



**Intelligent Components Software Platforms Open Technology Systems (ICSPOTS) Assessment  
Event (AE) Q&A Telecon Transcript  
16 October 2024**

**1. What is the start/end TRL expected?**

As far as we're concerned, the end is going to be a TRL 6 and with regards to start, it doesn't matter to us, as long as you can be at TRL 6 by the end of the period of performance.

**2. For the Integration, Test & Training tech focus area, do legacy assets/sensors need to be integrated? Or only those developed under this effort?**

No, you can leverage whatever you need to demonstrate your technology. So legacy things are fine. But if you decide you want to use sensors that are being developed in this effort, we have no issue with that.

**3. Can the government please expand upon the anticipated CONOPS - land/air domain? Joint C2?**

Being an Army organization, first and foremost, we're concerned with the land domain, but honestly, all domains are on the table right now, and we fight jointly. So, we need to be concerned about joint C2, also.

**4. Is there a limit to the number of submissions one company can make?**

No, there is no limit.

**5. How much interest is there in synthetic RF radar and comms data for training and testing AI/ML algorithms?**

There's a lot of interest. There's a very important training piece to our EW requirements that is probably not getting the attention it deserves, but it's going to start getting a lot more attention. Training and testing are going to be very, very important to us moving forward.

**6. Does your vision for Integration/coord go beyond a platform approach to more multi-platform, multi-domain integration, or is it a platform-centric approach?**

It is not a platform-centric approach. Our guidance is multi-platform, multi-domain integration. We're not trying to pigeonhole ourselves in here into one specific platform.

**7. Will a TRL-9 laser comm network that works in an RF-denied zone and cannot be direction-found be considered for backhaul, or is RF the only comm evaluated here?**

No, we will certainly consider TRL 9 laser comm networks, and RF is not the only comm evaluated here. If you've got anything besides that, too, please bring it to us. We're very





interested.

**8. Is there interest in resilient mesh networking that operates through jamming, maneuvers in the spectrum, and automates adjustments and interference detection?**

Yes, very much so. Especially when we're talking about sensors and how we take that sensor information, get it securely back to some type of decision maker, or collator, very much interested in that.

**9. Can a company with multiple solutions across the Technology Focus Areas submit a White Paper proposal for each different solution against each focus?**

Absolutely, no restrictions on the number of submissions per company.

**10. Is there any provision for providing data to tune ML algorithms?**

No, there's not. And if you're asking for government data, that's going to be off the table. We will not be proving that at this stage. There are no other provisions.

**11. Is the final submission only the 2-page white paper and a single slide quad chart?**

That is correct. The examples/templates are on the event webpage:

<https://events.sofwerx.org/icspots>

**12. Is there interest in a cyber component to the focus areas, either defensive, offensive or security based?**

Yes, we'd be interested in seeing how you're doing that.

**13. Do we submit one whitepaper per focus area or address all focus areas we want to cover within one whitepaper submission?**

To make sure we don't miss anything that you submit, because we're going to be getting a lot of these, it's easier for us to track them if there is one white paper per focus area. If you put a bunch of them in only one submission, invariably we're going to miss something.

**14. Will you accept multiple proposed ideas from a single vendor?**

Absolutely. Everything's on the table in terms of great ideas when it comes to electronic warfare. Multiple proposals are encouraged even from single vendors.

**15. Does one submission qualify for multiple topics or do multiple submissions need to be made to qualify for each topic?**

Multiple submissions need to be made for each topic.





**16. What is the anticipated evaluation period? 12 months, 15 months etc?**

As of right now, we're looking at an evaluation period of 12 months, but it's tentative.

**17. May submissions focus on some of the 6 total assessment criteria categories, or must the submission provide a solution to all 6?**

It can focus on any. We're trying to make this as broad and unrestrictive as possible. We don't want to force people into a corner. If you've got a question specifically on this moving forward, please reach out to us (via emailing Gabby Robles, [gabrielle.robles@sofwerx.org](mailto:gabrielle.robles@sofwerx.org)) and we'll get you a better answer, based off a more specific question. But as of right now, you can focus on just some of those 6 total assessment criteria. No reason to try to force it into something that it doesn't, just to meet a requirement.

