

SERDP Core Solicitation Federal Call for Proposals Full Proposal Submittal Instructions

1. PREPARATION AND CONTENT

Full proposals shall contain four sections submitted as one document: Abstract, Technical Section, Cost Section, and Appendices. Each section is described in detail below. Proposals shall be prepared in accordance with the following:

- Type size should not be less than 11 point, any font.
- All margins (top, bottom, left, and right) should not be less than 1 inch.
- Pages should be numbered beginning with the Technical Section.
- Proposals should use the headers provided in Section 1.2. These headers correspond to evaluation criteria that will be used to review, evaluate, and select proposals.
- Table of contents, introduction, executive summary, or any other elements not prescribed by this guidance are neither required nor desired.

You will submit your proposal via the [SERDP and ESTCP Management System](#) (SEMS). No electronic mail, faxed, or hard copy proposals will be accepted. ***Proposals must be submitted prior to 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time on March 4, 2021.*** All full proposals must be accompanied by the signature of an individual authorized to commit the lead organization to execute the proposed work. Complete submittal instructions can be found in Section 3 of this document.

1.1 ABSTRACT

In one page or less, provide a brief summary of the following information found in the proposal. Items 1-4 must be located at the top of the first page.

1. **Proposal Number:** The proposal number is generated by the SERDP and ESTCP Management System (SEMS) when the proposal details are entered. The proposal number for the full proposal is the same as the pre-proposal.
2. **Proposal Title**
3. **Lead Principal Investigator**
4. **Lead Organization**
5. **Objective:** A brief description of the environmental issue to be addressed, emphasizing its relevancy and importance to DoD, followed by the objectives of the proposed project.
6. **Technical Approach:** A concise summary of the science or technology (e.g., the chemical process that will be evaluated or the science behind a new sensor that will be developed) and a brief description of the tasks and methods (e.g., modeling, laboratory experiments, field work).
7. **Benefits:** A brief description of the expected benefits to DoD and the scientific community. Summarize what the project will accomplish and how the results will contribute to scientific understanding and be applied by an end-user to address the environmental issue relevant to DoD management.

This abstract is not part of the 15-page restriction for the Technical Section of the proposal.

1.2 TECHNICAL SECTION

The technical section shall be no more than 15 pages in length. A detailed description of the research to be undertaken shall be submitted using the outline below.

1. **SERDP Relevance:** Provide a brief statement describing explicitly how the proposed research project responds to the objectives of the Statement of Need (SON).
2. **Technical Objective:** State concisely the research objectives. Outline specific technical questions to be answered by the research.
3. **Technical Approach (Background, Approach, and Milestones):** Outline the research activities for which SERDP will provide support. Articulate specific technical goals, approach, and milestones for each year of the proposed project.
 - a. **Background:** Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the environmental issue and knowledge of the state of the science. Frame the proposed research in terms of current gaps in understanding or data. Articulate the hypotheses that the project will investigate. Cite relevant literature references.
 - b. **Approach:** Provide the technical approach and methods, preferably structured in hypothesis-driven tasks that clearly identify how the objectives of the proposed project will be addressed. This section should be the primary focus of the proposal. Provide details about the experimental design and methodology. If the methodology is new or unusual, describe it in sufficient detail for evaluation.
 - c. **Milestones:** Provide a project schedule in the form of a Gantt chart that delineates the timeline for each task as well as go/no go decision points. Ensure that all SERDP required deliverables are included in the Gantt chart. Required deliverables are found in the reporting guidelines on the [SERDP website](#).
 - d. **Research Team:** Identify the Principal Investigators (PIs), the key co-performers, and their respective organizations. If multiple co-performers are proposed, describe their responsibilities within the project and provide the management plan for coordinating all performers.
 - e. **Cooperative Development:** Identify government or non-government organizations that will be contributing direct funding or in-kind resources to the research effort. Describe existing or prospective joint sponsorship of any portion of the project. Where possible, provide estimates in dollars or level of effort equivalents of these in-kind resources. In the absence of agreements among sponsors for joint support, the proposal should be structured so that the research can be carried out without the resources of any other sponsor. In an appendix to the proposal, provide letter(s) supporting stated contributing efforts.
 - f. **Transition Plan:** To the extent possible, describe how the project results will be implemented in the field or transitioned for further research or development. Indicate efforts to identify a receiver of the product(s), any actual or planned agreements, and any commitment of funding to transition this technology by the completion of the project. Describe any planned guidance documents, software tools, manuals, training events, or other products that will foster technology transfer.

