

Special Notice (SN) DARPA-SN-16-67: Safe Genes Proposers Day

DATE: Friday, September 30, 2016

LOCATION: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2301 Constitution Ave NW, Washington, DC 20037

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: Friday, September 23, 2016 at 12:00 PM EST or when capacity is reached, whichever comes first.

REGISTRATION WEBSITE: <http://www.sa-meetings.com/SafeGenesProposersDay>

TECHNICAL POC: Dr. Renee Wegrzyn, DARPA/BTO

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The Biological Technologies Office (BTO) of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) is hosting a Proposers Day for the potential proposer community in support of a planned Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) for the Safe Genes Program. The Proposers Day will be held on Friday, September 30, 2016 from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM ET at the United States Institute of Peace (2301 Constitution Ave NW, Washington, DC 20037). Advance registration is required.

The goals of the Proposers Day include:

1. Introducing the Safe Genes program vision and goals;
2. Explaining the mechanics of a DARPA program in general and the objectives and milestones of this program in particular; and
3. Encouraging and promoting teaming arrangements among organizations that have the relevant expertise, research facilities, and capabilities for executing research and development responsive to the Safe Genes program goals.

The Proposers Day will include brief overview presentations by government personnel, an information session to respond to questions from participants, “lightning” talks (three minutes, one PowerPoint slide) and posters for potential proposers to highlight technical capability or interest to promote teaming, and private sidebar meetings with the DARPA government team and potential proposer teams that can be scheduled beforehand on the registration website.

Attendance at this event is not a requirement for submission of a proposal or selection for funding. Information relayed during the Proposers Day will be made available on the BTO section of the DARPA Opportunities page: <http://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/opportunities>.

Safe Genes Program Overview:

The Safe Genes program will create biological capabilities that enable the safe pursuit of advanced genome editing applications. Implementation of a “safety first” approach to the development of next generation biotechnologies and genome editing tools and their derivative technologies (e.g., gene drives) will foster, and even accelerate, responsible innovation while mitigating the risk of unintended consequences.

The emergence of advanced genome editing tools and derivative technologies, including gene drives (self-perpetuating gene editing systems that bias inheritance in populations through sexual reproduction), has provided an unprecedented ability to modify genomes and bias inheritance in a manner that is rapid, adaptable, and applicable to a broad range of organisms spanning microbes to mammals. These tools create a number of opportunities for the advancement of biological technological innovations that benefit the Nation.

New scientific investigations are needed to generate the foundational knowledge and comprehensive experimental data regarding genome editing tools, especially derivative technologies such as gene drives, to narrow the gap towards successful implementation of these tools for target applications. The Safe Genes program will provide new insights into what is possible, probable, and vulnerable with regard to genome editing biotechnologies and their derivative applications, create novel tools to enable predictable and reversible control of gene editors, and counter unwanted genome editing activity and outcomes.

Three program objectives will be pursued under the four-year (two phases of 2 years duration each) Safe Genes program. The first program objective is to design and develop genetic constructs that provide spatial, temporal, and reversible control of genome editors in living systems, thereby enabling programmable functional activities at the level of the genome. The second program objective is to develop new small molecule and molecular countermeasures that provide prophylaxis and treatment solutions to prevent or limit genome editing activity and protect the genome integrity of organisms and populations. The third program objective is to create a capability to eliminate unwanted engineered genes from environments and restore systems to a functional and genetic baseline state. It is anticipated that the tools generated under each of the program areas may be used independently, simultaneously, or in series to create a layered, modular, and adaptable solution set to address the broadest range of emergent opportunities and biodefense capabilities.

DARPA *strongly encourages* teaming to ensure the expertise and capabilities necessary to meet program goals are available. Interested parties are invited to submit a one-page profile (**see Attachment 1**) including the following information:

- Contact information, to include name, organization, email, telephone number, mailing address, and website.
- Brief description of the proposer's technical competencies and relevant facilities.
- Desired technical competencies and facilities from other potential team performers, if applicable.

Interested attendees are also invited to present a brief **one-slide** PowerPoint summary of their interests and capabilities (**see Attachment 2**). These will be presented during a 3 minute "lightning" presentation at Proposers Day. Presentations consisting of multiple slides will not be granted a time slot. Attendees may also choose to present a poster (**see Attachment 3**) describing

their research and interests that will be available for viewing and interaction for the duration of Proposer's Day – those interested may submit both a lightning talk and a poster.

Lightning talk and/or poster submissions will be accepted on a first-come basis until time constraints (lightning talks) or physical capacity (posters) is reached.

All profiles, presentations, and posters must be emailed to DARPA-SN-16-67@darpa.mil no later than 12:00 PM ET on **Friday, September 23, 2016**. Following the deadline, a consolidated list of all profiles (not presentations or posters) will be sent via email to the proposers who submitted a valid profile. Specific content, communications, networking, and team formation are the sole responsibility of the participants. Neither DARPA nor the Department of Defense (DoD) endorses the information and organizations contained in the consolidated teaming profile document, nor does DARPA or DoD exercise any responsibility for improper dissemination of the teaming profiles.

Registration Information:

PLEASE NOTE: Registration closes on Friday, September 23, 2016 at 12:00 PM ET.

Registration is limited by the venue capacity, and early registration is strongly recommended. The registration cutoff date is Friday, September 23, 2016 at 12:00 PM EST, or once attendance capacity is met, whichever comes first. **There will be no on-site registration.**

Participants must register in advance through the registration website. The registration fee will be \$46 and include breakfast, lunch, all day beverages and other associated catering fees.

Early registration is strongly recommended. Due to space limitations, attendance for the Proposers Day will be limited to the first 200 registrants. Interested parties are encouraged to coordinate attendance internally within their organizations prior to registration. Physical attendance is limited to no more than two representatives per division/department. Individuals who are unable to register because the deadline has occurred or capacity has been reached, will be added to a waitlist. If slots remain open after registration closes or become available due to cancellations, the slots will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis from the waitlist.

An online registration form and various other meeting details can be found at the registration website, <http://www.sa-meetings.com/SafeGenesProposersDay>.

All attendees are required to present government-issued photo identification upon entry to the event. Non-US citizens are required to submit a DARPA Form 60 (U.S. Permanent Resident and Foreign National Visit Request) no later than 12:00 PM ET on Friday September 23, 2016. This form and submission instructions will be provided in the registration confirmation email.

Further administrative questions should be addressed to DARPA-SN-16-67@darpa.mil. Please refer to the Safe Genes Proposers Day (DARPA-SN-16-67) in all correspondence. This announcement is not a request for proposals; any sent will be disregarded.

DARPA hosts Proposer Days to promote teaming arrangements between researchers; provide potential performers with information on whether and how they might respond to the Government's research and development solicitations; and to increase efficiency in proposal preparation and evaluation. Therefore, Proposer Days are open only to registered potential proposers.

This SN is issued solely for information and potential new program planning purposes; the SN does not constitute a formal solicitation for proposals or proposal abstracts. In accordance with FAR 15.201(e), responses to this notice are not offers and cannot be accepted by the Government to form a binding contract. Submission is voluntary and is not required to propose to subsequent Broad Agency Announcements (if any) or research solicitations (if any) on this topic. DARPA will not provide reimbursement for costs incurred in responding to this SN. Respondents are advised that DARPA is under no obligation to acknowledge receipt of the information received, or provide feedback to respondents with respect to any information submitted under this SN. NO CLASSIFIED INFORMATION SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE SN RESPONSE.