contracts but are interested in submitting research white papers to SI-ST should refer to the Government Call for special instructions. Any such FFRDC or UARC that submits a white paper and subsequent proposal that SI-ST selects for award will receive sponsorship in line with Economy Act requirements. The Economy Act is used to obtain goods and/or services from another DoD or federal agency under the Economy Act of 1932 (31 U.S.C. 1535).

H. **Number of Awards.** The number of awards resulting from this BAA will vary each year based on mission need and resource availability. There is no minimum or maximum number of awards.

1. Historically, SI-ST funding permits awarding approximately 20 new projects per fiscal year. However, number of awards varies and depends on the amount of funds allocated to SI-ST, the timeline according to which SI-ST receives funds, the types and quality of white papers received, and the final cost amounts of selected awards anticipated under the BAA.

2. There is no set limit to the number of white papers or proposals an organization, team, or individual may submit under this BAA; however, the level of effort for each PI and project team member shall not reasonably exceed one annual full time equivalent (FTE). PIs are allowed to pursue multiple, distinct projects concurrently, but shall ensure each project can be performed to completion, meeting all requirements and timelines. The white papers and (if invited) proposals shall explain how this will be accomplished.

3. There is no set limit to the number of awards a single organization or individual may receive. All proposals that meet the technical criteria will be further evaluated based on mission need and resource availability. Each proposed project will be evaluated individually, and all funding decisions will also be made on a per-project basis.

4. All awardees shall adhere to the terms and conditions of the contract. Proposed changes shall be incorporated by modification. Any unauthorized deviations to the terms and conditions of the contract may be subject to nonpayment.

5. **Funded Amounts and Periods of Performance**. Historically, SI-ST has made awards ranging from $50,000 to $1,300,000, depending on the scale and complexity of the individual project. SI-ST will consider projects both within and outside this range but will evaluate all proposed costs by standards of cost realism and reasonableness, to the extent appropriate, as required by FAR 35.016 – Broad agency announcement (https://www.acquisition.gov/far/35.016).

6. All projects will have base periods of performance 12 months or less. SI-ST welcomes projects that are shorter than 12 months as long as they can be realistically completed in the proposed timeframe. SI-ST prioritizes the completion of timely research, but all products must also be thorough and credible.

7. SI-ST will consider up to two option years after the base year but must be confident option years will yield year-after-year progression in relationships, thinking about CBRN topics, and solutions development. Submissions with proposed option years must clearly outline the planned progression of the project beyond the base year, demonstrating how research in the option year(s) will build on, rather than simply reinforce, the research conducted in the base year and how research in the option year(s) can credibly be expected to generate unique, progressive insights beyond those discovered in the base year.

VI. **Application and Submission Information**

A. **Administrative Information.** SI-ST uses a two-step submission process:

1. Phase 1: White papers.

2. Phase 2: Proposals (contingent on successful white paper submissions).

B. DTRA accepts submissions on a rolling basis but institutes priority review periods as a planning and work management mechanism. To that end, offerors must submit white papers by the suspense outlined in the latest amendment to receive priority funding consideration. Papers received by this date will be reviewed concurrently. Submissions received after the stated suspense will be reviewed

on an as-received basis, but not until those submitted by the suspense have been reviewed. DTRA will not consider submissions for future fiscal years beyond the fiscal year covered by the amendment (e.g., if the amendment applies to FY25, DTRA will not consider submissions for projects with proposed start dates beyond FY25).

C. The costs associated with preparing submissions in response to this BAA are not considered an allowable direct charge to any award resulting from this BAA or any other award.

D. White papers, proposals, or any other material submitted in response to this BAA will not be returned.

E. Awards under this BAA are the result of full and open competition. SI-ST considers each submission based solely on the information contained in the submission and without regard to size or type of organization.

F. SI-ST supports fundamental research in accordance with (IAW) DoD Instructions 5230.24 and 5230.27. This research is historically funded under Budget Activity 6.2 (Applied Research). However, DTRA reserves the right to use other forms of funding as appropriate.

