Request for Information

DARPA VENTURE HORIZONS

September 14, 2026

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency
Commercial Strategy
675 North Randolph Street
Arlington, VA 22203-2114

DARPA Venture Horizons Request for Information ("RFI")
Commercial Strategy

I. Introduction

The primary mission of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency ("DARPA" or "the Agency") is to make pivotal investments in breakthrough technologies that support our national security. DARPA Commercial Strategy seeks to provide opportunities to connect top-tier investors with DARPA Program Managers, Research and Development ("R&D") performers and other DARPA personnel through an initiative called DARPA Venture Horizons ("Venture Horizons") to amplify the impact of DARPA's work in breakthrough technologies.

DARPA is a unique organization that has consistently created game-changing technologies by building and empowering some of the strongest teams in the technical world. DARPA teams are charged with taking on the highest technical and business risks to create breakthrough technologies. The ultimate results have included not only game-changing military capabilities, such as precision weapons and stealth technology, but also icons of modern society, such as the Internet, mRNA vaccines, automated voice recognition and language translation, and Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers small enough to embed in consumer devices. DARPA goes to great lengths to identify, recruit, and support skilled program managers ("PM"), industry technologists, military subject matter experts, and academic researchers ("DARPA experts") who are at the top of their respective fields, seeking the opportunity to push the limits of their respective disciplines. These experts, who are foundational to DARPA's history of success, come from academia, industry, military, and government agencies to serve limited tenures, generally three to five years. These tenure limits for government positions help ensure that DARPA experts move rapidly through technology project iteration with the goal of producing proofs of concept or retiring projects quickly. Tenure limits also ensure that DARPA produces high-caliber technical subject matter experts capable of continuing to advance impactful technologies.

This RFI seeks to identify commensurate talent from a select group of qualified investors to which DARPA may provide opportunities for continued investment in DARPA technologies through engagements with our subject matter experts. Respondents to this RFI may include family offices, angel investors, venture capital firms, corporate venture capital firms, and private equity ("PE") or buyout firms (1) with pedigrees and track records of commercializing technology, and (2) that are interested in partnering with DARPA to advance the Agency's portfolio of technologies. RFI responses should explain investment flexibility or mandates (e.g., early-stage equity, growth equity, licensing, debt (including venture debt or private credit capacity)). Responses should also focus on communicating how respondents are likely to contribute to the Agency's mission.

II. Background

DARPA is comprised of administrators of over 250 research and development programs. The DARPA research portfolio is managed across six technical offices. Descriptions of each technical office are highlighted below in Section III.

DARPA Venture Horizons will provide access to certain DARPA portfolio and subject matter experts through engagements that may create investment opportunities in high-impact DARPA technologies. Potential investment opportunities strengthen the Agency's partnerships with investors, to help productize, scale, and transition DARPA-funded technologies for Department of War ("DoW"), commercial, or dual-use markets. Productization, scale, and transition of DARPA-funded technologies may include DARPA retaining certain rights to intellectual property that may be subject to export, field of use, or geographic use restrictions. Responses to this RFI will be used to identify investors who will be invited to participate in Venture Horizons. **No Government funding or reimbursement of expenses will be provided to individuals participating in any Venture Horizons activities.** Any investment derived from Venture Horizons engagements must be made without the use of adversarial capital, with investors certifying as to the source of funds used for each opportunity.[1]

III. Request for Information

A. RFI Focus Areas.

This RFI seeks responses that address:

1. **Investment Goals:** Investment entity capacity and track record of performance.
    - Willingness to self-certify at the time of this response and at the time of investment that the entity does not have adversarial capital or partners.

2. **History & Domain Expertise:** Expertise in technology categories aligned with at least one of the six DARPA technical offices (listed below).

3. **Commitment of Service:** Dedication to serving DARPA's national and economic security mission and provide crucial advisory and/or mentoring support to DARPA experts.

4. **Unique Capabilities:** Any unique capabilities that you want DARPA to be aware of, relevant to this RFI such as, but not limited to, staff with current security clearance, geography sector preferences or restrictions, and hands-on performance.

To facilitate categorization of responses, respondents are requested (See IV, below) to align their responses to DARPA's six technical offices. Respondents are also invited to list any technical investments that may be of interest to DARPA regardless of whether it is specifically identified in the technical office descriptions below. Any respondent that has previously submitted a response to DARPA's Venture Horizons Request for Information ("RFI") must submit a new, complete response to this RFI in order to be considered for an invitation to participate, unless DARPA expressly notifies the respondent in writing that a new submission is not required. Absent such express written notification from DARPA, a prior submission will not be carried forward, incorporated by reference, or otherwise considered sufficient for purposes of this RFI. Each respondent required to resubmit must provide all required information in its entirety and must ensure that the resubmission includes all current, complete, and updated information applicable as of the date of resubmission. Failure to provide a complete and updated submission, when required, will result in the respondent not being considered for an invitation to participate.

[1] Adversarial capital is as a direct or indirect investment from a rival nation in a U.S. company or technology that could block the DoW from working with the investor for national security reasons. See https://fedscoop.com/adversarial-capital-investment-ellen-lord-china/#:~:text=Ellen%20Lord%2C%20the%20undersecretary%20for,at%20the%20beginning%20of%20the.

B. DARPA Technical Offices.

DARPA's research portfolio is managed across the following six technical offices. For more details of each office go to https://www.darpa.mil/about/offices.

