

# **STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (SERDP) BROAD AGENCY ANNOUNCEMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**

Reference: Broad Agency Announcement (BAA), August 22, 2024  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Humphreys Engineer Center Support Activity

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program (SERDP) is the Department of Defense's (DoD's) environmental research and development program, planned and executed in partnership with the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency. SERDP's role is to fund research and development that addresses environmental and resilience issues relevant to the management and mission of DoD. SERDP-supported efforts lead to the development and application of innovative environmental technologies or methods that improve the environmental performance of DoD by improving outcomes, managing environmental risks, and/or reducing costs or time required to resolve environmental problems. The development and application of innovative environmental science and technology support the long-term sustainability of DoD's installations and ranges, and significantly reduce current and future environmental liabilities. Within its broad areas of interest, the Program focuses on Environmental Restoration, Munitions Response, Resource Conservation and Resilience, and Weapons Systems and Platforms. SERDP funds research and development programs in basic and applied research as well as advanced technology development.

### **1.1. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR PROPOSERS**

SERDP is seeking white papers for environmental research and development projects responding to topic areas defined by this BAA. Topic areas are located in Appendix A of this document. This BAA is for Private Sector Organizations.

Awardees under this BAA will be selected through a multi-stage review process, including a brief white paper and a full proposal. Some proposals may require an oral presentation to the SERDP Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) for final approval. To be eligible for consideration, proposers must submit a white paper. Any white paper submitted shall be in response to only one of the topic areas set forth in this announcement. White papers marked with ITAR, EAR, a limited distribution statement, Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI), or as company proprietary are not accepted. Please note, only government employees or Department of Defense contractors who have signed non-disclosure agreements have access to SERDP proposals. Proposers may respond to more than one topic area with separate white papers.

After evaluation of white papers, SERDP will contact all proposers and either request or not request each to submit a full proposal. At that time, SERDP will provide detailed instructions for the full proposal format. Full proposals may not be submitted outside the white paper process. Any full proposal that has not been reviewed in the white paper phase will not be evaluated nor considered for award under this BAA. Due to the volume of white papers anticipated, SERDP will not provide debriefs on those that are not requested to submit a full proposal.

Based on an evaluation of the written full proposal, and pending approval by the SAB, SERDP will notify each proposer as to whether the Government Contracting Officer wishes to enter into negotiation for the award of a contract. Proposers are advised that only the Contracting Officer is legally authorized to bind the Government. SERDP reserves the right to recommend for award any, all, or none of the proposals received. SERDP also reserves the right to recommend a portion of the work proposed in any single proposal for award. There is no commitment by SERDP to make any recommendations for contract awards, nor to be responsible for any money expended by the proposer before contract award is made. It is the sole responsibility of the proposer to make certain the proposal is properly received by SERDP.

The SERDP Office manages the BAA solicitation along with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Humphreys Engineer Center Support Activity (HECSA) Contracting Center in Alexandria, Virginia. For contracting or small business information regarding this BAA solicitation, contact Aimee Johnson (703-428-6551; [Aimee.N.Johnson@usace.army.mil](mailto:Aimee.N.Johnson@usace.army.mil)) or Shannon Benson (703-428-7407; [Shannon.N.Benson@usace.army.mil](mailto:Shannon.N.Benson@usace.army.mil)) or the HECSA Small Business Representative, Monique Holmes 202-934-1816; [HECSASmallBusinessProgram@usace.army.mil](mailto:HECSASmallBusinessProgram@usace.army.mil)). General SERDP procedural questions may be referred to the SERDP office at 571-372-6565. For technical information regarding a topic area, contact the individual listed in Appendix A.

## **1.2. EVALUATION SCHEDULE**

This BAA is open for one year from the date of release or until it is replaced by a subsequent announcement, whichever comes first.

White papers will not be evaluated against each other since they are not submitted in accordance with a common work statement. SERDP's intent is to review white papers as soon as possible after they are submitted; however, white papers may be reviewed periodically for administrative reasons. Proposers will be notified on the decision regarding their white paper as soon as possible following review.

Full proposals will be evaluated as soon as possible after they are submitted. Review of full proposals may require input from external peer reviewers or other technical experts. Proposals may be required to brief the SERDP SAB depending on their size and scope. SAB meetings are typically held four times each fiscal year in October, March, June, and September.

Contracts are anticipated to be awarded three to six months following final review and approval of each proposal, depending on availability of funding.

