

**NATIONAL SECURITY
AGENCY
FORT GEORGE G. MEADE,
MARYLAND**



Release – 14 April 2015

BROAD AGENCY ANNOUNCEMENT (BAA)

FOR

CYBER COMPETITION AWARDS

FY 2015

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BAA-004-15

CFDA # 12.901

“Mathematical Sciences Grant Program”

SECTION I - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

This Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) sets forth research areas of interest to the National Security Agency (NSA). This BAA is issued under Section 6.102 (d) (2) of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), and under Section 22.315 of the Department of Defense Grant and Agreement Regulations (DoDGARs), which provides for the competitive selection of basic research proposals. BAAs may be used by Agencies to fulfill their requirements for scientific study and experimentation directed toward advancing the state of the art or increasing knowledge or understanding, rather than focusing on a specific system or hardware solution. Proposals submitted in response to this BAA that are selected for award are considered to be the result of competition in accordance with 10 U.S.C. 2361 and 32 C.F.R. Sections 22.315 and 22.325.

The National Security Agency is soliciting proposals for grants or cooperative agreements to promote the study of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) with emphasis on Cyber-related study, in high schools and colleges through support for awards and/or scholarships for winners of competitions. Solutions using innovative approaches are sought.

1.1 SCHEDULE:

Proposals shall be due not later than 30 days after issuance of the BAA. The closing date is **14 May 2015, NLT 12:00 pm (EST)**. Proposal evaluations are expected to conclude no later than 30 days after the closing date.

1.2 FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION (CYBER COMPETITIONS)

The National Security Agency is soliciting grants or cooperative agreements for provision of awards or scholarships to winners of cyber competitions at the high school and/or college level.

The NSA is seeking to support competitions that foster interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics by providing monetary support for awards and/or scholarships for winners of these competitions. We are especially interested in programs that focus on a diverse student population (protected classes, women and people with disabilities); however this is not a set-aside program and no additional funds have been allocated for support. Innovative approaches are encouraged. Preference will be given to programs reaching a wide range of students (e.g. statewide or regional) as well as those focusing on cybersecurity, computer science, engineering or mathematics activities. Programs will also be evaluated on their plan to administer and distribute prizes or scholarships. Submissions that include plans to hold competitions/award ceremonies in which NSA can participate are preferred.

SECTION II - AWARD INFORMATION

2.0 AWARD TYPES AND FUNDING LEVELS

Awards made as a result of this BAA will be in the form of Grants or Cooperative Agreements. Offerors shall specify the type of award requested.

Funding for this BAA and anticipated awards will start in the fourth quarter of FY15. Individual awards should not exceed twelve months in duration. Offerors shall state in their proposal the expected period of performance in terms of specific months (1 to 12 months). Total available funding for this BAA is expected to be \$100,000.

There are no specific restrictions to the number of awards or the amount of any award. Awardees should expect awards to range from \$1,000.00 - \$60,000.00 per year. Awards may be made for up to 12 months after initial receipt of proposals. In addition, offers must remain open for a period of 12 months after receipt of proposals.

2.1 GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

As defined in the DoD Grant and Agreement Regulations, DoD 3210.6-R, a grant is “A legal instrument which, consistent with 31 U.S.C. 6304, is used to enter into a relationship:

1. Of which the principal purpose is to transfer a thing of value to the recipient to carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by a law of the United States, rather than to acquire property or services for the Department of Defense’s direct benefit or use.
2. In which substantial involvement is not expected between the Department of Defense and the recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated by the grant.”

The DoD Grant and Agreement Regulations defines a cooperative agreement as “A legal instrument which, consistent with 31 U.S.C. 6305, is used to enter into the same kind of relationship as a grant, except that substantial involvement is expected between the Department of Defense and the recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated by the cooperative agreement. This term does not include cooperative research and development agreements as defined in 15 U.S.C. 3710a”.

2.2 THE AGENCY MAY BE INVOLVED IN THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:

1. Assisting the Awardee with administrative activities. This may include receiving and evaluating applications for proposed programs, as well as selecting and notifying selected participants.
2. Assisting the Awardee in providing advertisement and evaluation of the proposed program. This may include mailings, posting on the NSA external website, collecting evaluation forms from participants, and communicating feedback from these evaluations.
3. Assisting the Awardee by providing guest speakers, judges, or other means of competition participation/recruiting presences from NSA personnel.

