These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

ARPA-H

SPECTRA

Systems for Phenotypic Evaluation, Clinical Trajectories, Response, and Agency

Technical Area 4

Technologies for Communication, Quality of Life, and Embedded Assessment

Program Overview and Proposer Briefing

Program Manager **Russell Shilling, Ph.D.**

TA4 Solution Summaries due **Oct. 21, 2026, at 3 p.m. ET***

Approved for Public Release: Distribution Unlimited

**Deadlines subject to change. Please reference the solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.*

WHAT IF

What if everyone on the autism spectrum could be understood and supported as an individual across the lifespan, with precision care that improves health, independence, and quality of life?

SPECTRA is designed to make this outcome possible.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

ARPA-H Key Features and Authorities

ARPA-H has unique structures and legal authorities that allow it to **function like a business — quickly, nimbly, and decisively**.

- ARPA-H is a **funding agency**
- **Independent** component of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- No internal research labs; **disease agnostic**
- Generally, **fund outcome-based contracts**, not grants; accelerated award timelines
- Unique **Food and Drug Administration reimbursement authority**

FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
$1B	$1.5B	$1.5B	Request: $1.5B

Lean and nimble management structure with autonomy in decision-making.

ARPA-H Director **reports directly to the HHS Secretary**.

Term limits of 3–6 years bring urgency and idea flow.

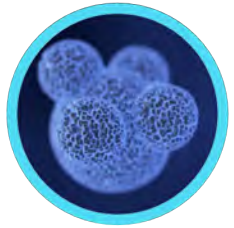
Flexibility in hiring allows ARPA-H to recruit at levels competitive with industry.

Bottom-up decision-making. Program Managers have autonomy to make decisions quickly.

ARPA-H is a problems-focused organization.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

ARPA-H: The ARPA Model at Work for Health



HOW?

We are a unique funding agency *by design.*

WHO?

Problem-focused Program Managers drive innovation.

WHAT?

We are seeking radical change.

Attributes that Support the Mission

Radical Change

ARPA-H investments should seek to address seemingly impossible barriers in demonstrating "proof of concept" for solutions to major challenges — not incremental advances.

Autonomy

PMs practice "full contact" management to maintain vision and deliver results with metrics/milestones for program. PMs are empowered to stop underperforming projects.

Term Limits

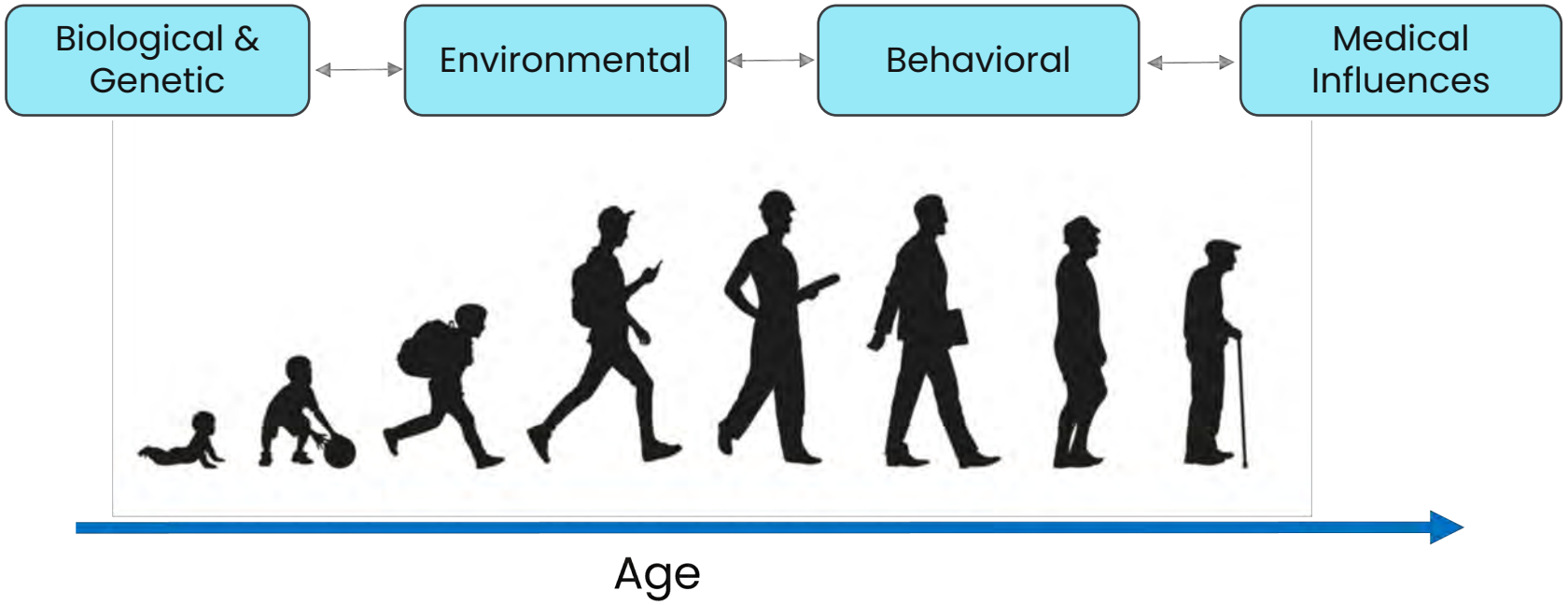
Terms limited to three years (renewable once for six total years) for PMs, Office Directors, and Deputy Directors, allowing inflow of new ideas.