1.3 COST SECTION

The cost section of the full proposal is an estimate of the total project cost. Required cost spreadsheet templates are located on the [SERDP website](#). Cost sections in formats other than this template will not be accepted. The cost spreadsheet for the lead organization should reflect the entire project costs. Separate cost spreadsheets are required for each co-performer or subcontractor

whose costs exceed \$25,000 for the total project. An accompanying narrative is permitted if necessary, but not required.

All SERDP projects are funded incrementally with funds provided in the year in which they are expected to be expended. The cost section should be structured to indicate annual, incremental funding required. For planning purposes, proposers should assume a project initiation date of March 1, 2022. The first year's planned funding should run through January 31, 2023, and each subsequent year should span February 1-January 31, until anticipated project completion.

1. **Labor Costs:** Show the projected labor rates in units of hourly rate or annual salary to be charged by the PI(s), associates, and assistants. Indicate the units you are using in the table footnote. In the units column, indicate the number of hours or the fraction of annual salary to be charged. The total column is the amount per year to be paid to each performer on the project. Labor costs should be unburdened.
2. **Indirect Charge #1:** Indicate burden or fringe rate applied to salaries and the total cost per year. Provide an explanation in the table footnote of what is included in this indirect charge.
3. **Indirect Charge #2:** Indicate other relevant indirect charges such as G&A. Provide an explanation in the table footnote of what is included in this indirect charge and to which cost elements it will be applied.
4. **Major Equipment:** Provide an itemized list of permanent equipment, if any, to be acquired in support of the project, showing the cost for each item. Use the second tab in the cost spreadsheet located on the [SERDP website](#) as a template. Permanent equipment is any article of non-expendable, tangible property having a useful life of more than two years and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit.
5. **Materials, Supplies, and Consumables:** Provide a general description and total estimated cost of expendable equipment and supplies.
6. **Subcontracts and Government Partners:** For any co-performer or subcontract totaling \$25,000 or more, provide a breakout of the tasks and associated costs in a separate cost estimate using the cost spreadsheet template in the [SERDP website](#). Government partners will be provided a separate allocation of funds directly based upon this separate estimate. Funds provided directly from SERDP to government partners are not to be subject to contractor indirect charges or fees. The lead organization should plan to manage all subcontracts to non-government partners.
7. **Travel Costs:** Estimate total travel costs. For planning purposes, SERDP conducts an annual in-progress review of management and technical status of each project in the Arlington, VA area. New start projects funded to begin in 2022 will be reviewed first in February 2023, with additional annual reviews in either April/May or October/November thereafter for multi-year projects. SERDP will support attendance at one domestic technical meeting each year. SERDP intends to sponsor an annual technical Symposium in the Washington, D.C. area that investigators are expected to attend. If applicable, investigators are encouraged to budget for students and postdocs supporting the project to attend this meeting. In the event the Symposium is not held, investigators may attend an appropriate meeting of their choice at comparable cost.
8. **Publication and Report Costs:** Estimate the costs of publishing and reporting results, including the direct charges for clerical preparation, page or illustration charges, and distribution. The SERDP reporting requirements are located on the [SERDP website](#).
9. **Fixed Fee:** Eligible organizations shall list the fixed fee (i.e., profit), if any, applied to the project. Indicate in the table footnote the cost elements included in the basis for the fixed

fee.

10. **Cost by Task Summary Table:** A total cost matrix with breakout of cost per task must be included. The third tab in the cost spreadsheet located on the [SERDP website](#) provides a template. These numbers must match those on the main cost spreadsheet.

1.4 APPENDICES

Appendices are not included in the page limitation for the full proposal.

- a. *Required* - **List of Acronyms:** Provide a complete list of acronyms used in your proposal and their definitions. List the proposal number at the top of the page.
- b. *Required* - **SERDP Review Comments:** Any comments from the SERDP review of the pre-proposal provided in your letter should be addressed in the appropriate sections of the full proposal. The response to each comment should be summarized in this section and a citation provided indicating the full proposal section and text location in which the comment was addressed.
- c. *Required, if literature is cited* - **Literature Citations:** Provide literature citations for any material cited in the technical section or the supporting technical data.
- d. *Optional* - **Supporting Technical Data (limited to 5 pages):** Data sheets, charts, and referenced research extracts.
- e. *Required* - **Abbreviated Curricula Vitae (CV) (3 pages or less per CV):** CVs are required for all key technical personnel at the lead organization and the lead individual for all key co-performers or subcontractors.
- f. *Optional* - **Existing Support:** If the PI is funded by other programs to conduct research that overlaps or parallels the current proposal, provide a brief description of that support (½ page per relevant effort). If applicable, provide letters of support from prospective joint sponsors. See Cooperative Development in the Technical Section.
- g. *Optional* - **Letters of Support:** If you have received letters of support or commitment from installations or site managers, provide them in this section.