**18. Is the government interested in data that tracks the use of cryptocurrencies foreign and domestic. Broadly termed blockchain analytics and crypto intelligence**

No, not really in the scope of this competition. We're sure the government is, but us here in this competition, we are not interested in that.

**19. What kind of funding levels are available and what color of money? And What FY?**

We're dealing in the research and development world, so we're looking at multi-year funding. As far as what funding levels are available, you're dealing with the U.S. Government. If it's a really great idea, anything's possible. But we can't give you a definite number, because it's dependent on what's submitted/selected. The color of money is mostly RDT&E.

**20. How much interest in is there in monitoring and detection of jamming in space-based communications?**

SOCOM probably has a little bit more interest in that - our partners over at SOF Warrior. From the Army, there's moderate interest. We might have some of the other service labs that are taking a look at our stuff here, too, and we encourage that. AFRL is extremely interested in this subject, and based off our working relationship with them, if we see something here good, we're going to take it to them and get their thoughts on thought on it.

**21. This is not a small business set-aside/SBIR, correct?**

Correct. Totally different.

**22. Where can we find the format for the quad charts?**

It's on the event webpage: <https://events.sofwerx.org/icspots>

**23. What is the target funding scope for each TFA?**

There isn't a specific amount of funding that we have right now. If we get interesting





tech that we really needed, we would find the money for whatever that tech is. Right now, we've got money allocated to this particular event, and there can be more added quite easily.

**24. Any preferences for ideas that are coming out of SBIR phase 2 efforts that are underway with high TRL for end of Phase 2?**

These ideas are welcome but receive no preference. Please indicate if your submission is leveraging a SBIR and what service or agency sponsored the SBIR.

**25. What classification level can we go up to for technology demonstration? collateral? no SAP?**

All submissions should be unclassified and non-proprietary. SOFWERX is an open and unclassified facility, as is this effort.

**26. Would you prefer a Word/PowerPoint document or pdf submission?**

Please submit as a PDF.

**27. Can you share how much funding has been set aside for the effort? Any idea on anticipated number and size of awards?**

No, and we don't have a restriction on how many that we can select. The size of the awards depends on how many we do select. We can't guarantee you anything, but there is funding allocated against this effort, that we can guarantee you.

**28. Will higher level TRLs (greater than TRL 6) be accepted for proposed technology solutions?**

Absolutely. We ask that you at least be TRL 6, but you can be greater than that.

**29. Are company logos permitted on the title page?**

Sure, that's fine. It's your space to use as you would like.

**30. How will performers under this effort be expected to work together to integrate, or is each development in a stovepipe?**

It kind of depends on what your proposal is. If your proposal is for a singular piece, then obviously it'll be inside of the stovepipe. Eventually we're going to try to integrate these pieces together. At some point in time, if you're selected, you're going to have to be working with other vendors and possible an integrator. You're possibly even going to be working with some of our prime principal investigators up at the lab, too. That's another thing, there's probably going to be some reach back with a lot of our scientists at the lab on some of these topics.





**31. Can a submission include images in the 2-page white paper?**

Yes.

**32. If an applicant has existing IP they wish to leverage, will their IP be protected during the program?**

Yes, whatever IP you bring to the table will be protected. Any IP that is developed or basically sponsored by the Government, will have the use rights.

**33. Can we submit a link for a demonstration or concept video along with white paper?**

Yes, you can. However, we're not guaranteeing we're going to be able to click on it. We've got Government computers, and can't click on suspicious links, so prefer that you don't, but it's your white paper and you can submit what you'd like.

**34. Do you have a preference for hardware or software solutions?**

No, but all solutions are very much welcome.

**35. Are you looking for a place to house virtual EW assets and/or train with them?**

We're looking for virtual EW assets to train with, not necessarily for a place to house them. An exercise/training location is beyond the realm of what we're doing here.

**36. Is there any preference for solutions that start at a slightly higher TRL level and potentially have some existing infrastructure to leverage?**

You can submit those. We wouldn't say there's a preference. For instance, if you want to start TRL at two, but be at six, we have no problem with that. But we won't assign preference based on being at or below a specific TRL level. We'll assess at the TRL six level in terms of the technology, but not put in preference for you because you're starting a little bit further to the right on the TRL chart.

