

MIDEX 5/6 Downselect Q&A

Updated: 27 May 2002

Question 35 revised

Updated: 23 May 2002

Questions 12-44

12. Will separate electronic submission be required for E/PO?

No electronic submission is required for the Concept Study Report. That means no electronic submission of cover page information, no electronic submission of E/PO proposals, etc. The entire Concept Study Report should be submitted in a single bound volume as described in the Guidelines and Criteria for the Phase A Concept Study. See the Guidelines for the requirements on the custom cover page (Section A of the Concept Study Report).

13. What are the 5 extra pages in the science investigation section (Section E) of the Concept Study Report for?

You may use the 5 extra pages for whatever you want. They have been allocated to allow for the additional information on the instruments and other aspects of science implementation that will be determined during the concept study.

14. What changes would trigger a re-evaluation of Science Objectives?

The science objectives must not change during the concept study. Any changes to science implementation will be carefully evaluated. These changes include, but are not limited to, changes in instrument, instrument details, mission design, mission duration, etc., that have a qualitative or quantitative effect on the science data returned from the mission. As described in the Guidelines, all changes in the science investigation section (Section E) of the Concept Study Report must be highlighted.

15. Will proposers hear from NASA Headquarters prior to site visits?

Yes. The Program Scientist (Paul Hertz) will communicate information and clarifications to the PI teams during Phase A. PIs have been requested to provide to Dr. Hertz a list of e-mail addresses for those key team members who should receive these communications. Questions may be directed to Dr. Hertz. All communications will be posted on the MIDEX downselect web page at <http://space.science.nasa.gov/codesr/midex/>.

16. Is there any possibility of having 2 day site visits?

No.

17. What should be included in Mission of Opportunity site visits?

The site visit agenda is up to the PI. The site visit presentations should span the same breadth of topics that the Concept Study Report covers. For Missions of Opportunity, this includes, but is not limited to, questions like: How will you implement your part of the mission? Can you meet cost and schedule requirements and will the interfaces work? Will the host mission provide you with what you need?

18. Are host mission team presentations allowed during site visits for Missions of Opportunity?

Yes.

19. Who should we contact for questions/clarifications?

For technical questions, contact the appropriate technical point-of-contact that was identified during the kickoff meeting on May 16 or is identified in the technical documents in the MIDEX Explorer Program Library. For questions concerning your Phase A contract, contact Chris Savinell in the Explorer Program Office, GSFC. For policy questions, contact the Explorer Program Scientist, Paul Hertz.

20. Do you need 40 CD's with the 40 paper copies ?

Yes, one CD with each paper copy. Preferably, the Concept Study Report on the CD should be saved as a single file in PDF format.

21. What is the time frame limit on Relevant Experience and Past Performance (REPP)?

5 years.

22. Is Appendix B of the Concept Study Report on E/PO limited to 4 pages?

The body of the E/PO proposal is limited to 4 pages, as specified in Appendix B of the Guidelines. This page limit does not apply to the budget tables, statements of work (SOW's), or letters of endorsement.

23. Should the site visit include a presentation on E/PO?

Yes.

24. Is a launch date earlier than March 2007 acceptable (not penalized)?

Yes. There is no restriction on the earliest launch date that you can propose. The only requirement is that it be no later than March 2008.

25. Who holds cost reserves?

The PI holds the entire budget of the project including all cost reserves. NASA does not hold any additional budget reserve. In the Concept Study Report, the PI should propose an appropriate level of reserves, a funding profile for those reserves, and a plan for managing those reserves. NASA will evaluate the proposed reserves plan.

26. Have the reserve guidelines been updated?

There has been no change from the AO. The requirement is that 20% reserves must be demonstrated at Confirmation.

27. What is the allowable cost growth between the original proposal and the Concept Study Report?

From the AO: 20% growth up to the cost cap.

28. Do fold outs in the cost section count against the 7 page limit?

No, they will not count. There is no page limit on the cost section, but please be brief.

29. What TRL levels should be proposed?

New technology will add risk unless flight qualified (TRL 8) or have flight qualified/demonstrated backups.

30. How do we infuse new technology if we are to fly TRL8?

Mission feasibility is enhanced if new technology is flight qualified. The emphasis of the evaluation will be on mission feasibility. Technology infusion is also an evaluation criterion. Plans for technology transfer and infusion count for about 2.5% of the overall evaluation.

31. The Taurus cost chart on page 4 of Darrell Foster's presentation has some inconsistencies in the numbers (Taurus East Cost line adds to \$49M chart only shows \$48M).

The chart has been updated. The correct total is \$48M RY\$. The charts posted on the web are the corrected charts.

32. When will questions on the Concept Study Report be sent to the teams?

They will be faxed at 9:00 AM (local time at the site visit location) 3 working days before the site visit. These questions need to be addressed at the site visit.

33. Do Launch Vehicles include escalation?

Launch vehicle costs are given in real year dollars.

34. Are Launch Vehicle numbers official numbers ?

Yes, for LRD of March 2007. Contact the ELV point-of-contact, Darrell Foster at KSC, for launch vehicle costs for other launch dates.

