

PRO-MICROBE Exploration Topic
ARPA-H-MAI-24-01-06
Question and Answers (Q&A)
Organized by Category
October 16, 2024

PRO-MICROBE – General

Q1: What modalities should be used to collect microbial data (air, water, surface swabs, dirt, etc.)? Does data need to be collected from humans?

A1: Proposers should identify and justify the modalities they will use to collect data from the built environment. Proposers should select modalities that will allow them to correlate microbial data with building health (Stage I) and develop representative health indices and predictive models (Stage II). Proposers may choose to sample microbial communities from humans to inform modeling efforts, however, this cannot substitute for sampling the built environment. Data that should be collected from humans is the health outcome data that will be used to classify buildings as “healthy” or “unhealthy.”

Q2: What are the definitions of "healthy" and "unhealthy" buildings, and how are they determined?

A2: The PRO-MICROBE Module Announcement specifies that proposers should clearly define a “healthy” versus “unhealthy” building using health outcome data. Definitions may incorporate qualifying attributes such as the high prevalence of specific chronic diseases among occupants (i.e., unhealthy) or the increased likelihood of beneficial health outcomes exceeding a normalized baseline (i.e., healthy). Health outcomes may include, but are not limited to, respiratory illnesses (e.g., influenza, COVID, and asthma), immune disorders, or mental health disorders. Proposers are encouraged to develop definitions based on their proposed methodology and building applications.

Q3: Will there be an opportunity to received feedback on the scope of our proposed work prior to the full proposal submission deadline?

A3: No. The Government is unable to provide feedback on your proposed approach prior to proposal submission. However, the PRO-MICROBE Team will provide feedback on questions that are submitted to the Question and Answer (Q&A) link as outlined in the PRO-MICROBE Module Announcement (<https://solutions.arpa-h.gov/Ask-A-Question>).

Q4: Is ARPA-H planning on any outreach activities associated with the PRO-MICROBE Exploration Topic where proposers will have the opportunity to learn more?

A4: ARPA-H is in the process of putting together public outreach slides that will be posted along with the Module Announcement and Q&As here: [PRO-MICROBE page](#). ARPA-H is also putting together a teaming page to facilitate connections between prospective proposers. Information on teaming will also be housed on the [PRO-MICROBE page](#).

PRO-MICROBE – Eligibility

Q1: We have an existing dataset of dust samples paired with health outcome data and other building/ environmental data. Is metagenomic analysis of these dust samples within scope?

A1: PRO-MICROBE is seeking solutions that iteratively sample buildings during Stage I. Existing datasets may inform these efforts, for example existing dust samples, but proposers should have access to buildings that will be sampled during the period of performance.

Q2: Can a U.S. Government entity or FFRDC be a prime performer or sub-performer for PRO-MICROBE?

A2: FFRDCs and U.S. Government entities, including federal Government employees, are not permitted to respond to Module announcements (including PRO-MICROBE) as a prime or sub-performer on a proposed performer team. Please see ARPA-H-MAI-24-01 Section 2.1.1 for additional eligibility information pertaining to U.S. Government entities and FFRDCS.

<https://sam.gov/opp/d2a77919c3c444e290c22b4f6c5f6639/view>

-----New Update as of October 16, 2024-----

PRO-MICROBE – General

Q5: What is the expected start date for performers?

A5: The start date will be once selections are made and negotiations conclude. However, as stated in Section 1 of Volume 1: Basis of Estimate (BOE) Template “*For pricing purposes assume a March 1, 2025, start date.*”

Q6: In Volume 1: Basis of Estimate (BOE) Template Subawardee Costs, which sections should each subawardee submit?

A6: The document includes a typo and should read as follows: Section 9 of Volume 1: Basis of Estimate (BOE) Template “*For each proposed subawardee, provide the information requested in Sections 1-8. All documentation should provide the same level of detail and/or assumptions.*”

Q7: How long after the start of the Period of Performance shall the contractor expect annual site visits and review meetings?

A7: The PRO-MICROBE ET MAI specifies the cadence for Performer Reviews and Program Manager Meetings. Additional timing details are not available at this time and will be provided after award.

Q8: When should metrics be finalized by the performers during the Period of Performance?

A8: As outlined in the PRO-MICROBE ET MAI, performers will “Set accuracy target” or “Set target” for the metrics. It is expected that performers will work with the Program Manager for final approval to set the metric requirements which will be dependent on the sampled microbial data, health outcomes, and modeling techniques. The metrics table in the MAI provides the timeline for the latest that the performance metric can be set.

Q9: Will a Cost Plus Fee contract be considered for this initiative?

A9: No, Per Section B.2 of ARPA-H-MAI-24-01-06 “Proposals identified for negotiation will result in negotiating an award of an Other Transaction Agreement (OT).”

Q10: In Volume 1 - Admin & National Security, section 1 “Team Member identification”: Should each individual at each organization that we are anticipating to work with on this project be listed? If individual names have not

been identified for specific tasks yet, would TBD be sufficient for certain positions?

A10: Please review the latest Amendment 3 of Volume 1 Administrative & National Policy Requirements posted on October 3. In Section 1 titled “Team Member Identification” of the attachment “*list all team members, including the prime awardee, sub-awardee(s), and consultant(s), as applicable, and their primary affiliation/employment. Identify specifically whether each is a non-US organization or individual. “Additionally, please review Section 3 of the same attachment titled “Research Security Disclosure” specifically the definition of senior/key personnel.* A Proposer should be listing all named individuals at the time of proposal submission in Section 1 and then providing the requested information for the named individuals (for technical leads and other senior key personnel) within Section 3.

Q11: In Volume 1: Basis of Estimate Template, can Sections 3-8 include an additional column that shows cost elements by Stage and substage?

A11: A further breakout by Stage/substage is not needed; please utilize the format provided in Sections 3-8 when creating the MS Excel Spreadsheet. A breakout by stage and substage is only needed for Section 1, Price Summary.

Q12: May we schedule a call to discuss our potential submission?

A12: No, the Program Manager will not be scheduling calls at this time.

PRO-MICROBE – Eligibility

Q3: Can two entities from the same overarching institution apply on separate proposals for PRO-MICROBE?

A3: The same entity can submit more than one proposal if it’s for two distinct research concepts.