**37. Would an Orin edge compute device able to host, manage, and provide networking for EW apps be something of interest.**

Yes, that's a big deal to us right now. We'd be very interested in that.

**38. Are you interested in LPI/LPD capabilities?**

Yes!

**39. Are there any specific technology gaps you are most hoping to fill in the RF sensor realm?**

We don't have anything specific, but anything that's interesting, or novel that you've got, just please submit it. We're all about the RF sensor realm, so give us your best tech.





- 40. Is there interest in secure closed network communications. Data storage, messaging, email, video, etc.**  
Possibly. We'd be really interested to see what you're planning on doing, then talk about perhaps some of the con ops for that.
- 41. How many units need to be provided for user's evaluation?**  
Let's start with one.
- 42. Any SWAP constraints or preferred form factors for hardware solutions (manpack vs. vehicle-mounted)?**  
No, no constraints or preferred form factors.
- 43. For clarity, TRL 6 mentioned is the exit TRL, correct?**  
Yes, the TRL six mentioned is the minimum exit TRL requirement.
- 44. TRL-6 by what the end of what period?**  
It depends on the PoP. It could be 6 months, 12 months or 18 months.
- 45. Can you comment on interest in RF threats to aviation (eg surveillance or engagement radars)? Or more focused on detecting/jamming/countering comms waveforms?**  
From ARL perspective we are more focused on detecting GMA and encountering comms waveforms. That's not to say that if we see a great RF aviation technology come in here that we're not going to be interested in it. Please submit both of them. But we will probably be more focused on detecting, jamming, and countering comms waveforms, that's all. Not to say we won't look at the first one.
- 46. Do the technologies developed under the PoP need to stay unclassified by the end of the PoP?**  
No. Once we get the task out there, we can talk about that. That piece is a requirement to task order, so don't worry about that at this time.
- 47. Is there an interest in large language models to address geopolitical unrest through the real-time monitoring of social media and the open web.**  
No.
- 48. Are proposals that require classified development allowed?**  
As long as what you talk about during this is unclassified. For the purposes of this competition and what we're going to down-select based off of, we can't have that.
- 49. Does the sensor need to have its own comms or can it use existing coms on the platform?**





We like the redundancy aspect of that, so we'd say that that's fine. No issue with that.

**50. How much consideration is given to an individual proposal's cost? Are lower-cost proposals that can get to TRL 7 favorable vs higher cost?**

We just have to see that technology. Then, it's supply and demand, interest versus resources. That'll be the battle we're fighting here.

**51. Is there interest in automated testing?**

Yes, absolutely.

**52. Anticipating multiple solutions that will integrate one day, is there current interest in tech that helps with establishing interoperability, management?**

Interoperability is what is our biggest struggle right now. So, yes, we are absolutely interested in that. If you're not thinking interoperability, you're probably behind the power curve, at least on the ARI side of this.

**53. Is there any interest in Counter UAS tip and cue capabilities within the context of EW enablement?**

Absolutely.

**54. Interest in better RF filtering, leveraging next gen semiconductors/materials?**

Yes.

**55. Are you interested in secure sensor exfil capabilities in contested environments?**

Absolutely.

**56. If a white paper is invited/selected to go to the next step by SOCOM, would there still be a competitive submission and selection after that stage?**

There are the white paper submissions, then down-selection. From there, selected vendors are invited to do a one-on-one briefing, and there's another down selection phase to go on to further possibly contracting.

**57. Any advantage/desire/preference to structure program execution into multiple phases of a PoP? Or is it all considered one PoP?**

It kind of depends on if your product is already TRL six or above. We're looking to go ahead and integrate the product with other potential products. If you are at a lower TRL level and you're going to still be developing, potentially there can be multi phases to a pop. Usually you want it to be, like we said in the beginning, a TRL level six. We can do something with it, look at it integrative.





**58. Can the contracting agency sponsor a facility clearance if classified work becomes required?**

Once the task order is assigned, that would be part of the provision in the task order to do that. Sure, it's a possibility, but that's a little bit further down the road than we need to worry about right now in the context of this competition.

**59. Is there an interest in secure communications to include encrypted messaging, data storage, email and video**

Yes, there is.