## **2. WHITE PAPER INSTRUCTIONS**

### **2.1 WHITE PAPER LENGTH AND FORMAT**

White papers shall be no longer than two (2) pages, type face not less than 11-point, and margins not less than one inch on all sides. All white papers shall be submitted as a single PDF file containing all sections outlined below.

### **2.2 WHITE PAPER CONTENT**

White papers must describe the merits and objectives of the proposer's project in response to the respective topic area. The white paper should concisely describe the following:

1. Proposal Title
2. Lead Principal Investigator
3. Lead Organization
4. Objectives: State the proposed objectives and how the project is responsive to the objectives articulated in the topic area.
5. Approach: Describe the technical approach and methods, preferably structured in hypothesis-driven tasks that clearly identify how the objectives of the proposed project will be addressed. This section should be the primary focus of the white paper.
6. Cost Estimate: The estimated total costs by year. A detailed breakout of costs is not required or desired in the white paper. A detailed cost breakout will be provided in the full proposal, if requested. If selected for funding, proposers will be required to provide a certificate of current cost or pricing data prior to award in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 15.403-4(a)(1) if the total contract value is expected to exceed \$2,000,000.00 to the cognizant contracting office.
7. Literature Citations: Provide literature citations for any material cited.

### 3. SUBMITTAL

White papers are submitted via the SERDP and ESTCP Management System (SEMS). No electronic mail, faxed, or hard copy white papers will be accepted.

Complete all steps below in order to submit a white paper.

- Create a single PDF file that contains all required sections outlined in the white paper guidance.
- Click the link below that corresponds to the Program Area the white paper responds to (create a SEMS account if needed):
  - [Environmental Restoration](#)
  - [Munitions Response](#)
  - [Resource Conservation and Resilience](#)
  - [Weapons Systems and Platforms](#)
- Enter all required white paper details into SEMS. If the white paper is associated with an existing SERDP project, enter the project number on the first page of the white paper submission wizard in SEMS. White paper details may be saved and edited prior to final submission.
- Before submitting, add the system-generated proposal number (displayed in front of the white paper title on the “Manage Proposals” page), project title, lead PI name and organization to first page of white paper as instructed in Section 2.2 above.
- Upload the final white paper file.
- Submit the white paper. Only white papers that have been submitted will be considered. White papers with a “Saved” status will not be reviewed.

Edits cannot be made once the white paper has been submitted. SEMS will display an on-line confirmation message and send an email notification to the proposer. It is the sole responsibility of the proposer to make certain the white paper is properly received by SERDP. For questions, contact the SERDP Office at 571-372-6565.

**Note:** A signed cover page is **not required** for white papers.

#### **4. EVALUATION FACTORS FOR WHITE PAPERS AND FULL PROPOSALS**

The following evaluation factors will be the sole basis for reviewing white papers and full proposals submitted in response to this BAA. SERDP relevance is a pass/fail criteria evaluated at the white paper stage only; white papers not passing this gate will not be further evaluated. Among the other evaluation factors for both white papers and full proposals, Technical Merit is more important than Personnel, Cost and Transition Plan.

##### **SERDP RELEVANCE (PASS/FAIL)**

Proposal reviewers will assess whether the white paper submission (1) responds to the objectives as described in the topic area, and (2) falls within the SERDP mission to support basic and applied research or advanced technology development. SERDP Relevance is a threshold review and if the white paper is determined to be not relevant, no further evaluation of the white paper will be conducted.

##### **TECHNICAL MERIT**

The overall scientific and technical merit of the white paper must be clearly identifiable. The evaluation will consider the proposed approach and its substantiation by calculations, test data, and references. Emphasis will be placed on the proposer's demonstration of a thorough understanding of the environmental issue. The proposer must demonstrate the ability to execute the work by providing a comprehensive, logical, orderly, and concise plan that indicates major tasks, milestones, critical paths, go/no-go decision points and key events leading to the completion of the project in the proposed time frame. In addition, the proposer must show how the technical approach and proposed tasks will address the project objectives. Strong consideration will be given to innovation; however, the degree of risk associated with individual proposals will be weighed against potential benefits. The proposal should clearly articulate how the research will advance the state of the science.

##### **PERSONNEL (FULL PROPOSALS ONLY)**

Proposal reviewers will examine and assess the applicable qualifications, capabilities, demonstrated achievements, and proposed time commitment to the project by the proposed principal(s) and other key personnel.