SECTION III - ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

3.0 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

1. U.S. Universities - Public or Private
2. U.S. Public Schools Systems - High Schools
3. U.S. Non-Profit Organizations which meet the requirements of Internal Revenue Code Section 501 (c) (3)
4. Federally Recognized Tribal Governments, including Alaska Native Corporations and authorized intertribal consortia, as defined in 25 U.S.C. 405b(e)

3.1 COST SHARING OR MATCHING

There are no requirements for Cost Sharing or Matching arrangements.

3.2 OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Individuals supported by a grant or cooperative agreement awarded as a result of this BAA must be U.S. citizens, or permanent residents admitted to the U.S. for permanent residence prior to award. To be eligible for an award, an organization must submit a certificate of Assurance or Compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and be constantly in compliance with the Act.

3.2.1 SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (SAM)

SAM is the primary Government repository for prospective federal awardee information and the centralized Government system for certain contracting, grants, and other assistance related processes. All contractors must be registered in the SAM to receive solicitations, awards, or payment. To register in the SAM, you may use any one of the following methods: (1) telephone: 1-866-606-8220; (2) input directly to the SAM through the internet at: <https://www.acquisition.gov>.

Processing time for registration of an applicant submitting an application may take up to five (5) business days.

Should you need additional information, visit their home page at <http://www.sam.gov>.

3.2.2 REQUIRED ACQUISITION RESOURCE CENTER (ARC) REGISTRATION

1. Definitions. As used in this clause -

(1) "Acquisition Resource Center (ARC) Business Registry" means the primary Maryland Procurement Office (MPO) repository for contractor information required for the conduct of business with MPO.

(2) "Registered in the ARC Business Registry" means that all mandatory information is included in the ARC Business Registry.

2. (1) By submission of an offer, the offeror acknowledges the requirement that a prospective awardee must be registered in the ARC Business Registry prior to award, during performance, and through payment of any contract resulting from this solicitation, except for awards to foreign vendors for work performed outside the United States.

(2) Lack of registration in the ARC Business Registry shall make an offeror ineligible for award.

- (3) MPO established a goal of registering all contractors in the ARC Business Registry to provide a market research tool and to facilitate communication between the MPO and the contractor community. Offerors that are not already registered in the ARC should apply for registration immediately upon receipt of this solicitation.
3. The Contractor is responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the data within the ARC, and for any liability resulting from the Government's reliance on inaccurate or incomplete data. The Contractor agrees to periodically update information when previously provided information changes. To remain registered in the ARC Business Registry after the initial registration, the Contractor is required to confirm annually on or before the anniversary of the initial registration that the information is accurate and complete.
 4. Offerors that are not already registered in the ARC Business Registry shall register via the Internet at: <http://www.nsaarc.net/>

3.2.3 PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

There are no limits on the number of proposals that may be submitted pertaining to an institution, individual investigator/program director, or both.

3.2.4 DEBARMENT

As indicated in Executive Order 12549, "...Executive departments and agencies shall participate in a government wide system for non-procurement debarment and suspension. A person who is debarred or suspended shall be excluded from Federal financial and non-financial assistance benefits under Federal programs and activities. Debarment or suspension of a participant in a program by one agency shall have a government wide effect."

SECTION IV - APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

4.0 WAYS TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

4.0.1 ELECTRONIC PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Offerors are strongly encouraged to utilize e-mail and submit proposals electronically to the following individual:

Grants/Contracting Specialist: Trina Benson

E-mail: tmbenso@nsa.gov Phone: (410)854-7001

HARDCOPY PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

For those who choose not to use e-mail, submissions shall be mailed to the following address when using the U.S. Postal Service or other express mail service (i.e., Federal Express, DHL, etc.):

Maryland Procurement Office
Suite 6812, BA323 (TMB)
9800 Savage Road
Fort George G. Meade 20755-6812

Hand carried proposal submissions will not be accepted.