Success for ARPA-H is defined by real-world impact.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

Autism as a complex event, not a single label

Factors that Shape ASD Trajectories



SPECTRA aims to understand the nonlinear interactions and exposures that lead to specific trajectories across the lifespan and translate those findings into precision care and assessments aimed at real-world environments outside the clinic.

1 in 31

U.S. 8-year-olds are identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Autistic people are valued members of families and communities, with diverse strengths, needs, and goals.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

Current care falls short in five ways for ASD

1. **Diagnosis comes too late.**
   We miss opportunities to intervene and prevent avoidable morbidity.

2. **Factors that influence development are studied in isolation.**
   Genetic, biological, immune, behavioral, environmental, and medical influences are examined separately.

3. **The data are siloed.**
   Records that could reveal trajectories cannot be linked across institutions.

4. **Prediction and data do not drive care.**
   Even where data exists, prediction models do not capture the individual nature of development — let alone translate into meaningful guidance to inform care.

5. **Function is not measured in real-world settings.**
   Clinic-based assessment gives a limited view of daily communication and function.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

SPECTRA: Four technical areas (TAs), one system

Moving autism care beyond a single diagnostic label toward biologically and behaviorally informed, trajectory-guided treatment.

TA1 — ANALYZE

Multi-Factor Analysis and Trajectory Identification

TA2 — INTEGRATE

Population-Scale Modeling and Data Integration

TA3 — ACT

Precision Intervention and Trajectory Testing

TA4 — ENABLE

Technologies for Communication, Quality of Life, and Embedded Assessment

New assessments from preconception to infancy to geriatrics, built for natural, everyday settings

Note: SPECTRA is presently only soliciting solution summaries for TA4. Instructions for TAs 1, 2, and 3 will be released at a later date.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

Multi-Factor Analysis and Trajectory Identification

- TA1 identifies distinct autism-related trajectories by integrating and analyzing comprehensive, multimodal data that resolve the interactions among genetic, epigenetic, immune, metabolic, microbiome, environmental, infectious, iatrogenic, and prenatal and perinatal factors — all domains usually studied separately.
- TA1 is an analysis area. Using new modeling on existing data, it begins in Year 1 without waiting for new measurement, and aims at causal, individual-level trajectory structure rather than single-factor association.
- TA1 supplies the trajectory structure TA3 needs to stratify treatment.

Goals:

- Resolve nonlinear, time-dependent interactions among many factors, moving beyond association toward causal inference.
- Deliver first-generation candidate trajectory definitions in Year 1, with calibrated uncertainty and preregistered plans.
- Characterize trajectories at the individual level, with population coverage reported.
- Integrate validated TA4 real-world measures from Year 2 and re-estimate as the data enrich.
- Issue an annual statement of the measurement gaps that most limit trajectory resolution.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

TA2: Population-Scale Modeling and Data Integration

- TA2 is the data integration and federation backbone of SPECTRA.
- This Technical Area federates existing and newly generated data across institutions without moving records, applies common data standards and stringent quality control, and characterizes prevalence, incidence, and trends across the full range of autism-affected people and support levels.
- TA2 is built to enable secure, long-term access to longitudinal, multidomain data so the same people can be followed as they age. The federated network is designed to become self-sustaining national infrastructure that outlasts the program.