**60. Data networking is mentioned - what existing protocols are you using now, and what capabilities are you looking to improve?**

Any standards and protocols that aim to create an interconnected, secure, and efficient communication network across military branches and domains, supporting the overall JADC2 concept of connecting sensors into a unified network powered by artificial intelligence.

**61. Will additional information be provided I CONOPS to increase ROM fidelity?**

No, probably not.

**62. If you receive multiple solutions that address the same problem, would you select only one or allow multiple approaches to proceed?**

We are open to multiple approaches.

**63. When you say interoperability is a significant challenge, at what specific networking layers are you referring?**

It's a challenge across all the layers.

**64. Are you looking for EW payloads (small form factor) to be integrated into platforms?**

Yes, absolutely. Please note that we are also very interested in EW at the tactical level, not just at the operational/strategic level.

**65. Has SOFWERX done this kind of technology invite/competition in the past? If so, how many awards and at what average funding level?**

Yes. As for the number of awards, it depends. There's been as few as two and sometimes even ten. In terms of funding, it depends on the technology.







**66. Are joint vendor solutions on the table?**

Yes.

**67. With the resurgence of EW throughout the DoD, are there classification concerns with SIGINT overlap? If so, how do you address those issues?**

It depends on who you talk to, SIGINT people will say absolutely, while the EW people will say no. Since the EW people are running this event the answer is no, we don't have to address any issues.

**68. Are high altitude balloons or micro high-altitude balloons of interest as a sensor deployment platform?**

Yes, absolutely.

**69. Can we provide pricing instructions instead of an actual ROM in the absence of definitive requirements?**

Yes, if we have any questions, we'll come back to you for clarification.

**70. Do you have a goal in mind for how quickly you turn around and award your first TO?**

The goal is to be ready to do that by the end of December.

**71. Are you interested in an AI agentic framework that will provide standardization of AI solutions across your efforts & ensure interoperability and security?**

Yes.

**72. If a solution is selected for award, would SWX consider working with the ARMY Catalyst program and provide SWX funding as matching funds for Catalyst?**

Yes, we would definitely consider it.

**73. Should we anticipate an additional proposal submission during "Phase 4"? What does that process look like?**

No, you need to have your proposal up front.

**74. Are the dates firm for down-selection? Or could possibly change depending on number of submissions?**

There's no plan to move the dates.

**75. Are there specific open architectures or standards that ARL/SOCOM have used or would like to use?**

Nothing specific.





**76. Regarding a demonstration or concept video, if not a link in a white paper, can we send a CD or other media for upload?**

No, accessing outside links on government computers can prove difficult. If for some reason we're reading over something and would like it to be visualized, we may ask to do a teams/Zoom call where you can screenshare.

**77. Would there be any restrictions to applying fee in the pricing of an awarded TO?**

No.

**78. Are there specific field exercises that would be the likely target for TRL6 demonstration (e.g. Vanguard or STORMFORCE)?**

We're going to find what we think is the best fit for it, and then we can look at leveraging one of those events.

**79. Is final downselect based exclusively on the WP/QC/1:1? Or does that process result in an invitation to submit a "full proposal"?**

It's exclusively based on that WP/QC and one on one.

**80. With the FY25 budget being stuck in a CR cycle potentially for a while, does that impact your selection timeline?**

No, it does not affect our selection timeline. It does not even affect the task order award because we have multiyear funds. We can't speak for our partners at SOF Warrior though, but if they're using RDT&E money, it shouldn't be an issue.

**81. Is an above TRL 6 solution accepted where the proposal is to tailor that technology to your specific comm systems needs?**

Sure, that would be one scenario.

**82. Are existing defense-related frameworks/stds, e.g. SOSA and FACE, important to align to?**

It wouldn't hurt to do so, but honestly its not something we're going to look at first and foremost during the assessment. Considering integration with ATAK may be a more relevant concern.

**83. If a solution is at TRL 6, is a 6 PoP for a pilot acceptable, or is the preference for 12 month PoP regardless?**

Six is fine. For these individual circumstances, that's the whole reason we do a task order and discussions that take place beforehand. This will all be discussed and we're more than happy to entertain people's ideas on that.





**84. If we have one concept that fits into multiple focus areas, do we send it multiple times to address each focus area?**

No reason to do that.