4.1 SUBMISSION DATE AND TIME

4.1.1 Submission, modification, revision and withdrawal of proposals

1. Offerors are responsible for submitting proposals, and any modification, or revisions, so as to reach the Government office designated in the solicitation by the time specified in the solicitation. The time for receipt is 12:00 p.m. local time for the designated Government office on the date that proposal or revision is due.
2. Any proposal, modification, or revision received at the Government office designated in the solicitation after the exact time specified for receipt of offers is "late" and will not be considered unless it is received before award is made, the Grants/Contracting Specialist determines that accepting the late offer would not unduly delay the acquisition; and
 - (1) If it was transmitted through an electronic commerce method authorized by the solicitation, it was received at the initial point of entry to the Government infrastructure not later than 5:00 p.m. one working day prior to the date specified for receipt of proposals; or

- (2) There is acceptable evidence to establish that it was received at the Government installation designated for receipt of offers and was under the Government's control prior to the time set for receipt of offers; or
- (3) It is the only proposal received.

Proposals shall be due not later than 30 days after issuance of the BAA. The closing date is **14 May 2015, NLT 12:00 pm (EST)**. Proposals received after this deadline will be considered late and shall not be evaluated.

Acknowledgement of receipt of proposals will be provided via e-mail.

4.2 FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

- 4.2.1 Pre-Award Costs will not be allowed for any resultant award.
- 4.2.2 There are no other funding restrictions.

4.3 CERTIFICATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

The Government's required Certifications and Representations, as listed below, are attachments to this BAA. By signing and submitting a proposal, the prospective participant acknowledges acceptance of the terms and conditions of the attachments.

1. Military Recruiting on Campus- 32 C.F.R. Section 22.520, Campus Access for Military Recruiting and Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC)
2. Debarment and Suspension- 2 C.F.R. Part 1125, Government-wide Debarment and Suspension
3. Drug Free Workplace- 32 C.F.R. Part 26, Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)
4. Lobbying- 32 C.F.R. Part 28, New Restrictions on Lobbying

4.4 PROPOSAL ORGANIZATION

This section specifies the instructions for proposal preparation to ensure a consistent sequence and content of information, and to ensure that all proposals set forth full and sufficient information to facilitate timely and complete evaluation.

Note that proposals will **not** be returned to Offerors. Proposals shall be handled in accordance with the procedures set forth in FAR 15.207 and 3.104-4.

4.4.1 PROPOSAL COPIES AND LENGTH

1. Six (6) hard copies of each document shall be provided in the event that the offeror does not utilize the electronic submission option.

2. The Offeror's proposal shall not exceed the following page limits. Page limits exclude the covers, title pages, table of contents, and appendices. Additional pages will not be read or evaluated in any way by the evaluators. The Offeror is urged to minimize unnecessary elements and to seek brevity where it does not sacrifice completeness. Figures, diagrams, charts, and tables will not be included in the page count.

Technical Proposal: no more than 20 pages

Cost Proposal: no limit

3. Offerors **shall** mark their proposals to indicate the use of proprietary information and/or data.

4.4.2 DOCUMENT AND SECTION COMPLETENESS

Each document and major section within each document shall stand alone and shall contain all information necessary to evaluate that portion of the response, including complete coverage of and responses to relevant evaluation criteria. Appendices will be treated as auxiliary information that may be read at the option of the evaluator; therefore, the ability to evaluate a section must not depend upon the content of appendices. A brief description of the contents of these sections is provided in these proposal preparation instructions.

SECTION V – PROPOSAL FORMAT

5.0 PROPOSAL FORMAT

All proposals must consist of a technical proposal and a cost proposal. Proposals must adequately describe the technical objectives and approaches, impact on the Area of Interest (identified in Section 1.2), and requested expenditures. All submissions will be evaluated by technical reviewers in accordance with the evaluation criteria during the selection process.

5.1 TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

5.1.1 TECHNICAL PROPOSAL TITLE PAGE

The technical proposal shall include a title page with the following information:

1. BAA Number (BAA-004-15)
2. Name of Offeror
3. Area of Interest
4. Proposal Title
5. Technical Point of Contact including: name, telephone number, electronic mail address, fax number, and mailing address
6. Type of legal instrument: grant or cooperative agreement

7. Description of Institution:
 - (1.) U.S. University - Public or Private
 - (2.) U.S. Public Schools System - High School
 - (3.) U.S. Non-Profit Organization which meets the requirements of Internal Revenue Code 501 (c) (3)
 - (4.) Federally Recognized Tribal Governments, including Alaska Native Corporations and authorized intertribal consortia
8. Period of Performance
9. Original signatures on the title page

A table of contents shall be provided to allow ready reference to key sections, figures, tables, and illustrations.