Goals:

- Map every federated source into a common data model built on standards such as Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR) and Observational Medical Outcomes Partnership (OMOP), extended to sensor, acoustic, eye-tracking, omics, and exposure data.
- Publish a privacy architecture with privacy-preserving linkage, federated learning at scale, differential privacy, and secure execution.
- Advance methods for measurement error, missing data, and differing ascertainment so heterogeneous data combine validly.
- Characterize who is and is not represented, bounding the generalizability of TA1 trajectories.
- Stand up an operating federated network of live nodes built to persist beyond the program.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

TA3: Precision Intervention and Trajectory Testing

- TA3 tests interventions within trajectories rather than against the autism label, establishing which options work for whom and using each trial as an experimental test of the mechanism it targets.
- Trials open with broad eligibility and add trajectory stratification as TA1 confirms trajectories, so a delay upstream slows refinement rather than halting the work.
- Priority goes to the co-occurring conditions that cause the most harm and are most often missed.

Goals:

- Run adaptive platform and sequential multiple-assignment trials under a master protocol with shared controls.
- Register in advance each arm's target, predicted effect, and the subgroups where the effect is and is not expected.
- Prioritize high-harm, co-occurring conditions — including when to safely reduce or stop medication — held to the same evidentiary standard.
- Measure outcomes in daily life through TA4 measures, with durability at 12 months as the bar.
- Co-design endpoints and meaningful benefit with autistic people and families.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

TA4: Technologies for Communication, Quality of Life, and Embedded Assessment

- TA4 develops technologies people want in daily life, across the lifespan, that generate assessment data as a byproduct of ordinary use.
- Example approaches include wearables, Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) and speech interfaces, phones, camera-based movement analysis, eye-tracking on tablets, low-channel EEG, and immersive tools.
- Used daily, each approach yields continuous, ecologically valid measurement of domains assessed today only in the clinic and improves with use through personalization. Measurement, personalization, and sustained use are treated as one system.

Goals:

- Produce continuous, ecologically valid measurement outside the clinic, as a byproduct of use.
- Serve three returns at once: identification and characterization, therapeutic effectiveness, and device personalization.
- Solve cold start, few-shot personalization, non-stationarity, adaptive drift, and on-device constraints.
- Co-design with the people who will use the technology from the earliest stage; acceptance and sustained use are the test.
- Deliver durable functional benefit at 12 months, with no loss of user agency.

Boundary. Measurement must come as a byproduct of use. A capability that requires a task to be performed in order to measure belongs in TA1. Addresses Limitation 5.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

SPECTRA TAs are sequentially dependent, not sequentially executed

- TA1 identifies candidate trajectories from the nonlinear interaction of many factors, using new modeling on existing data. It begins in Year 1 without waiting for new measurement.
- TA2 builds durable, secure infrastructure that integrates data across institutions and characterizes the population, serving every area.
- TA3 runs rigorous trials that act on trajectories, concentrating on the co-occurring conditions that drive the most harm.
- TA4 generates the real-world measurements TA1 and TA2 need, enriching them from Year 2 onward, and delivers support technologies that improve daily function.

TA1 ↔ TA4

Each other's answer key

TA1 models the trajectories worth measuring. TA4 builds the measurements to see them. Each phase of TA development sharpens the other, converging on both the outcomes that matter and the measurements to assess them.

Co-development by design, not circular logic.

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Measurement as a byproduct of use

TA4 pursues two goals at once — measurement and utility within the same solution by providing:

1. Continuous, ecologically valid measurement that feeds the whole program.
2. Delivery through technologies that people will actually use to improve daily life.

Solutions may target assessment in any relevant domain. Example domains include behavioral, motor, physiological, sleep, sensory, cognitive, and adaptive daily function and/or communication.