##### **COST (FULL PROPOSALS ONLY)**

Proposal reviewers will consider the reasonableness of the proposed cost, as well as the appropriateness and substantiation of costs for the technical complexity described. Cost sharing or leveraged resources also will be considered.

##### **TRANSITION PLAN (FULL PROPOSALS ONLY)**

The transition plan of the proposed research product(s) should demonstrate a clear understanding of how the project's results will transition to implementation either directly through future demonstrations or through future development, and show a linkage between the work proposed and the needs of ultimate end user of the results. Coordination between the proposer and targeted end user community is of value for late-stage development projects.

## APPENDIX A: SERDP TOPIC AREAS

### ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION

SERDP's Environmental Restoration Program Area focuses on cleaning and managing impacted lands on current and former military installations. It supports the development and demonstration of innovative technologies to characterize, remediate, and scientifically manage chemicals of concern in soil; sediments; and ground, storm, surface, and waste water.

To provide strategic guidance for future research, SERDP and ESTCP periodically hold workshops to identify and prioritize research needs on specific topics. Proposers are strongly encouraged to refer to the Summary Reports listed below.

- [Summary Report](#) from the November 2022 SERDP and ESTCP *Strategic Workshop on Management of PFAS in the Environment*
- [Summary Report](#) from the July 2018 SERDP and ESTCP *Workshop on Management of DoD's Chlorinated Solvents in Groundwater Sites*

Data needs identified during these workshops are relevant to several of the specific areas of interest listed below. Current and anticipated areas of focus include:

#### **Characterization and Monitoring**

Improved understanding of or development of methodologies or technologies for the assessment or long-term monitoring of chemicals of concern or biogeochemical indicators in soils, sediments, and water.

#### **Reduction in Cost to Complete**

Improved understanding of the processes that impact the DoD's Cost to Complete for impacted groundwater or aquatic sediments. Also of interest is the development of innovative tools, methodologies, or technologies that can reduce the Cost to Complete for these matrices by improving performance assessment or optimizing treatment. Sites impacted with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and/or chlorinated solvents, munitions constituents, PCBs, and PAHs are of most concern, but other chemicals of concern may be of interest.

#### **Reduce Source Loading of Munitions Constituents**

Improved understanding of processes associated with the management of munitions constituents on DoD testing and training ranges throughout the lifecycle of their use. Development of innovative tools, methodologies or technologies that can reduce source loading of munitions constituents during routine DoD operations and demilitarization activities is also of interest. Proposers are encouraged to refer to the [Summary Report](#) from the July 2015 SERDP and ESTCP *Workshop on Research and Demonstration Needs for Management of Munitions Constituents*.

#### **Stormwater Treatment**

Development of innovative tools, methodologies or technologies for management and treatment of stormwater runoff from DoD facilities. Consideration should be given to incorporation into

existing Best Management Practices and to meeting National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements.

### **Wastewater Treatment**

Development of innovative, energy efficient, low maintenance systems for decentralized treatment or recycling of wastewater on fixed installations. Systems that are capable of operating in an energy neutral configuration, that produce power or materials that can easily be converted into power, and/or that are capable of generating water for potable or nonpotable re-use are of interest.

### **Risk Assessment**

Improved understanding of processes that impact assessment and prediction of human and ecological risk from contaminants of concern including but not limited to PFAS, chlorinated solvents, munitions constituents, PCBs, and PAHs. Specific areas of concern include fate and transport of contaminants, exposure pathways to humans and ecological receptors, contaminant effects on ecological receptors and tools and methods to assess environmental impacts.

### **Point of Contact**

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## **MUNITIONS RESPONSE**

SERDP's Munitions Response program area supports the development of innovative technologies that can characterize, remediate, and scientifically manage sites affected by military munitions with a focus on munitions in the underwater environment. Many sites affected by munitions have depths less than 5 meters although water depths down to 35 meters are of concern. Aquatic environments include ponds, lakes, rivers, estuaries, and coastal or open ocean areas. Munitions of interest range from small projectiles and mortars to large bombs. Current and anticipated areas of research focus include:

### **Wide Area and/or Detailed Survey Techniques**

Technologies to enable cost-effective survey of large (kilometer-scale) areas to identify concentrations of munitions and areas free of munitions continue to be of interest but the program has developed a complete suite of physics-based systems and the interest has shifted to maintaining an awareness of scientific advances for improvement. Sensor modalities addressing this aspect of the problem must provide high areal coverage rates but may be successful with only modest probabilities of detection and classification.