The proposals shall be printed on 8 1/2" x 11" paper. Illustrations must be legible and no fold out shall exceed 11" x 17". Narrative text shall be of size 12 font or larger in Times New Roman. Tables shall use fonts no smaller than size 10 font or 10 characters per inch (whichever is larger).

5.1.2 TECHNICAL PROPOSAL CONTENT

The Technical proposal shall include an executive summary, a detailed description of the proposed program idea, a discussion of key challenges and risks, the resources necessary for successful execution of the proposal, and the expected impact on the Area of Interest. It shall thoroughly address the evaluation factors described in the 'Proposal Evaluation Criteria' portion of the BAA (Section 6). Administrative information regarding the Offeror's organizational structure, capabilities, and collaborations relevant to the proposal shall also be included. A brief overview of the contents of these sections is provided below.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The executive summary is intended to provide an overview of the salient features of the entire proposal. It shall explain briefly the Offeror's proposal without including any cost data.

The Offeror's compliance with the requirements of the BAA shall be indicated in the Executive Summary. The Offeror may also provide high level diagrams and illustrations of the proposed technical approach.

2. PROPOSED IDEA

Introduce the proposed cyber competitions idea, identify key challenges and risks, outline the proposed solution and well-defined objective(s) and benefits to the STEM/Cyber community, analyze the impact on the Area of Interest (identified in this BAA) if successful, and identify the investigators and resources.

3. **PERSONNEL, FACILITIES, RESOURCES**

(1.) Describe the personnel, facilities and other resources available for accomplishment of the objective.

(2.) The personnel section shall describe the qualifications of the principal investigator/program manager and other key individuals involved in the project. This section may include resumes/curriculum vitae. For all proposals, one individual shall be the designated principal investigator/program manager for the purposes of technical responsibility and contact.

(3.) Describe the facilities and resources that will be used in the accomplishment of the objective.

4. **ADMINISTRATIVE**

(1.) The Offeror's program organization and ability to carry out the requirements of the BAA shall be presented in this section. It shall contain any other supporting information that gives insight into the way that the program will be organized and conducted. The organization and effectiveness of the proposed program will be evaluated based in part on the information presented in this section.

(2.) Describe the process by which scholarships or prizes will be administered or distributed, including details on how and to whom funds will be paid and mechanisms for holding scholarship funds in the event that an awardee will not immediately be incurring tuition costs.

(3.) Identify other parties to whom the proposal has been/will be sent.

(4.) Describe in detail any proposed sub-contracts or relevant collaborations (planned or in place) with industry, government organizations, universities, or other institutions. The proposal shall describe how the particular collaborations are expected to facilitate the transition of research results to product offerings. If subcontracts are proposed, the Offeror shall make clear the division of the research activities.

5.2 **COST PROPOSAL**

5.2.1 **COST PROPOSAL TITLE PAGE**

The cost proposal shall include a title page with the following information:

1. BAA Number (BAA-004-15)
2. Name of Offeror
3. Area of Interest

4. Proposal Title
5. Technical Point of Contact including: name, telephone number, electronic mail address, fax number, and mailing address
6. Type of legal instrument: grant or cooperative agreement
7. Summary of the total base cost plus any requested option years
8. Description of Institution:
 - (1.) U.S. University - Public or Private
 - (2.) U.S. Public Schools System - High School
 - (3.) U.S. Non-Profit Organization which meets the requirements of Internal Revenue Code 501 (c) (3)
 - (4.) Federally Recognized Tribal Governments, including Alaska Native Corporations and authorized intertribal consortia
9. Period of Performance

5.2.2 BODY OF COST PROPOSAL

In order to evaluate the proposal for completeness and reasonableness of price, a separate breakout of the amounts, types, and structure of the award shall be included in the cost proposal.

The Grants Officer will need enough information to complete a price/cost analysis and establish the total amount as reasonable and fair.

The cost proposal shall include the anticipated schedule summary for the program, and may address the potential impact of a schedule slip in the event of a delayed contract award.

SECTION VI - APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

6.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The primary basis for selection shall be (in order of importance):

6.0.1 POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION AND RELEVANCE TO GOALS (40%)

The proposal shall be evaluated according to the alignment of proposal offerings/goals with NSA interests in the improvement/advancement of STEM education, as stated in Section 1 herein. Return on investment, or program impact compared to program cost, plays a significant role in determining potential contribution.