VII. Phase I—White Paper Submission

A. Eligible applicants should submit the complete white paper package to dtra.belvoir.si.mbx.hdtra1-stri-Adm@mail.mil. Submissions uploaded to any internet-based submission sites will not be considered.

B. DTRA reserves the right to forgo a technical review of white papers that do not include all required information or are not formatted in accordance with the requirements identified below. DTRA will inform the applicant via email that their white paper did not meet submission requirements and offer an opportunity to resubmit. DTRA also reserves the right to forgo a technical review of the following types of submissions:

1. Capability statements;

2. Lists (with or without explanation) of potential projects an organization could undertake in response to the BAA (e.g., a list of projects from which DTRA could potentially select for funding);

3. White papers that offer a proposed analytic approach to address a "to be determined" research topic (e.g., a research topic to be identified post-award in consultation with the sponsor); or

4. White papers that restate the BAA research thrust areas but do not provide specific information about how they will be addressed.

C. The submission, although digital, must be formatted to 8 ½ x11 inch sized paper, single spaced, with one-inch margins in type not smaller than Times New Roman, 12-point font for evaluation purposes. All submissions must be in narrative form. Please note, SI-ST will not evaluate the following:

1. Briefing slides;

2. Submissions that are password protected or encrypted; or

3. Submissions provided in "zipped" files.

D. Applicants should include all requested information in one file attachment. The file should not exceed 5 MB of storage space and should be no more than 6 pages. If the white paper is successful, proposal page counts allow additional space to entertain more detail.

E. The attached file shall include three components: (1) Cover Page, (2) Technical Concept, and (3) Cost Estimate.

1. **Cover Page—one page maximum.**

      i. Titled "WHITE PAPER," marked as "Procurement Sensitive," and including the following information:

         a. BAA number HDTRA1-24-S-0003

         b. Thrust Area # (choose only one for submission)

         c. Descriptive and concise project title that can be applied to a technical report if awarded (do not use multiple colons or insert the year of submission in the title)

         d. Estimated cost of proposed effort

         e. Proposed period of performance (PoP)

            (1) Identify the number of months (not start/end date)

            (2) Identify any proposed option periods (as applicable)

         f. Name, title, phone, and email address of the PI

         g. Name, title, phone, and email address of the technical point of contact (POC) if different from the PI

         h. Name, title, phone, and email address of the business/contracts POC

         i. Institution's full address

         j. Unique Entity Identification (UEID)

         k. Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)

         l. Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code

         m. North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) number

         n. Name, title, phone, email, and signature of an Authorized Officer at the institution (SI-ST cannot accept unauthorized submissions)

2. **Technical Concept—four pages maximum.**

      i. Clearly and concisely describe the following:

         a. **Research focus—one page maximum** describing the research problem and questions the research seeks to answer.

            (1) Describe the research problem, why it is important to the USG and specifically DoD/DTRA, and any relevance to, or alignment with, USG strategies and priorities.

            (2) State the research objective(s) and specific questions the project will answer.

         b. **Background—one page maximum** describing the background of the research topic.

            (1) Explain how this is a future-focused topic/research area that impacts WMD and related technologies.

            (2) Summarize what is currently known about the research problem, highlighting recent related research efforts.

            (3) Explain how the proposed project will help to provide insights and recommendations on the future challenge.

         c. **PI and team information—one page maximum** describing the PI, team, and teaming arrangements, including consultants.

(1) Explain the proposed PI's expertise, knowledge, capabilities, and experience to conduct the proposed project. Note: while this section can also discuss the organization's capabilities, white papers that do not at least reference the PI's specific qualifications **(and senior mentor's qualifications for white papers submitted under Thrust Area 3)** are unlikely to be successful.

(2) This section should also explain any proposed use of sub-contractors, teaming arrangements, or consultants and the expected benefits to the research output.

d. **Methodology and milestones—one page maximum** describing the project methodology/approach and milestones within the base period of the contract.

(1) State how this project will be accomplished (the technical approach) and why this approach was selected.