### **Cost-Effective Recovery and Disposal Methods**

Improved methods are needed to cost-effectively and safely recover munitions from the underwater environment. Current practices employing divers for manual retrieval of targets are typically dangerous and expensive. Proposals should focus on recovery in the shallow water environment, where munitions are likely to be encountered by the public (to depths routinely accessed by recreational divers), and should address explosive safety issues. Cost-effective, safe, and environmentally acceptable remediation techniques are also needed for underwater items that cannot be moved due to explosive safety concerns and where blow-in-place operations underwater can significantly impact marine life.

### **Mobility of munitions in the dynamic underwater environment**

The search for a limited set of parameters that describe water column dynamics, sediment physical properties and munition configurations, and in turn, predict transition from stationary to mobile munition behavior and/or burial potential remains of high interest.

### **Point of Contact**

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## **RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND RESILIENCE**

SERDP's Resource Conservation and Resilience (RC) program area supports research that improves DoD mission readiness and environmental performance by providing new scientific knowledge and the demonstration of advanced technology. To accomplish these objectives, RC addresses high priority DoD environmental technology requirements that enhance military operations, improve military training and readiness, support the sustainment of DoD's training and test ranges, improve installation built and natural infrastructure, and better ensure the safety and welfare of military personnel and their dependents. Research efforts in the research areas outlined below may include the formation of research working groups to identify knowledge gaps, develop research strategies, and explore research solutions.

### **Natural Resources**

Natural resource research efforts focus on ecological systems, aquatic and marine resources, terrestrial ecology, and species and ecosystem management. These efforts research, analyze, and demonstrate advanced tools, technologies, and methodologies for the management of ecological systems integral to DoD installations and capabilities to ensure the continued availability of realistic training and testing conditions while preserving the long-term viability of installation and regional biological diversity and associated ecological processes. Ecological systems of emphasis are forested ecosystems, arid land ecosystems, ecosystems associated with the Pacific Islands and interior Alaska, and coastal and estuarine ecosystems. Living marine resources ecology and management efforts research, analyze, and demonstrate advanced the tools, technologies, and methodologies to monitor and minimize the impacts of military operations on marine, aquatic, and terrestrial natural resources. Species ecology and management efforts research, analyze, and demonstrate advanced tools, technologies, and methodologies for the active management of invasive, listed, and at-risk species. Species management research may include threatened, endangered, at-risk, invasive, and other categories of species and ecologies of interest to the DoD.

### **Wildland Fire Smoke and other Emissions**

Emissions research efforts focus on the tools, technologies, and methodologies for the active management of dust, fire, and other emissions from training, testing, and other DoD activities to include both wildfires and prescribed burns. These research efforts seek to ensure the continued availability and sustainability of training and test ranges. Research that advances the accuracy of emissions productions and transport of emissions in the near field are of particular interest. Advanced technology demonstrations can include any elements from the emissions production process from fuel characterization, combustion, emissions factor estimation, and transport.

### **Resilience of Built and Natural Infrastructure**

Resilience research focuses on research efforts that analyze, develop, and demonstrate advanced tools, technologies, and methodologies for the continuum of infrastructure, both natural and built required by the DoD for the maintenance of capabilities, training, and testing of new systems. Particular focus is given to research that examines natural and built systems challenged by a non-stationary environment, the identification and accurate prediction of regime shifts, and the identification of response. Forensic analysis of recent or historical regime shifts impacting natural and built systems is also of interest in so far as such analysis may be of value in the development of forecasting methods. In addition to regime shift, risk to natural and built infrastructure is also

of interest, especially compound threats, and the relationship between risk of compounding events and resilience.

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## **WEAPONS SYSTEMS AND PLATFORMS**

SERDP's Weapons Systems and Platforms program area supports the development of innovative technologies and materials that can address the current and future environmental and worker safety liabilities associated with the design, construction, maintenance, demilitarization repair and operations of Department of Defense weapons systems and platforms. Several areas of interest are described in the sections below.