From the outset: solutions may combine several technologies, and the program assumes artificial intelligence and machine learning are integral to how they measure, personalize, and adapt.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

TA4 Solution Summaries first, then full proposals

STEP 1

Sept. 17, 2026

ISO issued

The SPECTRA Innovative Solutions Opening (ISO) was posted.

STEP 2

Oct. 4, 2026

TA4 portal opens

TA4 Solution Summary submission opens at solutions.arpa-h.gov.

STEP 3

Oct. 21, 2026 · 3 p.m. ET

TA4 Solution Summaries due

Mandatory preproposal. Attachment A gives the format and instructions. ARPA-H reviews each and encourages or discourages a full proposal.

STEP 4

Date to be announced

TA4 Full Proposals due

Attachment B will give the proposal requirements and instructions. Proposers should heavily consider Solution Summary feedback before submitting.

Solution Summaries are mandatory. This slide is only for the TA4 submission. Monitor SAM.gov for amendments and the posting of each additional TA's preproposals and proposals.

Questions after this briefing: Submit at solutions.arpa-h.gov/Ask-A-Question and select SPECTRA in the dropdown, or email SPECTRA@arpa-h.gov. General questions and answers are posted publicly.

Future dates are subject to change. Please reference the solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

TA4 OBJECTIVE

Assessment first, delivered through technologies people will use

The primary purpose of TA4 is to generate the program's real-world assessment data: continuous, ecologically valid measurement of domains assessed today only in the clinic, produced as a byproduct of ordinary use. Because the data comes from use, the technologies must be easy to adopt and sustain across the lifespan. Where it makes sense, the same technologies also deliver usable benefit in communication, independence, and quality of life, and that usefulness is what earns the sustained use the assessment depends on.

EXAMPLE TECHNOLOGIES MAY INCLUDE:

- Wearables: sleep, movement, autonomic
- AAC and speech interfaces
- Eye tracking on tablets and phones
- Low-channel EEG outside of a research center
- Camera-based movement, gait, and behavior
- Immersive and virtual-environment tools

Assessment is the goal; use is how we get it. Measurement enables personalization, personalization drives sustained use, and sustained use makes continuous, real-world measurement possible. Because acceptance and sustained use are the test, TA4 technologies are co-designed with the people who will use them from the earliest stage.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

One stream of data, three returns

TA4 exists to generate assessment data. That single stream of real-world data in TA4 serves three purposes at once across the remaining SPECTRA TAs.

1

Identification and characterization

Continuous, ecologically valid measurement feeds TA1 analysis and TA2 population characterization, reaching settings and populations clinic-based instruments cannot.

2

Therapeutic effectiveness

TA4 solutions measure the effectiveness of TA3 interventions in real-world settings, including durability and individual-level response over time.

3

Device improvement and personalization

Data returns to the technology itself, supporting AI-driven adaptation to the individual user and improving the underlying models for all users.

Submissions must address all three data requirements.

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TA1 and TA4 are each other's answer key

TA1's problem

The models needed to interpret trajectories are nonlinear and incomplete.

TA4's problem

The real-world measurements needed to observe trajectories in daily life do not yet exist.

The co-development loop:

- TA1 defines and models the trajectories worth measuring, informing what TA4 builds.
- TA4 pushes novel real-world measurements that TA1 incorporates and tests against its models.
- Each round converges on both the outcomes that matter and the measurements to assess them.

Co-development by design, not circular logic.

The Interface: TA4 collects and validates pilot data before handoff, then delivers validated real-world measures to TA1 and TA2 from Year 2; TA1 issues an annual statement of the measurement gaps most limiting trajectory resolution.

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Requirements every solution must meet

These apply to every TA4 submission, whatever the technology.

Privacy and security by design

Physiological, behavioral, speech, video, and neural data are sensitive and identifiable. Build in privacy and security from the start: process on device where possible, keep raw data (such as raw speech) from leaving the home, coordinate with TA2 on privacy-preserving infrastructure, and provide granular, revocable consent with reidentification risk management. Solutions must pass a Research Security Review.

Accessibility for everyone served

Technologies must be usable by the people they serve across the lifespan, including those with high support needs, intellectual disability, and minimal or no reliable speech, and must meet applicable accessibility requirements. Technologies must be usable from first use, without a separate onboarding burden.