Multi X Office ("MXO")

MXO's core mission is to develop high-performance intelligent microsystems and next-generation components to ensure U.S. dominance in the areas of Command, Control, Communications, Computing, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (C4ISR), Electronic Warfare (EW), and Directed Energy (DE). The effectiveness, survivability, and lethality of these systems depend critically on the microsystems contained inside. MXO focuses on: (1) quantum, photonic, and organic circuits; (2) new microsystems manufacturing ecosystem; and (4) dual-use by design.

Strategic Technology Office ("STO")

STO develops technology to give national security leaders trusted, disruptive capabilities to win in all physical domains (air, space, sea, and land) and across the spectrum of competition, from deterrence to high-end peer combat. STO focuses on the following areas: (1) advanced sensors processing; (2) battlefield effects; (3) command, control, and communications; (4) Systems Warfare National Resilience.

Tactical Technology Office ("TTO")

TTO's mission is to provide or prevent strategic and tactical surprise with very high-payoff, high-risk development and demonstration of revolutionary new platforms in ground systems, maritime (surface and undersea) systems, air systems, and space systems. TTO focuses on: (1) reimagination of hardware design, development, and test; (2) rapid, affordable, and scalable manufacturing; (3) Decisive long-range effects; and (4) novel approaches that radically change the military advantage calculus.

Defense Sciences Office ("DSO")

DSO identifies and pursues high-risk, high-payoff research initiatives across a broad spectrum of science and engineering disciplines and transforms them into important, new game-changing technologies for U.S. national security. DSO relies on the greater scientific research community to help identify and explore ideas that could potentially revolutionize the state-of-the-art. DSO focuses on: (1) materials, manufacturing, and structures; (2) sensing, measuring, and affecting; (3) math, computation and processing; and (4) complex, dynamic, and intelligent systems.

Information Processing Techniques Office ("IPTO")

IPTO creates groundbreaking science and develops transformational capabilities in the informational and computational spheres to surprise adversaries and maintain enduring advantages for national security. IPTO focuses on: (1) transformative artificial intelligence; (2) offensive and defensive cyber; (3) fighting in the information domain; and (4) resilient, adaptable, and secure systems.

Biological Technologies Office ("BTO")

BTO develops capabilities that embrace the unique properties of biology and applies those features to revolutionize how the U.S. protects its Warfighters. BTO is helping DoW expand technology-driven capabilities in two thrust areas: (1) warfighter combat casualty care and performance optimization; (2) warfighting logistics, including edge manufacturing and operational advantage; and (3) frontier technologies, including data factories and simulation.

IV. Submission Format

Respondents to this RFI are encouraged to be as succinct as possible while also providing actionable insights. Format specifications for responses include 12-point font, single-spaced, 8.5 by 11-inch paper format, with 1-inch margins in MS Word in .docx format. Submissions are limited to 25 pages, including exhibits.

Submission should also include completion of the Venture Horizons RFI Response Spreadsheet (provided) in an editable .xlsx format.

To the maximum extent possible, respondents are encouraged to send non-proprietary information. If proprietary information is included, respondents are responsible for clearly identifying such information. Responses containing proprietary information must have each page containing such information clearly marked with a label such as "Proprietary" or "Company Proprietary."

DARPA Venture Horizons RFI

Each response shall consist of the following sections:

1. Complete Attachment A: RFI Response Spreadsheet (provided)
   - **A. Tab A: RFI Response Cover Sheet**
     1. Organization
     2. If applicable, Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code
     3. If applicable, sensitive compartmented information facility identification number (“SCIF ID”)
     4. Response Title
     5. Previous Domain Experience (In which of the six Technical Offices)
     6. Future Investment Interest
     7. Technical point of contact (name, address, phone number, and e-mail address)
     8. Administrative point of contact (name, address, phone number, and e-mail address)
     9. If applicable, security point of contact (name, address, phone number, and e-mail address)
   - **B. Tab B: Questions & Responses to RFI Focus Areas**
     1. Investment Goals
     2. History & Domain Experience
     3. Commitment to Service
     4. Unique Capabilities

2. Presentation of Capabilities (no provided template)

   Provide any additional charts, diagrams, tables or spreadsheets, or memoranda containing information that you would like us to know about your organization, such as:

   - DARPA Technical Offices listed by order of domain experience and interest.

- For each applicable Technical Office, write a description of the level of experience and explanation of desired interest in each domain.
- Provide examples demonstrating experience with technology.
- Transition and methods of technology adoption and scale with examples for each.
- Provide a description of any facilities or assets uniquely suited to support this effort. If facilities have been approved for classified storage, processing, and discussion, indicate the level of classification.

V. Submission Instructions

Responses to this RFI must be unclassified and e-mailed to DARPAVentureHorizons@darpa.mil. Responses will be accepted at any time from the publication of this RFI until **5:00 p.m. (Eastern) on October 9, 2026.**

VI. Eligibility

As noted above, DARPA invites participation from all capable and qualified sources. Note that certain DARPA General Service Agreement ("GSA") and Senior Commercial Advisor ("SCA") team members may be ineligible to participate in this program.

VII. Disclaimers And Important Notes

- This is an RFI issued solely for information and new initiative planning purposes; it does not constitute a formal solicitation for proposals. In accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation 15.201(e), responses to this RFI are not offers and cannot be accepted by the Government as such.
- Responses do not bind DARPA to any further actions related to this topic, including requesting follow-on proposals from respondents to this RFI.
- DARPA will not provide reimbursement for costs incurred in responding to this RFI.
- Respondents are advised that DARPA is under no obligation to acknowledge receipt of the information received or provide feedback to respondents with respect to any information submitted under this RFI.
- DARPA will disclose submission contents only for the purpose of review. Submissions may be reviewed by other Government agencies; Federally Funded Research and Development Centers; and Scientific, Engineering and Technical Assistance support contractors.