2. EVALUATION FACTORS FOR FULL PROPOSALS

The following evaluation factors will be the sole basis for reviewing full proposals. Technical Merit is more important than Personnel which is more important than Cost. Transition Plan is less important than Cost.

TECHNICAL MERIT

The overall scientific and technical merit of the proposal must be clearly identifiable. The evaluation will consider the depth of the research leading to the proposed approach and the substantiation by calculations, test data, and references. Emphasis will be placed on the proposer's demonstration of a thorough understanding of the environmental issue. The proposer must demonstrate the ability to execute the work by providing a comprehensive, logical, orderly, and concise plan that indicates major tasks, milestones, critical paths, go/no-go decision points, and key events leading to the completion of the project in the proposed time frame. In addition, the proposer must show how the technical approach and proposed tasks will address the project objectives. Strong consideration will be given to innovation; however, the degree of risk associated with individual proposals will be weighed against potential benefits. The proposal should clearly articulate how the research will advance the state of the science.

PERSONNEL

Proposal reviewers will examine and assess the applicable qualifications, capabilities, demonstrated achievements, and proposed time commitment to the project by the proposed principal(s) and other key personnel.

COST

Proposal reviewers will consider the reasonableness of the proposed cost, as well as the appropriateness and substantiation of costs for the technical complexity described. Cost sharing or leveraged resources also will be considered.

TRANSITION PLAN

The transition plan of the proposed research product(s) should demonstrate a clear understanding of how the project's results will transition to implementation either directly through future demonstrations or through future development, and show a linkage between the work proposed and the needs of ultimate end user of the results. Coordination between the proposer and targeted end user community is of value for late-stage development projects.

3. SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals are submitted via the SERDP and ESTCP Management System (SEMS). No electronic mail, faxed, or hard copy proposals will be accepted. **Proposals must be submitted prior to 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time on March 4, 2021.**

Complete all steps below in order to submit a proposal.

- Create a single PDF file that contains all required sections outlined in the proposal guidance.
- Log in to [SEMS](#).
- Enter all required proposal details into SEMS. Proposal details may be saved and edited prior to final submission.
- Download or print the “Proposal Details” page. This must be signed by an individual with the authority to commit the lead organization to execute the proposed work. The document may be electronically or hand-signed. Ensure all information on the signed summary matches the proposal file.
- Upload the signed “Proposal Details” page.
- Add the system-generated proposal number, project title, lead PI name and organization to first page of proposal as instructed in Section 1.1 above.
- Create a single PDF file that contains all required sections outlined in the proposal guidance.
- Upload the final proposal file.
- Submit the proposal. Only proposals that have been submitted will be considered. Proposals with a “Saved” status will not be reviewed.

Once the proposal has been submitted, SEMS will display an on-line confirmation message and will send an email notification to the proposer. It is the sole responsibility of the proposer to make certain the proposal is properly received by SERDP.

The proposer may continue to modify proposal details and upload revised proposal files until the due date. Prior versions of the proposal will be over-written and **only the last version uploaded** will remain in the system. Ensure the proposal details entered into the system match the contents of the proposal file. It is recommended that proposals are uploaded as early as possible prior to the deadline, to ensure a successful and timely submission.

For proposal upload questions, contact the SERDP Office at 571-372-6565.

4. REQUIREMENTS FOR PROPOSALS SELECTED FOR FUNDING

Please be aware of the following requirements for proposals that are selected for funding. These requirements are considered part of the proposal process and the associated costs are to be borne by the proposer.

4.1 REVISED PROPOSAL

Proposals selected for funding may require revision following the selection process and prior to contract award. Common revisions include adjustments to schedule, task structure, funding profile, or specification of required deliverables. Any missing letters of support should be provided at that time.

4.2 BRIEFING TO THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD

Proposals selected for funding require final approval from the SERDP Scientific Advisory Board (SAB). This approval generally requires the PI to present a briefing to the SAB in September or October 2021. Detailed instructions are provided to selected proposers. Note that this requirement does not apply to Limited Scope proposals.