Pilot data before handoff

Performers must collect and validate pilot data in real-world settings before handing measures to other TAs. Handoffs to TA1 and TA2 must use versioned, validated data fields that conform to TA2 standards, so what other areas receive is proven, not provisional.

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Measurement Outside the Clinic: TA4 capabilities are required to solve these technical challenges

Cold start

Useful from first use, improving quickly from sparse examples.

Few-shot personalization

Adapt from very small individual datasets.

Nonstationarity

The same person changes with development, aging, illness, and medication.

Adaptive drift

A system that adapts to a low-engagement state can narrow what it offers and entrench it.

On-device constraints

Compute, memory, and power for all-day wearable and mobile use.

Personalization can complicate assessment.

If a device adapts while it measures, an observed change can reflect the user improving, the model improving, or both. Separating device-attributable from user-attributable change is a required deliverable.

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Speech and language models for the people SPECTRA serves

Automatic speech recognition (ASR) underpins many TA4 capabilities, from voice interfaces and captioning to speech-derived measurement.

SPECTRA will accept submissions that address creating customized ASR training sets and applications trained on autistic voices.

The gap

Today's systems are trained on fluent, neurotypical adult speech. Performance degrades on children's speech and further on disfluency, atypical prosody, articulation and phonological differences, dysarthria and apraxia, reduced intelligibility, and minimal or emerging speech. Echolalia and scripted or gestalt language are handled poorly, and scaling adult data does not fix it.

Open, on-device models

Open-source, openly licensed acoustic and language models, small enough for on-device deployment and fine-tunable so per-speaker adaptation happens on device, without raw speech leaving the home. A submission states its target populations and profiles across the lifespan.

A shared, consented corpus

A consented, shareable speech corpus and a public benchmark reporting word and phoneme error rate stratified by age and speech profile, with a stated error-rate reduction on child and atypical speech. Corpus and benchmark are built to outlast the program.

Consent and governance. Speech is biometric, identifiable, and often collected from people who cannot consent conventionally. Corpus construction must address consent, assent, revocation, and reidentification risk, and coordinate with TA2 on data standards and privacy-preserving infrastructure.

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TA4 Acceptance Requirements: The people who must accept and sustain a new technology will change across the lifespan

Life stage	Who must sustain it	What it must deliver
Infancy and early toddlerhood	The family, in the home	Indirect benefit: sleep and feeding insight, reassurance, faster access to support, reduced clinic burden
Early and middle childhood	The child and family together	Direct benefit in communication, participation, or regulation, with manageable burden for family and school
Adolescence through adulthood	The person themself	Direct benefit the person values enough to keep using, with control over what is collected and shared

Early identification. Push validated performance roughly ten months earlier (in selected populations, by 24 months) using modalities that work outside a research center, such as low-channel EEG and tablet or phone eye tracking. In the birth-to-24-month window, reducing diagnostic delay is sufficient justification on its own.

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Direction fixed by the program, thresholds set by the performer

Each proposal must state the improvement its technology is predicted to deliver over current practice.

- **Earlier validated identification**: Below the 16-month floor, robust by 24 months in real-world populations
- **Adoption, retention, and burden**: Lower abandonment at six months; setup, wear time, and effort measured
- **Real-world measurement validity**: Embedded measures track structured assessment across two or more settings and sites
- **Measurement integrity**: Device- and user-attributable change separated; model state versioned and auditable
- **Learning performance**: Usable at first use; adaptation from sparse data; federated gain without centralizing data
- **Integration with TA1 and TA2**: Measures map to TA1 constructs; data conform to TA2 standards
- **Functional performance**: Capability-specific gains over current practice, to performer-set targets
- **Subgroup performance consistency**: Performance holds within a prespecified margin across sex, genetic ancestry, income, and communication and cognitive profile
- **Safety**: Adverse events tracked against a prespecified threshold; alerting lead time at a set sensitivity and false-alarm rate; independent safety monitor

Note: Proposers may submit their own performance metrics if technically justifiable for consideration by the Program Manager.

How targets are set:

The program fixes the direction of effect and the required evidence.

The performer proposes the numeric threshold, set with the program team and Program Manager at award.