(2) If proposing a study, provide sufficient detail about the proposed analytic approach, including any potential workshops, roundtables, interviews, etc. If these events will involve other experts, describe the types of experts that will be engaged, how many, when and why, etc.

(3) If proposing a dialogue, clearly delineate whether it is a Track 2 or Track 1.5 event (ensure the type of dialogue proposed matches the applicable definition in Section IV.F.2.i, WMD-relevant strategic international dialogues). Also provide a description of the potential meeting agenda, to include topics, format, and discussion questions. Successful white papers will also describe the types of experts who will be invited and why. If possible, provide notional participant names.

(4) Outline expected project milestones and associated deliverables, ensuring consistency with the requirements outlined in Section IV.C.3 (Deliverables).

3. **Cost Estimate—one page maximum.**

   i. Applicants shall provide a realistic cost summary.

   ii. The cost summary shall include the following areas: labor, travel, other direct costs (ODCs), and indirect costs.

   iii. This estimate should reference any planned use of sub-contractors or consultants under ODCs.

VIII.   Phase II—Proposal Submission

A. Successful white papers will result in an invitation to submit a complete proposal via email to dtra.belvoir.si.mbx.hdtra1-stri-Adm@mail.mil. SI-ST will not evaluate proposal submissions that:

1. Are password protected or encrypted;

2. Exceed 10 MB; or

3. Include "zipped" files.

B. The submission, although digital, must be formatted to 8 ½ x11 inch sized paper, single spaced, with one-inch margins in type not smaller than Times New Roman, 12-point font for evaluation purposes.

C. Cost information is required to support a determination of whether the proposed costs are allowable and reasonable. Submissions will be subject to cost realism and reasonableness analysis in accordance with FAR 35.016(e) and FAR 31.205-46. Failure to provide adequate, detailed cost data will

require the DTRA Contracting Officer to contact the proposing organization for the requisite information or reject the submission for cause.

D. Please note that successful completion of STRI research does not require the use of Government-furnished information technology (IT) equipment such as telephones, computers, printers, or videoconferencing platforms. Proposed ODCs may include costs related to conferencing calls, conference/meeting support services, and printing and copying services but may not include the purchase of IT equipment. Please also note:

    1. SI-ST's research does not require the purchase of the same.

    2. SI-ST will not mandate the use of specific types of IT equipment.

    3. Do not list the names of specific IT equipment that the offeror will be using, to include videoconferencing platforms.

    4. Ensure cost of these services are not replicated in the general and administrative (G&A) costs.

E. The proposal shall consist of four components: (1) Technical Proposal, (2) Cost Proposal, (3) Draft Statement of Research Work, and (4) Supplemental Information.

F. Each component should be included as a separate attachment in a single email submission, for a total of four attachments. The attachment file names shall correspond with the component type (e.g., "Technical Proposal").

G. **Component 1: Technical Proposal—14 pages maximum**. Consists of three sub-components: (1) Cover Page, (2) Technical Concept, and (3) Qualifications and Management Approach.

    1. **Cover Page—one page maximum.**

        i. Titled "TECHNICAL PROPOSAL," marked as "Procurement Sensitive," and including the following information:

            a. BAA number HDTR1-24-S-0003

            b. Thrust Area (choose one)

            c. Descriptive and concise project title that can be applied to a technical report if awarded (do not use multiple colons or insert the year of submission in the title)

            d. Proposed total cost

            e. Proposed period of performance (number of months, not start/end dates) and any proposed option periods if applicable

            f. Name, title, phone, and email address of the PI

            g. Name, title, phone, and email address of the technical POC if different from the PI

            h. Name, title, phone, and email address of the business/contracts POC

            i. Institution's full address

            j. Unique Entity Identification (UEID)

            k. Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)

            l. Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code

            m. North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) number

            n. Name, title, phone, email, and signature of an Authorized Officer at the institution (SI-ST cannot accept unauthorized submissions)

2. **Technical Concept—10 pages maximum** and broken into four sections: (1) Research Goal, (2) Background, (3) Methodology and Milestones, and (4) Risk Mitigation.

   i. Clearly and concisely, but with a sufficient level of detail, provide the following information:

      a. <u>Research Goal</u>—Describe the research problem.

      b. <u>Background</u>—Describe the relevance of the proposed research to the DTRA mission; any relevance to, or alignment with, USG strategies and priorities; and the expected benefit for DTRA and DoD.

      c. <u>Methodology and Milestones:</u>

         (1) Explain the expected benefit of the technical approach and why it was selected.

