

Request for White Papers:  
COVID-19 Prototype PPE and Decontamination Equipment

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**CAUTION NOTICE:**

1. Defense Logistics Agency (“DLA”) may add other problem statements as they arise;
2. Solicitation for white papers, solution briefs or proposals do not guarantee that the government will make an award;
3. Offerors bear all costs to prepare and submit responses to this solicitation;
4. By submitting a response, offerors agree that the government:
  - a. Shall reproduce the response, or any portions thereof, to the extent necessary to evaluate the offer;
  - b. Shall use information contained in the brief only for evaluation purposes. The Department of Defense (“DoD”) shall not disclose, directly or indirectly, such information to any person including potential evaluators, unless that person has been authorized to receive such information.
5. For traditional defense contractors only: statute requires<sup>1</sup> a cost sharing arrangement of at least one-third if a non-traditional defense contractor does not participate to a significant extent in this prototype project. A cost sharing arrangement is not a consideration for award; therefore, the government will give no evaluation preference to offerors that propose a cost sharing arrangement;
6. Any Prototype Other Transaction Agreement (“OTA”) awarded in response to this solicitation may result in the award of a follow-on production contract or transaction without the use of further competitive procedures. The follow-on production contract or transaction will be available for use by one or more organizations in the Department of Defense and, as a result, the magnitude of the follow-on production contract or agreement could be significantly larger than that of the Prototype OTA. As such, any Prototype OTA will include the following statement relative to the potential for follow-on production:

In accordance with 10 U.S.C. 2371b(f), and upon a determination that the prototype project for this transaction has been successfully completed, this competitively awarded Prototype OTA may result in the award of a follow-on production contract or transaction without the use of competitive procedures.

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<sup>1</sup> 10 U.S.C. § 2371b(d)(1)(c)

**BACKGROUND:**

The Defense Logistics Agency (“DLA”) is the Department of Defense’s largest logistics combat support activity. DLA provides worldwide support, primarily to the military services. Other customers include U.S. civilian entities and foreign countries. DLA manages 5.1M national stock numbers (“NSNs”) – items that military services use.

DLA seeks novel solutions to combat COVID-19. Specifically, the DoD suffers from an increasing demand for Personal Protective Equipment (“PPE”) for individuals who perform critical national security functions. Of particular concern are N95 masks, which are primarily produced overseas. Overseas production is compounded by a lag in domestic production. Domestic production is limited because of the unavailability of mask conversion machines, long timelines to manufacture and assemble new production lines and limited supplies of refined materials. Moreover, various state governments are competing to buy the limited N95s currently available, reducing supply and increasing cost.

DLA seeks prototype solutions that can help combat this shortage in the near and medium term.

**PROBLEM STATEMENTS:**

**A. PPE Re-Use and Decontamination**

The United States faces a shortage of PPE for individuals who come into contact with COVID-19 patients. To conserve available supplies, hospitals and health workers across the country currently reuse PPE orders of magnitude longer than recommended guidelines and while they treat multiple patients. This re-use not only puts healthcare providers at risk but also increases the potential that they spread COVID-19 to uninfected patients. **DLA seeks solutions that will allow healthcare providers and the warfighter to safely decontaminate and re-use N95 masks and other PPE.**

DLA is solution agnostic but is primarily interested in approaches that can (1) demonstrate effectiveness and safety; and (2) do not negatively impact mask performance. Potential technical approaches include but are not limited to:

- Hydrogen Peroxide Vapor Decontamination
- UV Light Sanitization
- Plasma Sterilization
- Thermal Sterilization

**Scaling Potential:**

- The prototype award shall focus on producing a limited number of re-use/decontamination systems. Should an awardee advance to a follow-on production contract, DLA (or other government entities) may seek to procure significantly larger quantities.
- While the solution is initially intended for use as part of COVID-19 relief efforts, DLA may seek alternate form-factors for use against different biological threats, deployment as part of *deployable medical systems*, operation in austere environments or to meet other needs.

**B. Prototype PPE: N95 Masks**

DLA seeks near- and medium-term solutions that can provide prototype PPE that is equivalent to N95 masks.

DLA is solution agnostic, but is primarily interested in N95-equivalent prototypes can be rapidly produced. Potential approaches include but are not limited to:

- Alternate materials
- Alternate form-factors
- Alternate production processes

Note: DLA is not currently seeking long-term solutions under this vehicle to bolster domestic manufacturing capacity of traditional N95 masks.

**Scaling Potential:**

- The prototype award shall focus on producing a limited number of prototype masks for functional testing, user evaluation, and proof of concept. Should the awardee advance to a follow-on production contract, DLA (or another government entity) may seek to obtain significantly larger quantities.
- DLA provides facemasks and PPE to the military, U.S. Department of Veteran’s Affairs (“VA”), and a variety of other organizations. DLA may choose to incorporate prototype masks into its supply catalog after successfully completing a prototype award.
- DLA may choose to license Intellectual Property (“IP”) associated with a successful prototype in order to rapidly scale production and meet demands.