TA4 metrics will be assessed at:

- **G1** Month 12
- **G2** Month 24
- **G3** Month 48

G=Gate

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Per-award and program-level

PER-AWARD DELIVERABLES

- **New technologies with functional benefit**: One or more technologies that people adopt and sustain in daily life, demonstrating durable functional benefit at 12 months of use with no loss of user agency
- **Validated communication and function profile for each technology**: Description of the domains the technology targets, stating where on the continuum it applies, from fluent speech with impairment through intermittent speech loss to no reliable expressive method, and reporting expressive ability and, where the approach allows, receptive ability
- **Demonstrated individual personalization loop**: Measured improvement in the individual's device performance attributable to adaptation, reported separately from user change, with versioned model state
- **Operational closed-loop data**: Real-world data from TA4 into TA1 and TA2 through the common data model

PROGRAM-LEVEL OUTCOMES

- **New technologies that improve outcomes**: At least three technologies demonstrating durable functional benefit at 12 months of use, spanning the communication and function continuum and the lifespan from fluent speech with impairment through intermittent speech loss to no reliable expressive method
- **Demonstrated population transfer**: Improvement in base-model performance for new users arising from federated learning across the cohort
- **Public benefit capabilities**: Open-speech models, a consented and shareable speech corpus, and a public benchmark, released under open license and expected to outlast the program

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Out-of-Scope

- **Unvalidated Methods or Measures**: Methods or approaches that lack evidence are out-of-scope. SPECTRA will fund only evidence-based approaches and rigorous validity testing (if in question).
  - Refer to the Evidence Tiers Matrix in Section 1.3 of the SPECTRA ISO.
- **Closed-Loop/Nonconsenting Approaches**: Systems that log or transmit without user-controlled consent, or that restrict use expression, are out-of-scope.
- **Devices Lacking Real-World Durability**: In-clinic performance alone is insufficient; devices must demonstrate durability in ordinary, real-world settings of their intended use.
- **Systems Lacking Integration**: Closed ecosystems that cannot export interaction data in the program's common schema are out-of-scope.
- **User-Burdening Assessments**: Capabilities that impose an assessment task on the user rather than measuring as a byproduct of use (*with possible exceptions in infancy*) are out-of-scope.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

Interdisciplinary by design

Teaming and co-design

- Combine scientific, clinical, engineering, and lived-experience expertise; the strongest contributions sit at disciplinary boundaries.
- Co-design with the people who will use the technology, and where relevant, their caregivers and communication partners, from the earliest stage.
- The strongest approaches often combine modalities; the program may assemble interdisciplinary teams across awardees after submission.
- Coordinate with TA2 on data standards; the program favors open, inspectable models over closed commercial systems.

What makes a competitive submission

- Treats assessment as the goal and use as how you get it
- Shows evidence of acceptance and sustained use, with retention reported over months
- Gives a concrete method to separate device- from user-attributable change
- Addresses all three returns
- Is open, on-device, and consent-forward

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Questions and how to propose

PROPOSING TO SPECTRA

- Proposers may submit to one or more technical areas. Submissions addressing a single technical area are welcome and expected.
- To respond to more than one TA, submit separate submissions when the submission portals open. Each must stand on its own should only one be funded and may note synergies if they exist.
- **TA4 Solution Summaries are due Oct. 21, 2026, at 3 p.m. ET.*** Follow the solicitation and Attachment A for required format.

*Deadlines subject to change. Please reference the solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

Questions and updates

- Submit questions at solutions.arpa-h.gov/Ask-A-Question and select SPECTRA. General questions and answers are posted publicly.
- Email the program at SPECTRA@arpa-h.gov.
- Monitor SAM.gov for amendments and the posting of each Technical Area's Attachment A and B.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

SPECTRA · TECHNICAL AREA 4

Measure what matters. Build what people will use. Feed the whole program.

Continuous, ecologically valid measurement generated as a byproduct of use, across the lifespan; the three returns; co-developed with TA1; with acceptance and sustained use as the test.

Program Manager **Russell Shilling, Ph.D.** | Solution Summaries due **Oct. 21, 2026, at 3 p.m. ET***

*Deadlines subject to change. Please reference the solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

Business, Acquisitions, & Innovative Solutions Opening (ISO) ARPA-H-SOL-26-163 Overview

Caitlin Burns
Agreements Officer, ARPA-H

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

SPECTRA ISO Summary

- Solution Summaries are mandatory.
- Proposers who submit a Solution Summary may submit a full proposal regardless of encourage/discourage.
- No funding limits (or range) for individual projects.
- All awards will be Other Transactions (OTs).
- Resource sharing is encouraged.