         (2) State how the research will be accomplished (the technical approach), including specific tasks.

         (3) Outline the project schedule and associated milestones in table format. Do not use actual dates. Instead, use "month 1," "month 2," etc. (Note: If specific dates are advantageous to the proposed project, please articulate the reason.)

      d. <u>Risk Mitigation:</u>

         (1) Describe any project risks (risk of failure, risk to DTRA's or DoD's reputation, etc.) and identify any risk mitigation measures. If the technical approach includes any form of expert engagement, provide details about what this will entail, who will be involved, and how it will be conducted.

         (2) Use of specific consultants, experts, or other critical personnel (or facilities/access) should be addressed in this section.

3. **Qualifications and Management Approach—three pages maximum.** (Note: do not include individual resumes/Curriculum Vitae [CV]). These should be provided in the Supplemental Information attachment.)

   i. Briefly explain the organization's experience and capabilities as applicable to perform the research as stated. Provide a short list of relevant past or current USG contracts with titles, contract numbers, and year(s) of execution. Only include work completed within the last three years.

   ii. Describe the PI's experience, knowledge, and capabilities, focusing on applicability to perform the proposed research as stated. For emerging CWMD researcher projects (Thrust Area 3), describe the mentor/mentee relationship, including a description of both the PI's (mentee) and mentor's relevant skills and experience.

   iii. Identify the proposed roles/functions of each member of the project team (including the PI). If there are multiple people assigned to a single role or function, identify any differences in assigned roles and responsibilities.

   iv. Provide names and applicable labor categories for project team members other than the PI who will occupy key positions and include a brief description of their experience, knowledge, and capabilities as applicable to the proposed research project. SI-ST defines key positions as those filled by subject matter experts (SMEs) on the research topic who would otherwise be difficult to replace with other individuals in the organization due to their specific experience, knowledge, and capabilities.

    v.   Describe teaming arrangements, including sub-contractors and consultants. Describe and justify any proposed use of sub-contractors and SME consultants, as applicable. Identify the proposed individuals who will fill this position and describe any applicable experience, knowledge, and capabilities.

H. **Component 2: Cost Proposal**

    1.   There are three sub-components: (1) Cover Page, (2) Cost Spreadsheet, and (3) Cost Narrative.

        i.   **Cover Page—one page maximum.** Follow the format instructions described in "Component 1—Technical Proposal," except to replace "TECHNICAL PROPOSAL" with "COST PROPOSAL".

        ii.   **Cost Spreadsheet**—single spreadsheet using the Microsoft Excel template and instructions provided by DTRA in the email to the offeror inviting a proposal. The template is not included in this BAA. A cost spreadsheet that includes information that is inconsistent with information contained in the cost narrative (described below) will result in a request for resubmission or outright rejection.

        iii.   **Cost Narrative—10 pages maximum**, not including any appendices. Provide, in narrative form, a justification for all cost items included in the spreadsheet.

            a.   The information shall be organized in the same order as the cost spreadsheet.

            b.   For each entry in the cost spreadsheet, explain how the cost was calculated (including estimating methodology used) and why the proposed cost type is required to perform the research as stated.

            c.   As necessary, applicants can provide additional information (e.g., past receipts) as an appendix to the cost narrative, but the narrative should summarize this information and direct the evaluator to the appendix as necessary. The appendix should be included in the same file attachment.

            d.   A cost narrative that includes information that is inconsistent with information contained in the cost spreadsheet will result in a request for resubmission. This will result in a delay of award even if the technical proposal meets all the criteria.