### **Manufacturing and Maintenance**

Developments to enable cost-effective development of environmentally benign materials with applications to the production and repair of military unique platforms are of interest. We are interested in processes, materials, and formulations that eliminate or reduce the generation or use of hazardous or toxic materials, including chemicals of concern. Targeted processes and materials include paints, primers and other organic coating systems, surface treatments to include passivation and plating, adhesives, sealants, and alternative solvents or technologies for vapor degreasing and paint and coating removal. Additional technology of interest includes environmentally friendly additive manufacturing processes that enable more effective and efficient repair, alloys and processing of alloys with reduced environmental footprint, and more environmentally friendly and efficient composite repair materials and processes. Sub-system engineering methods to combine technologies in novel ways to reduce corrosion are also of interest. Inspection or analysis techniques that would reduce the requirement for maintenance or overhaul are also desired. In addition, technologies for detection and monitoring of hazardous materials used in industrial processes or technologies to control the release of these materials into the environment are of interest. Performance requirements to enable weapons systems and platforms to function at a high level are important considerations as well as reduced frequency and cost of sustainment.

Additional information may be found on our website describing our [ASETSDDefense](#) (Advanced Surface Engineering Technologies for a Sustainable Defense) workshops and data base. We have also developed [strategy and implementation documents](#) and these are also available on our website.

### **Energetic Materials and Formulations**

The development of alternative materials or fabrication methods for application to military propellants, explosives, and pyrotechnics are sought. Improved synthesis and processing methods that eliminate solvents, hazardous reagents or components, chemicals of concern, reduce hazardous waste, and generate a relevant energetic material should be explored. Alternative materials or methods should provide reductions in hazardous emissions during synthesis, formulation, operations or demilitarization. Novel formulations methods that reduce or eliminate hazardous solvents or components that are toxic or of environmental concern or that produce less hazardous wastes are of interest. Formulations that do not produce hazardous or toxic emissions when combusted or detonated are needed. Methods to measure and analyze emissions are required. And finally, methods to demilitarize or to design for demilitarization would be of significant interest.

Additional information on our current and past efforts in the area of [energetic materials](#) is available on our website.

## **Waste and Emissions Reduction**

We are interested in technologies that can reduce waste and emissions for general Department of Defense activities related to weapons systems and platforms as well as construction/architectural materials. One category deals with the unique requirements for shipboard water treatment. Analytical methods towards understanding bilge and black or grey water treatment on ships remains an area of interest. In addition, novel treatment methods would also be of interest. Low global warming and non-flammable refrigerants and novel refrigeration technologies that do not use refrigerants are of significant interest to ground vehicles. The use flame retardants for soldier, vehicle, and support equipment applications often poses environmental risk and alternative technologies are of interest. Elimination of chemicals of concern in soldier uniforms and equipment are of interest. Noise reduction technologies for weapons and platforms systems are also of interest, especially for aircraft.

Forward operating bases (FOBs) are a unique military environment. Some FOBs are intended to be maintained for weeks or months and some for years. They must be sustained and provided with all requirements to include food, potable water, and energy. The wastes from FOBs are an important consideration. Food and other wastes should not be open burned and incinerators are not always available. We would be interested in novel ideas or methods to reduce the emissions from FOB operations that could provide clean water or energy.

Additional information on our prior efforts in [waste and emissions reduction](#) can be found on our website.

## **Firefighting**

We are seeking new and in-development fluorine-free surfactants, additives, and formulations for aqueous film forming foams (AFFF) that have at least a theoretical potential to meet and exceed MIL-PRF-32725 performance requirements. Furthermore, we are seeking formulation technologies that could enable use of these fluorine-free formulations onboard of ships, which would require reduced time for fire suppression and for the supplied concentrate to be able to be mixed with sea water prior to use. Additionally, we are seeking understanding of fluorine-free AFFF through development of relevant physics and chemistry models. Related to that, understanding of how these alternative formulations degrade over time and interact with other fluorine-free AFFF formulations is important to ensuring proper logistics. Development of engineering technologies to aid in application and fire suppression is also of interest. Lastly, we seek technologies to improve the capabilities of simulating live fire training with foam on liquid pool fires to improve training effectiveness prior to real firefighting exercises and to ultimately reduce the amount of chemical exposure to the environment from AFFF. Simulations that include air flow and haptic feedback while properly simulating the fire and response to the AFFF is of interest. Additionally, low toxicity chemicals and technologies for interior space fire suppression as alternatives to halon are sought.

## **Point of Contact**

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