## **SUBMISSION CRITERIA & EVALUATION PROCESS**

The Government shall evaluate each offeror submission on the following three technical criteria<sup>2</sup>, all of equal importance. The government shall also consider price. The technical criteria, popularized by IDEO<sup>3</sup>, is a common method to drive enterprise innovation and build successful prototypes. These criteria help prevent common dead ends and drive prototypes that are actionable, which the government is likely to adopt and scale.

1. **Feasibility** – solution to problem statement is technically possible. This criterion measures whether the technology exists or is likely to be developed in the scope of this prototype effort. An example of something that is not feasible is a “Star Trek” transporter. Considerations include, but are not limited to:
  - Speed (time to value)
  - Existing prototypes
  - Demonstrated effectiveness
  - Prior performance and subject-matter-expertise
  - Relevant studies published in reputable scientific journals or by government entities
  
2. **Viability** – solution to problem statement is compatible with DoD constraints, technical environments and other organizational requirements. This criterion measures whether DoD could easily adopt the prototype. An example of something which is not viable is a technology that has no chance of passing DoD cyber security requirements. Considerations include, but are not limited to:
  - Past certification/approval by relevant governing authorities (such as FDA or NIOSH)
  - Testing and certification requirements
  - Existing partnerships with other government organizations
  - Domestic vs. international production
  
3. **Desirability** – solution is responsive to a problem statement. This criterion measures whether end users are likely to adopt the offeror’s prototype solution. An example of something which is not desirable is a piece of field equipment that is so uncomfortable to carry that end users refuse to bring it into the field. Another example of something which is not desirable is a feasible, viable technology that does not meet the problem that end users are trying to solve. Considerations include, but are not limited to:
  - Effectively meets goals described in the problem statement
  - Cost and speed for development and production
  - Capacity and scalability
  - Ease of use, safety and effectiveness

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<sup>2</sup> <https://medium.com/innovation-sweet-spot/desirability-feasibility-viability-the-sweet-spot-for-innovation-d7946de2183c>

<sup>3</sup> IDEO is a prominent Silicon Valley-based design firm. See [IDEO.org](https://www.ideo.com)

The government does not anticipate that offerors will have a solution that combines both problem areas. Offerors should focus their responses on the particular problem statement to which they have relevant technology. Should an offeror have technology that is relevant to more than one problem area, it may submit separate white papers. Offerors should only provide one paper per problem statement.

DLA recognizes that solutions may not have prior FDA or NIOSH approval. **Therefore, FDA/NIOSH approval is NOT a prerequisite to submit a white paper.** As appropriate, however, DLA may require FDA/NIOSH approvals as part of relevant payment milestones and/or to proceed to follow-on production. Please note: since prior approvals from relevant government authorities (such as NIOSH or FDA) positively impact a solution's *viability*, they may be considered as part of the evaluation criteria.

White papers shall conform to the following. Should offerors submit anything longer, the government will only evaluate the first five pages of a white paper. DLA shall not consider information that offerors communicate by means other than the white paper. Moreover, DLA shall not consider information contained in addenda, hyperlinks or appendices beyond the initial five pages.

- Four pages of technical discussion—explicitly describing the proposed solution and how it addresses the target problem statement, and how the proposed solution meets the three evaluation criteria
- A one page rough order of magnitude (“ROM”) price estimate

The government shall respond to relevant white paper submissions as quickly as possible. At that time, the government shall inform an offeror that:

1. The government has not selected to move forward with the submitted white paper; or
2. The government requests that the offeror participate in a virtual pitch.

The government shall use the same criteria to evaluate pitches as described for white papers.

After pitches, the government shall further down-select potential awardees and issue a request for prototype proposal (“RPP”) to the remaining candidate firm(s). The RPP will have specific guidelines. Chiefly, offerors must submit a statement of work and a detailed price breakdown as it relates to payment milestones. The government shall use the same criteria to evaluate prototype proposals as described for white papers and solution briefs.

**PROJECT DURATION, ESTIMATED FUNDING & AWARD DATE:**

**Period of Performance:** Successful offerors shall receive payment upon completion of the following project phases/payment milestones. An evaluation and go/no-go decision follows each milestone.

1. Initial prototype development and delivery
2. Prototype assessment and testing
3. Limited prototype production and delivery
4. Final evaluation, testing and certifications

**Estimated Funding: \$1,000,000**

The Government reserves the right to award multiple prototypes. Depending on technical merit, the government may allocate this funding:

- Across multiple awards to various companies on one problem statement;
- Across multiple awards to various companies on multiple problem statements;
- On one award to a single company; or
- Any other configuration/allocation, including no award.

Please direct all questions and comments before the white paper submission deadline to [accelerate@dla.mil](mailto:accelerate@dla.mil).

Electronic copies of white papers will be accepted on a rolling basis beginning April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 9:00 AM ET.