I. **Component 3: Draft Statement of Research Work (SoRW)**

    1.   SI-ST will use this document to create the SoRW if the proposed effort is awarded. The Government reserves the right to modify the draft SoRW as appropriate to ensure it conforms to Government expectations and BAA requirements.

    2.   Use the template provided by DTRA in the email inviting a proposal. This template is not included in this BAA. The draft SoRW must be prepared in the provided Microsoft Word format. Other formats will not be accepted.

    3.   Do not:

        i.   Include the draft SoRW in the technical proposal. Instead, attach it to the submission email as a standalone document.

        ii.   Modify the format.

        iii.   Replace the word "contractor" with the name of any specific organization, person, or position.

J. **Component 4: Supplemental Information**

1. This component consists of three sub-components: (1) Current and pending projects and proposal submissions; (2) Resumes/CVs and disclosures; and (3) Data rights assertion list. There is no page limit.

    i. **Current and Pending Projects and Proposal Submissions**

        a. Provide the information specified below about any current, pending, or proposed projects from/with any sources (e.g., federal, state, local or foreign government agencies, public or private foundations, industrial or other commercial organizations). List all projects involving the proposed PI or team members occupying key positions, including those for which they do not receive salary.

        b. Each entry shall include the following information:

            (1) Status (current, pending, or proposed)

            (2) Title

            (3) One sentence summary of the project

            (4) Explanation of how the project is related to the proposed research project and the degree of overlap, if applicable

            (5) Source of funding and POC

            (6) Total funding amount (if current)

            (7) Proposed or actual period of performance

            (8) Contract or grant number (if current)

            (9) Percentage of effort devoted (or expected to be devoted) to the project (Note: this can be number of labor hours per person)

    ii. **Resumes/CVs and disclosures**

        a. Include the PI's resume/CV as well as the resume/CV for any other individuals that will occupy key positions if awarded.

        b. Provide disclosure statements for key personnel IAW NSPM33 and FAR 9.5. Include the following information (this information may be included in the resumes/CVs):

            (1) Organizational affiliations and employment

            (2) Other support, contractual or otherwise, direct, and indirect, including current and pending private and public sources of funding or income, both foreign and domestic

            (3) Current or pending participation in, or applications to, programs sponsored by foreign governments, instrumentalities, or entities, including foreign government talent recruitment programs

            (4) Positions and appointments, both domestic and foreign, including affiliations with foreign entities or governments, to include titled academic, professional, or institutional appointments

    iii. **Data Rights Assertion List** IAW DFARS 252.227-7013(e).

IX. Evaluation and Selection Process

A. SI-ST will leverage a secure web-based collaboration platform to facilitate and streamline the internal evaluation process for submissions received under the BAA. This is an internal system used by staff only.

B. SI-ST's evaluation process is intended to provide informed and reproducible assessments of offeror's submissions to ensure that the research portfolio aligns to the needs of the Agency's CWMD mission, embraces innovation and future-focused thinking, and balances the research effort to ensure that SI-ST maintains a watchful eye across the totality of the threat trends space.

C. The submission process is two-phased. Phase one requires a short white paper and phase two requires a full proposal. White papers will result in either a Request for Proposal (RFP) or rejection. SI-ST will notify the submitter in either case with the rationale for its decision. If specific inconsistencies, missing information, or other flaws prompted rejection, SI-ST may also provide guidance on how the offeror may revise their white paper for resubmission. Not all rejection notices will contain offers for resubmittal or revision guidance. Requests for additional information about white paper rejections will not receive a response.

D. White papers may be rejected during the compliance stage (e.g., because SI-ST was unable to evaluate the white paper due to missing elements or could not confirm it is a valid organizational offer) or during the Selection Authority stage (additional information about each review stage is provided below). Submitters may choose to resubmit rejected white papers after edits/corrections are made. The Government will not guarantee reconsideration in line with other received white papers nor guarantee an initially rejected white paper will result in an RFP if resubmitted.