6.0.2 TECHNICAL MERIT (35%)

This section includes the overall technical merit, approach, and deliverables of the proposal made by the Offeror. Proposals will be evaluated on their technical feasibility (the extent to which the Offeror's proposal meets the technical goals as defined in Section 5.1 of

this BAA), and quantifiable measurability (number of teachers/students affected, ability to share deliverables, etc). Solutions using innovative approaches and reaching a large audience will be scored more favorably. Failure to demonstrate an adequate process for retaining or disbursing any award funding shall render the proposal unawardable.

6.0.3 PAST PERFORMANCE/EXPERIENCE (15%)

Prior experience with programs similar to the Offeror's proposal, or prior experience with NSA, may be used to judge potential benefits of the proposal. Demonstrated success with math, STEM and/or cyber competition programs for students will be scored more favorably. In the absence of any relevant previous experience, evaluations will be based solely on the remaining three criteria.

6.0.4 COST/SCHEDULE REALISM AND FUND AVAILABILITY (10%)

The Government shall perform a price analysis of all proposals. The Offeror's cost proposal and supporting data will be analyzed and compared to the technical effort proposed by the Offeror to determine the extent to which the Offeror has proposed a realistic price and schedule.

6.1 EVALUATION PROCESS

The Government anticipates multiple awards as a result of this BAA. However, the Government reserves the right to select for award all, some or none of the proposals received, if it is determined to be in the best interest of the Government. The Government may also make partial awards, make awards of one or more grants or cooperative agreements on the same subject matter, and to make awards up to 12 months after the date of initial receipt of proposals. The actual number of grants or cooperative agreements awarded will depend on the number of selectable proposals, cost of individual awards, and availability of funds.

The Government intends to evaluate proposals and make awards without discussions; however, the Government reserves the right to conduct discussions, as the discretion of the Grants/Contracting Officer. Because of the unique nature of each proposal, the Grants Officer may select one or more individual proposals for discussion. Selection of one or more proposals for discussion will not obligate the Government to enter into discussions with any other offeror.

The Government intends to conduct a two-stage evaluation process. First, Offerors submit full proposals to the Government for evaluation. A Proposal Review Board (PRB) will conduct the evaluation of proposals. All proposals will be carefully evaluated using the above criteria. All PRB members will determine the degree to which each proposal fully addresses the requirements of the BAA. As soon as Government proposal evaluation is complete, the Grants Officer will notify the Offerors of the selectability or non-selectability of their proposals. Second, the selected proposals will be considered for funding. Non-

selected proposals will not be returned to Offerors. Decisions to fund selected proposals will be based on the selection criteria specified above and fund availability. As a result of funding constraints, not all proposals deemed selectable may be funded. Awards resulting from this BAA will be made to responsible Offerors, whose offers, conforming to the Announcement, represent the best overall value to the Government, considering cost and non-cost factors. Where there are no significant differences in the evaluation of non-cost factors among proposals determined selectable, and such proposals are found to be of equal importance in supporting the STEM/Cyber community, then funds availability alone will be the determining criterion for award.

SECTION VII - AWARD NOTICES

7.0 AWARD & PRE-AWARD SELECTION NOTICES

Following evaluation, an applicant can expect to receive a letter indicating that a proposal will be selected or not selected. A letter indicating selection is not an authorization to begin performance. No expenditures should be made until the institution receives notice that a fully executed document is in place. The notice of grant or cooperative agreement will be signed by the Grants Officer and emailed to the authorized institution official. Unsuccessful Offerors may request additional information via e-mail.

7.1 ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

See General Provisions for NSA Grant and Cooperative Agreements, attached hereto.

7.2 REPORTING

The awardee is required to deliver a final report no later than 30 days after completion of the grant or cooperative agreement.

SECTION VIII - CONTACTS

Grants/Contracting Officer: Gary Magaw
Email: gtmagaw@nsa.gov Phone: 410-854-7105

Grants/Contracting Specialist: Trina Benson
Email: tmbenso@nsa.gov Phone: 410-854-7001

SECTION IX - OTHER INFORMATION

The Government is not obligated to make any award as a result of this BAA.