Read the ISO!

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

Solution Summaries

- **Solution Summaries are MANDATORY.**
  - TA4 due Oct. 21, 2026, at 3 p.m. ET*

- **Use of Attachment A is mandatory.**

*Deadlines subject to change. Please reference the solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

4.3 Solution Summaries (Pre-Proposal Submissions)

ARPA-H requires submission of a Solution Summary prior to submission of a Proposal for all Technical Areas. Solution Summaries allow ARPA-H to assess the viability of proposed concepts prior to Proposals.

Solution Summary Format (Attachment A)

Use of Attachment A — Solution Summary Format is required. All solution summaries submitted in response to this ISO must comply with the content, page, and formatting requirements outlined in Attachment A. Potential proposers are required to use the template provided. Information not explicitly requested in this ISO may not be reviewed.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

Eligibility Information

- **Government entities (agencies, Federally Funded Research and Development Centers, etc.) are not eligible.**
- **Non-U.S. entities are eligible.**
- **SAM.gov registration required for award.**
- **Awards, at any level, cannot be made to entities that are suspended or debarred, including key personnel.**

ARPA-H is primarily interested in proposals from commercial performers, academic institutions, and nonprofit organizations. **Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) and government entities, including federal employees, are not permitted to respond to this ISO as a prime or sub-performer.**

ARPA-H must prioritize awards to entities that will conduct funded work in the United States. Nondomestic performers are encouraged to collaborate with a domestic entity. ARPA-H will not make awards to entities organized under the laws of a covered foreign country per 42 U.S.C. 290c(n)(1)(D).

An active SAM.gov registration and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) is required to receive an award. NOTE: SAM actions may take more than 14 business days to process; at times it may take up to 90 days. SAM is independent of ARPA-H and thus ARPA-H representatives have no influence over processing timeframes.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

Review Process

- **Solution Summaries are mandatory**
- **Solution Summaries will be reviewed based on ARPA-H processes**
- **Notification of Encourage or Discourage will be sent via email**

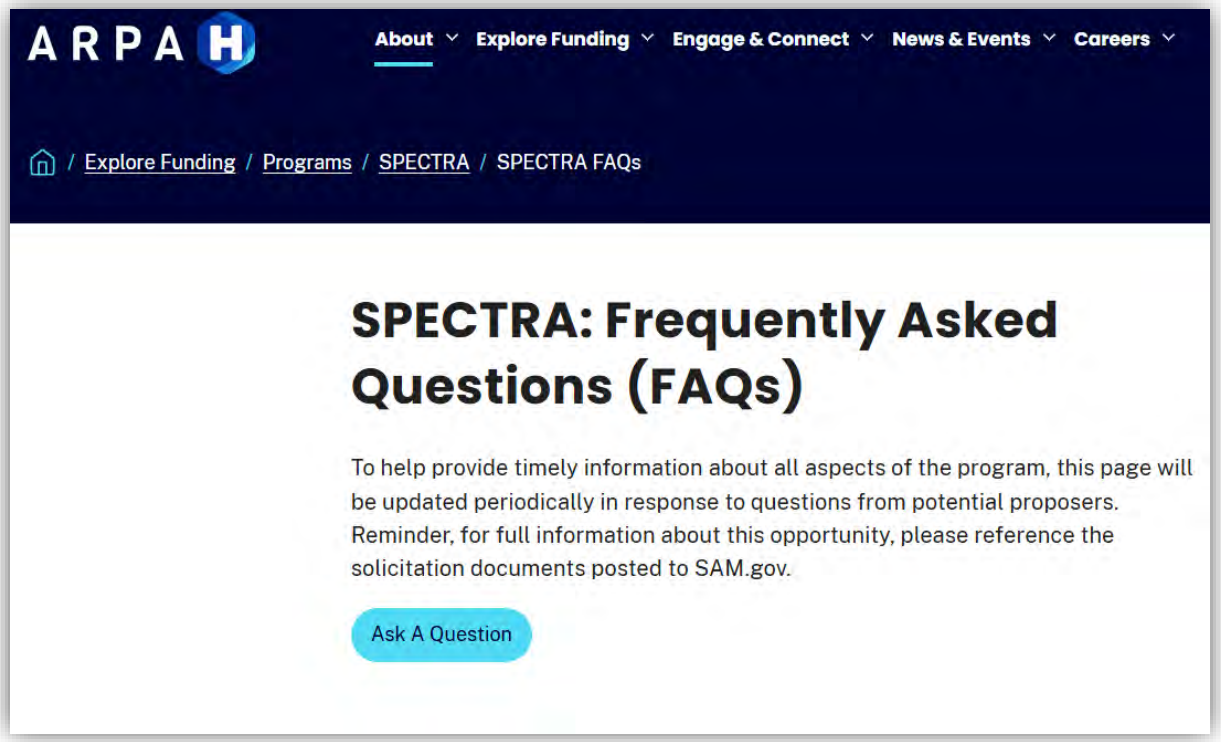
4.3 Solution Summaries (Pre-Proposal Submissions)