**85. Is there a ballpark number for the ROM? I.e. 10 devices?**

We are unable to give an estimate because we don't yet know what the technology is, but it is open for discussion in the contracting process.

**86. Would a vendor with an existing IDIQ contract with a solution that the SWX wants be given any preferences?**

It wouldn't hurt you, but it wouldn't help you though either. It doesn't help you because this is why we're standing this one up, so that ARL can do business directly with your vendors. It's not going to help you on the ARL side of the decision making bench and won't hurt you either.

**87. Is real-time networking a requirement, such as IEEE Time Sensitive Networking. It runs over Ethernet, and some work is being done over wireless.**

It's not a requirement. We're very interested in it, but we're not going to mandate something like that at this stage.

**88. Are you open to solutions that include fundamental research pre-deployment, or more guaranteed options?**

As long as you get to TRL six where you start, is not a concern.

**89. Are ARL and PEO-SW jointly executing ICSPOTS? Can you help describe the relationship between the two organizations?**

Symbiotic. We're very fortunate that SOCOM and SOFWERX has allowed us to leverage this mechanism. We provide a lot of SME support to them, and they're providing a lot of contracting, acquisition support, venues and vehicles to us. USSOCOM is the clientele for SOFWERX, so SOFWERX is unable to host an event without a SOCOM rep and/or stakeholder present.

**90. If selected, and as part of negotiation discussions, will we potentially have access to secure facilities/sites for prototyping?**

For right now, up until the down select process – no.

**91. What level of detail are you looking for in the Technical Approach section of the white paper?**

A college graduate level is what we're looking for. As long as it makes sense and is not overly technical using layman's terminology will serve you best.





**92. TRL 6 in what timeframe?**

That would be the timeframe of your task order and what the pop is on. That could be six months. Could be 12 months. Could be 18 months. Probably not more than 18 months. Target is 12.

**93. Are you aware of the Big Iron Software Framework being developed within/for USAF EW?**

Yes, we are aware. We will not say anything more than that. We do work with AFRL on a couple of different joint ventures. Most of that is in like research and academia, though we don't do as much with big Air Force and this specific thing, but we're familiar with it.

**94. Will the government help facilitate access to assets/sensors if the proposer does not have these organically - ie. if we are trying to demonstrate integration?**

We will entertain that at this stage, but that'll be something that will come out once we actually have a task order and the technology has been selected. We have a better understanding of what your requirements are. Meaning what type of sensors you need, and what the classification levels of those sensors are, and do you have a clearance, etc. That's something we'll entertain. We don't want to say no to that. We are just saying that there'll be some other caveats, but we're interested.

**95. Do you have people at AUSA that could visit a booth to see our product?**

No.

**96. Is the submission website/process ready to accept CUI marked material?**

No, not at this stage.

**97. Are SOF entities outside of Army targets for the tech developed under ICSPOTS? Should solutions be focused on Army SOF first and foremost?**

SOCOM would say no. We as an army organization do not consider it as a disqualifier. But that being said, don't let that dissuade you from submitting great technology like a satellite application that the air force would love. We just can't promise you that the army is going to sign up to back it.

**98. If we are building software networking solutions, should we target ATAK as the software foundation?**

You don't have to, but you cannot go wrong with ATAC.

**100. If a concept is rejected, can you provide feedback to indicate which other organizations might be a better fit?**

No, there's going to be too many submissions.





**101. To what extent will the target EW components be wireless vs wired?**

We're not restricting it.

**102. Is a mentor protege appropriate for this opportunity or is this not restricted to small business?**

It's open to any industry. There's not a small business caveat in any of this.

**103. Regarding interoperability, what standards are you currently employing that are not enabling you to achieve the interoperability levels you desire?**

Well, it's not so much a standard. The problem is we have a million different solutions that we try to and have to integrate together, and it kind of depends on what platform you're talking about.

**104. What happens at the end of the program? Does the Army then start buying parts?**

Each winner could be awarded a task order and each outcome is unique.

**105. Will any EW data be available for testing purposes (if awarded) if we propose an effort that could show data transmission reduction of 90% that can still achieve significant detection results?**

Not for this selection process but could be upon award.