E. Favorably evaluated white papers will result in an invitation to submit a proposal (i.e., Request for Proposal or RFP), sent to the offeror via email. The RFP email will highlight any suggested revisions to incorporate into the proposal based on the technical review, as well as any requested clarifications. Such recommendations may include but are not limited to: (1) adding or eliminating a task; (2) reducing the scope and associated cost to align better with resource allocations; or (3) reorienting the problem statement and technical approach. The email will also include a proposal due date.

F. Submitted proposals will be evaluated and then either selected for funding, rejected, or may be held upon joint agreement between the submitter and USG for later use. To enable prioritization for possible selection across the proposals received, SI-ST will use a numbering scheme aligned to a rating. Each criterion for technical review, research manager review, and selection authority review will receive a score that will determine the projects that best align with the needs of the research portfolio, Agency goals, and USG guidance.

Score	Rating	Description
5	Outstanding	The proposed work is a technically exceptional submission that is pertinent to program goals and objectives. It contains multiple strengths that will provide significant benefit to USG and that far outweigh any weaknesses. The risk of unsuccessful performance is low.
4	Good	The proposed work is a technically thorough submission that is pertinent to program goals and objectives. The proposal contains at least one strength that will provide benefit to USG

Score	Rating	Description
		and that outweighs any weaknesses. The risk of unsuccessful performance is low to moderate.
3	Acceptable	The proposed work is a technically adequate submission that is pertinent to program goals and objectives. Strengths and weaknesses are offsetting or will have little or no impact on contract performance. The risk of unsuccessful performance is no worse than moderate.
2	Marginal	The proposed work is a technically weak submission that is pertinent to program goals and objectives. It has ONE or MORE weaknesses that are not offset by strengths. The risk of unsuccessful performance is high.
1	Unacceptable	The proposed work does not meet requirements or is not pertinent to program goals and objectives and contains ONE or MORE deficiencies. The work proposed is unawardable.

G. Any criterion scored as "Unacceptable (U)" will render the applicant's submission "Unawardable," and it will not be considered further.

H. Before a final award decision is made, proposals will also be evaluated against a short list of criteria including (1) applicability to the DTRA CWMD mission, (2) urgent needs of DTRA and the CWMD community, (3) portfolio regional/topical balance, (4) timing and sequencing of the project, (5) innovation and creativity in achieving results, (6) available manpower and funds levels to contract the project, and (7) past performance (including recency, relevance, and quality of performance), if applicable. Rejection notices will include a rationale for SI-ST's decision.

I. White paper and proposal submissions under this research effort will undergo a tiered evaluation process. Where possible, SI-ST will use the same evaluators for the white paper review and the corresponding proposal review.

J. SI-ST reviews each white paper and proposal for compliance; evaluates the research topic, methodology, and teaming to ensure it is feasible; addresses whether the research supports SI-ST's strategic needs and will have an anticipated return on investment; and determines whether the project is fiscally possible within funding levels. SI-ST will entertain concurrent external Government and SME reviews to ensure the most knowledgeable review possible. This Advisory Group will be comprised of experts in specific disciplines (technology, policy, strategy, etc.) or represent a USG viewpoint on the CWMD community.

K. Evaluation areas include:

1. **Compliance**. This evaluation ensures the submission is complete and a valid offer. It reviews:

   i. Adherence to submission guidelines, internal consistency, and completeness (e.g., no "mismatched" section headers and section content or "TBD" sections).

   ii. Authorization by a corporate officer.

   iii. Description of specific goals/objectives (research questions).

   iv. Cost (to determine consistency within the limits of the BAA funding ceiling).

2. **Technical Review (TR)**. This evaluation determines whether the research project, as proposed, provides an opportunity to solve future WMD problems. It reviews:

    i. Alignment with strategic guidance.

    ii. Qualifications of the PI and research team.

    iii. Project focus (to determine if research is adequately focused on future challenges related to WMD topics and/or emerging disruptive technologies [EDT]).

    iv. Alignment of research objectives and methodology.

    v. Presence of risk mitigation.