ARPA-H requires submission of a Solution Summary prior to submission of a Proposal for all Technical Areas. Solution Summaries allow ARPA-H to assess the viability of proposed concepts prior to Proposals.

These informational materials are updated as of Oct. 14, 2026. Please reference the SPECTRA solicitation documents for the most up-to-date information.

Questions and Answers

- **Please check posted answers before submitting a question**
- **Submit via the Solutions site Ask-A-Question (select SPECTRA in the dropdown)**
- **The Solutions site can be found at: solutions.arpa-h.gov/ask-a-question**



6.5 Questions and Answers

The following types of questions will not be answered:

- Which Technical Area a given team or concept should address
- Whether a specific idea or approach falls within SPECTRA's scope
- Preferred or recommended teaming arrangements
- Requests for ARPA-H's position on topics beyond the requirements of this solicitation

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Pre-Award

Solicitation Details

Classification

Description

Contact Information

Attachments/Links

Opportunity

Systems for Phenotypic Evaluation, Clinical Trajectories, Response, and Agency (SPECTRA)

Active

Notice ID	Contract Opportunity Type	Inactive Dates	Date Offers Due
ARPA-H-SOL-26-163	Solicitation	Jan 19, 2027	Oct 21, 2026 3:00 PM EDT
Related Notice	**Contract Line Item Number**	**Inactive Policy**	**Published Date**
(blank)	(blank)	Manual	Oct 14, 2026 10:34 AM EDT

Department/Ind. Agency	Sub-tier	Office
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF	NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH	ADVANCED RESEARCH PROJECTS AGENCY FOR HEALTH (ARPA-H)

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- Pre-Award
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Award Type — Other Transactions

OTs are agreements

- Mutual assent, expressed by a valid offer and acceptance; adequate consideration; capacity; and legality (i.e., these are contracts, but not Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) procurement contracts).
- Leverage commercial business practices more than traditional FAR procurements.

Collaborative

Increased collaboration and partnership, leading to more effective use of resources and knowledge sharing.

Flexible

- Many typical contract laws and regulations don't apply (e.g., Competition in Contracting Act, FAR, Cost Accounting Standards).
- Greater flexibility in project design and implementation.
- May fully negotiate data rights, patents, etc.

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Process and Checklist

Step 1: Solution Summaries Required

- Must use Attachment A
- Submit to: https://solutions.arpa-h.gov/submit-summary
  - TA4 Solution Summary Deadline: Oct. 21, 2026, at 3 p.m. ET
  - Submission portal opens Oct. 4, 2026

Encouraged/ Discouraged

Step 2: Full Proposals

Details in upcoming ISO amendment

Selected/Not Selected

Step 3: Negotiation & Award

- Revised and/or additional documentation (as requested by ARPA-H)
- Real-time negotiations

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Final Guidance

- The final ISO is binding until/unless changes are posted as amendments to SAM.gov.
- Ask questions at https://solutions.arpa-h.gov/Ask-A-Question/ after checking the posted Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).
- Register, or update registration, in SAM.gov and the ARPA-H Solution Submission Portal as early as possible.
- **Read the ISO**.

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