

§ 37.415

such as audits and intellectual property rights that may cause concern for commercial firms. Doing so should increase the likelihood that commercial firms will be willing to submit proposals.

§ 37.415 Should I address cost sharing in the announcement or solicitation?

To help ensure a competitive process that is fair and equitable to all potential proposers, you should state clearly in the solicitation:

(a) That, to the maximum extent practicable, the non-Federal parties carrying out a research project under a TIA are to provide at least half of the costs of the project (see § 37.215(b)).

(b) The types of cost sharing that are acceptable;

(c) How any in-kind contributions will be valued, in accordance with §§ 37.530 through 37.555; and

(d) Whether you will give any consideration to alternative approaches a proposer may offer to demonstrate its strong commitment to and self-interest in the project's success, in accordance with § 37.215.

§ 37.420 Should I tell proposers that we will not disclose information that they submit?

Your solicitation should tell potential proposers that:

(a) For all TIAs, information described in paragraph (b) of this section is exempt from disclosure requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (codified at 5 U.S.C. 552) for a period of five years after the date on which the DoD Component receives the information from them.

(b) As provided in 10 U.S.C. 2371, disclosure is not required, and may not be compelled, under FOIA during that period if:

(1) A proposer submits the information in a competitive or noncompetitive process that could result in their receiving a cooperative agreement for basic, applied, or advanced research under the authority of 10 U.S.C. 2358 or any other type of transaction authorized by 10 U.S.C. 2371 (as explained in appendix B to this part, that includes all TIAs); and

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(2) The type of information is among the following types that are exempt:

(i) Proposals, proposal abstracts, and supporting documents; and

(ii) Business plans and technical information submitted on a confidential basis.

(c) If proposers desire to protect business plans and technical information for five years from FOIA disclosure requirements, they must mark them with a legend identifying them as documents submitted on a confidential basis. After the five-year period, information may be protected for longer periods if it meets any of the criteria in 5 U.S.C. 552(b) (as implemented by the DoD in subpart C of 32 CFR part 286) for exemption from FOIA disclosure requirements.

Subpart E—Pre-Award Business Evaluation

§ 37.500 What must my pre-award business evaluation address?

(a) You must determine the qualification of the recipient, as described in §§ 37.510 and 37.515.

(b) As the business expert working with the program official, you also must address the financial aspects of the proposed agreement. You must:

(1) Determine that the total amount of funding for the proposed effort is reasonable, as addressed in § 37.520.

(2) Assess the value and determine the reasonableness of the recipient's proposed cost sharing contribution, as discussed in §§ 37.525 through 37.555.

(3) If you are contemplating the use of a fixed-support rather than expenditure-based TIA, ensure that its use is justified, as explained in §§ 37.560 and 37.565.

(4) Address issues of inconsistent cost accounting by traditional Government contractors, should they arise, as noted in § 37.570.

(5) Determine amounts for milestone payments, if you use them, as discussed in § 37.575.

§ 37.505 What resources are available to assist me during the pre-award business evaluation?

Administrative agreements officers of the Defense Contract Management

Agency and the Office of Naval Research can share lessons learned from administering other TIAs. Program officials can be a source of information when you are determining the reasonableness of proposed funding (*e.g.*, on labor rates, as discussed in §37.520) or establishing observable and verifiable technical milestones for payments (*see* §37.575). Auditors at the Defense Contract Audit Agency can act in an advisory capacity to help you determine the reasonableness of proposed amounts, including values of in-kind contributions toward cost sharing.

RECIPIENT QUALIFICATION

§ 37.510 What are my responsibilities for determining that a recipient is qualified?

Prior to award of a TIA, your responsibilities for determining that the recipient is qualified are the same as those of a grants officer who is awarding a grant or cooperative agreement. Those responsibilities are described in subpart D of 32 CFR part 22. When the recipient is a consortium that is not formally incorporated, you have the additional responsibility described in §37.515.

§ 37.515 Must I do anything additional to determine the qualification of a consortium?

(a) When the prospective recipient of a TIA is a consortium that is not formally incorporated, your determination that the recipient meets the standard at 32 CFR 22.415(a) requires that you, in consultation with legal counsel, review the management plan in the consortium's collaboration agreement. The purpose of your review is to ensure that the management plan is sound and that it adequately addresses the elements necessary for an effective working relationship among the consortium members. An effective working relationship is essential to increase the research project's chances of success.

(b) The collaboration agreement, commonly referred to as the articles of collaboration, is the document that sets out the rights and responsibilities of each consortium member. It binds the individual consortium members together, whereas the TIA binds the Gov-

ernment and the consortium as a group (or the Government and a consortium member on behalf of the consortium, as explained in §37.1015). The document should discuss, among other things, the consortium's:

- (1) Management structure.
- (2) Method of making payments to consortium members.
- (3) Means of ensuring and overseeing members' efforts on the project.
- (4) Provisions for members' cost sharing contributions.
- (5) Provisions for ownership and rights in intellectual property developed previously or under the agreement.

TOTAL FUNDING

§ 37.520 What is my responsibility for determining that the total project funding is reasonable?

In cooperation with the program official, you must assess the reasonableness of the total estimated budget to perform the research that will be supported by the agreement. Additional guidance follows for:

(a) *Labor*. Much of the budget likely will involve direct labor and associated indirect costs, which may be represented together as a "loaded" labor rate. The program official is an essential advisor on reasonableness of the overall level of effort and its composition by labor category. You also may rely on your experience with other awards as the basis for determining reasonableness. If you have any unresolved questions, two of the ways that you might find helpful in establishing reasonableness are to:

(1) Consult the administrative agreements officers or auditors identified in §37.505.

(2) Compare loaded labor rates of for-profit firms that do not have expenditure-based Federal procurement contracts or assistance awards with a standard or average for the particular industry. Note that the program official may have knowledge about customary levels of direct labor charges in the particular industry that is involved. You may be able to compare associated indirect charges with Government-approved indirect cost rates that exist for many nonprofit and for-profit