3. **Advisory Group (AG) (as needed)**. This evaluation addresses subject matter alignment to CWMD mission space and possible redundancy within the community. It reviews:

    i. Relevance to the WMD problem set (that is, the problem set identified in the submission is direct/indirectly supportive of work by the CWMD community).

    ii. Project focus (to determine if there is sufficient future focus to allow the CWMD community to act on research findings and recommendations and if the project will support DTRA's missions as a CSA and/or DA).

    iii. Research topic (to determine if it fills gaps or complements the existing body of work).

    iv. Proposed methods, participants, and research goals (to determine if a positive return on investment [ROI] is likely).

4. **Research Manager (RM)**. This evaluation determines whether the submission supports the needs of the total Fiscal Year research portfolio. It reviews:

    i. Applicability of the proposed work to the research portfolio goals and objectives and known gaps in knowledge.

    ii. Qualifications of the proposed research team, including the PI, other research team members, and consultants (to determine if they are capable of conducting the research).

    iii. Proposed research approach (to determine if it is viable).

    iv. Risk mitigation plan.

    v. Project focus (to determine if the project is sufficiently focused on a threat trend that is not well characterized, not well covered in the existing literature, and has the applicability to meet urgent needs or support crisis response).

5. **Selection Authority (SA).** This final review step addresses overall benefit and applicability to the office and Agency. It reviews:

    i. Technical merits of the project that lead the Government to understand the likelihood of beneficial ROI.

    ii. Scope and complexity of the proposed work (to determine if the USG staff can accommodate what is proposed [manpower, time constraints, allocated funds]).

    iii. Project construction, including research objectives, assembled team, and methods (to determine if the project will allow for ROI and if risk to portfolio, Agency, and USG is allowable).

X. Submission Instructions

A. All white papers and proposals, as well as questions regarding this BAA, shall be submitted to the following email address, which is regularly monitored by program (technical) and contracting personnel: dtra.belvoir.si.mbx.hdtra1-stri-Adm@mail.mil.

B. When submitting white papers, proposals, or questions, it is the applicant's responsibility to:

1. Ensure a correct email address is provided at time of submission.

2. Provide at least two points of contact to ensure responses reach the intended recipient.

3. Ensure that emails from DTRA regarding this BAA or associated submissions are not blocked by "spam blocker" software or other means that the recipient's internet service provider may have implemented to block the receipt of certain email messages.

C. If for any reason there is a delivery failure of email notices regarding submissions, including those highlighted above, DTRA will make no further attempt to contact the applicant.

D. DTRA will not release employee personal contact information. Proposals or white papers submitted directly to SI-ST personnel will not be considered. Only materials submitted to the specified email address will be evaluated.

E. All applicants will be notified regarding acceptance or rejection via email. Due to the workload of the SI-ST team (related to numbers of submissions), SI-ST is unable to provide direct phone calls or meetings to provide this information.

F. An email notice of intent to award should not be construed as an obligation on the part of the Government; only duly authorized procurement personnel may commit resources. Only Contracting Officers (KO) are legally authorized to bind the Government. This will be done by issuing a contract document to the selected applicants.

G. The email notice of intent to award must not be used as a basis for accruing costs to the Government prior to award. Selected applicants are not authorized to begin work, as any award is subject to successful negotiations (if determined necessary by DTRA) between DTRA contracting personnel and the selected organization and to the availability of funds.

XI. Negotiation

Because white papers and proposals are not based upon a common work statement, cost analysis and negotiations are required. Selected proposals will be subject to negotiations IAW FAR 15.4 procedures, which will include cost and price and may include technical scope. The Procuring Contracting Officer (PCO) will have the ultimate authority and responsibility to make final scope determinations for selections of proposals that will not be totally funded to ensure the portion selected meets the solicited requirements and does not represent a substantial change to the original scope of work proposed.

XII. Contact Information

To submit questions regarding this BAA and its contents or to otherwise contact the SI-ST team, please email dtra.belvoir.si.mbx.hdtra1-stri-Adm@mail.mil.