

AACE BAA (08-30) FAQ
(Revised July 3, 2008)

Q1. In the AACE solicitation, it says that the performer selected for the Task 2 Metrics and Evaluation effort, will not and cannot be selected for the Task 1 Development effort, whether as a prime or subcontractor or in any other capacity; therefore, if DARPA selects your proposal for Task 2, your proposal submitted for Task 1 will be considered as "not selectable" even if it would otherwise have been considered "selectable" according to the evaluation criteria. Could an organization receive both a "Metrics and Evaluation" team award, as well as a Development award, even if the investigators were mutually exclusive?

A1. Proposals from the same organization can NOT be selected for both Task 1 and Task 2 regardless of whether any of the team members overlap.

Q2. Are there any budget parameters we should consider for BAA 08-30, Architecture-Aware Compiler Environment (AACE)?

A2. No budget constraints or parameters have been set for the AACE BAA. Each offeror must develop a solution that fully addresses the goals and deliverables of the AACE BAA within a reasonable and justifiable budget.

Q4. Will DARPA be hosting a proposer's day or teaming website that might facilitate the networking to support team formation.

A4. No proposer's day will be held. The government will not be providing or supporting a teaming website.

Q5. FPGA and GPU technologies are both mentioned in the "background/goals" introduction, but are not specifically mentioned in the more detailed sections of the BAA. Are FPGAs intended to be in scope of this effort?

A5. The initial implementation of AACE, as addressed in this solicitation, is intended to specifically address multi-core processor based systems including multi-chip and heterogeneous resources. Ideally, the AACE solutions sought would be extensible to address all possible processing technologies, potentially including FPGAs and GPUs, however this is not the emphasis of this solicitation.

Q6. With regard to the presentations from the ECCD Workshop posted at <http://www.darpa.mil/ipto/personnel/harrod.asp>, Attachment_01.ppt states: All information submitted in response to this announcement will be considered public information and will be made available to workshop attendees (Position papers, Presentations). In the event of an associated solicitation, all submitted material will be considered available to be placed on a public web site. I have not been able to find any public information resulting from the RFI.

A6. All material presented at the ECCD Workshop (which resulted from the ECCD RFI) are posted on the referenced website as well as the solicitation web page at http://www.darpa.mil/ipto/solicit/solicit_open.asp. No other material was presented at the ECCD workshop.

Q7. What is the assumed start date for Phase 1?

A7. Assuming DARPA program and funding approvals, an estimate for AACE Phase I to be initiated would be in the mid to late November 2008 time frame.

Q8. The Task 2 team is expected to evaluate prototypes from and collaborate with an unknown number of Task 1 teams. When we are creating our budget, how should we account for this variable cost? Should we assume some maximum or average number of Task 1 teams and construct the budget with this assumption?

A8. A possible solution is to propose a base effort that is required regardless of the number of Task 1 teams to be evaluated and then also propose an amount that each Task 1 team evaluation would cost. These two amounts could be combined for a total estimate.

Q9. We are planning to submit a proposal and wondered if you could provide some clarification on the commitment to commercialization of the compiler. In our proposal, we are planning to provide some open source components and some proprietary components of the complete AACE. Would this approach satisfy the commercialization requirement as stated in the BAA?

A9. The BAA states that, "Performers must commit to either commercialization of the AACE developed under this effort or providing the environment and the technologies as open source." If the environment will be made available as open source, then the entire AACE must be open source, not just some of the components. The proposal evaluation criteria goes on to state, "The offeror will be evaluated on their capability to transition the technology to the research, industrial, and operational military communities in such a way as to enhance U.S. defense. *Offerors should provide a clear explanation of how the technologies to be developed will be transitioned for government use and available as open source to the user community.* Also considered will be impediments to future transition, including intellectual property restrictions." Therefore, proposals that do not fully meet the commercialization requirement may be downgraded at evaluation.

Q.10 In our original proposal, we broke out the individual SOW items for our subcontractors. This created a fairly long section 2.5 Overall Statement of Work.

Would you prefer to see the SOW compressed into major deliverables, with the subcontractor SOW items developed potentially later at contracting times? Or is breaking out the subcontractor deliverables acceptable/preferable to you?

A.10 Please do break out all the requested costs in your proposal. If your team were to receive an award, a shorter/more concise SOW may be negotiated at that time.

Q11. The BAA states that the AACE should be commercialized or made available as open source, but not a combination thereof. Our proposed solution utilizes some open source components, and we would like to be able to return changes to those components to the open source community. The complete AACE, including the open source-derived components, will be commercialized by the prime. Does this satisfy DARPA's requirements for commercialization of technology?

A11. Yes.

Q12. The BAA makes reference to a requirement for 75% characterization accuracy in Phase I / 90% accuracy in Phase II. What metric will be used to evaluate accuracy of the characterization?

A12. The metric will be the relative accuracy for each characteristic value.

Q13. I interpret the text in section 2.9 to indicate that short resumes should be provided only for the six key personnel and that current and pending support information should be provided for both the six designated key personnel and the lead team member for each subcontractor. Is that correct?

A13. This is correct.

Q14. In section 2.9, should the "key individual time commitments" table include both the six designated key personnel and the lead team member for each subcontractor, or just the six designated key personnel?

A14. Please show the commitment info for the key personnel and the team leads.

Q15. What span of years should the "key individual time commitments" table in section 2.9 cover? (The example table shows information for 2007 - 2010.)

A15. For the life of the contract. We can negotiate a change when an individual's involvement in the project changes.

Q16. The language on funding restrictions in the amended AACE BAA is highlighted. Has there been a change in your anticipation of using 6.2 funds?

A16. No.

Q17. The Amended BAA states that a Task 1 proposal must include specific system characteristics that will be used to guide optimization in the AACE and that the Task 2 team will produce the system characterization data used to measure the Phase I Go/No Go test. Does this mean that all Task 1 teams will use the same characteristics? (implying some post-award negotiation among teams?)

A17. Each Task 1 team will determine the characteristics that are important to their project. The Task 2 team will characterize three systems (once in Phase 1 and once in Phase 2) based on what the Task 1 teams determine should be characterized.

Q18. The Amended BAA states that the Task 2 team will work from publicly available data on the target system. Do you expect that the Task 2 team will measure the characteristics (in which case they duplicate a significant part of the Task 1 effort) or do you expect that they will derive them analytically? (In the latter case, the characterization has the potential to miss significant effects caused by the vendor compiler and the operating software on the system. Those effects might well mislead optimization.) My overall concern is that the characteristics of use for optimization may well be different than those that are derivable from published specifications.

A18. We expect the Task 2 team will determine the values based on published data from a vendor and measure the values. The Task 2 team will work with the Task 1 teams to make sure that we have a fair evaluation process. We will make sure that there is a common agreement on how these tests are executed.