35. Will NASA accept SOMO/SCDS quotes as valid costs with low risk? How will TMCO evaluate the costs from SCDS?

The SCDS quotes are ROM's based on a best estimate of what it will cost in the year required. Due to the way SCDS costs are attributed, costs can depend on system utilization. The CSOC contract for SCDS services is a cost-plus-award-fee contract. A fixed-price contract would be a guarantee. There is no guarantee on SCDS ROM's.

SCDS costs will be evaluated just as they evaluate estimates from any provider, considering such things as reasonableness of the estimate, contract mechanism, etc. Make sure to state what is/is not included in the cost estimate so that valid comparisons and evaluations may be made. Some SCDS services include a large collection of support services (e.g. DSN) others do not (e.g. commanding).

36. Is Software Independent Assessment (IA) not applicable until Phase C/D?

This applies to Phase C and beyond. For the Concept Study Report, NASA will evaluate whether the project interfaced with the NASA IV&V facility properly, whether the right level of IV&V is being conducted, etc.

37. What are typical IV&V costs? How does IVVF account for Phase B/C costs?

According to John Marinaro, NASA IVVF, in the past costs have come out to be in the range of 1.5 - 2.0% of Mission Cost, but this is just a guide and each mission is different. NASA IVVF submits monthly reports and financial statements.

38. Does NASA IVVF review ESA software?

IVVF reviews software for NASA missions.

39. Have there been any changes in the past 3 years in how E/PO is evaluated?

Yes there have been changes. See Rosalyn Pertzborn's presentation at the kickoff meeting.

40. Will individuals with Secret and Top Secret Clearance need a National Agency Check to conform with IT security requirements?

No, Secret and Top Secret clearance is above the "National Agency Check." Therefore, no additional check would be required.

41. What do we have to do regarding IT Security during Phase A? Will a new section/appendix be dedicated to IT Security or should the discussion be put into an existing section/appendix?

Take the IT Security requirements into account in the plan you propose in the Concept Study Report. All aspects (technical, cost, schedule, etc.) should be considered. This includes the following:

- 1) If you are using IONET, you need to address how to meet IT Security requirements. If not using IONET, this would not be required.
- 2) You must address Personnel Screening. This is affected by whether or not an International Agreement is in place or not.
- 3) You must address how to secure the data until it is ready to be released to the public. How will the data be protected? What physical security (key cards, separate room, etc.) will be used?
- 4) You must address how to ensure only the people designated as "Privileged Access" will be able to perform these functions.

Your plans for IT security should be an integrated part of your development plan. No separate section or appendix is required.

42. We will be obtaining our data from a TREK workstation. Once we have copied the data from the TREK and distributed it to our collaborating institutions for analysis, what IT Security requirements does NASA impose on the institutions that are analyzing the data?

TREK workstations already meet IT Security requirements. The fact that it is Government Data that you are handling makes it a requirement that you adhere to IT Security requirements. This applies even if it is a public website. This applies up to the point that the data is considered "public data." Once the data is considered to be public data, and is released to a university, it is not subject to these requirements and can be freely posted on a website. If there are existing agreements, then those agreements take precedence. Your question does not specify the nature of your "collaborating institutions," which might affect the requirement for IT Security. Clarification of this should be directed to Hank Middleton (301-286-2486).

43. Has there been a relaxation in ITAR requirements for universities?

There have been some changes, which may or may not benefit you. Contact John Hall/Code I (202-358-2070) to get the latest information.

44. If Launch Vehicle costs increase, how do we show it?

Don't Panic! When we evaluate you against the cap, we will use the costs quoted in the MIDEX Launch Vehicle Opportunity Guide. Any increase in cost will not be assessed against your capped cost as long as you have not changed your requirements (i.e. no special services, etc.). Launch vehicles are offered as GFE so we guarantee

the price to you. You do not have to carry contingency for the launch vehicle cost in your proposal. However, when Code S selects a mission, we will need to know the true costs and cost profiles in order to budget the selected missions. The actual costs of the ELV, and the actual cost profile, are what we will have to allocate. And NASA will have to pay for any cost increases in the ELV.

So there are really two budgets: a fictional budget which includes the old ELV costs and which keeps you under the cap, and a real budget which reflects the true cost to NASA for your mission. I assume that the only difference between these budgets are the ELV costs. If that is true, we will

- Look at the fictional budget to verify that you are under the cost cap.
- Not evaluate the ELV costs, other than verify that you have used the numbers NASA gave you, because it is GFE.
- Evaluate everything else as usual; but everything else is the same for both budgets so the evaluation will be the same.

What I want you to do is

- Provide the true budget in the Concept Study Report, even though it puts you over the cap.
- Include a disclaimer in the cost section (which has no page limit) showing that you are under the cap if you use the ELV costs from the AO. You can show in some straightforward way what the differences are between the two budgets.

Alternatively (though this is not my favorite solution) you can

- Provide the fictional budget in the Concept Study Report.
- Include an amendment in the cost section (which still has no page limit) showing a high level version of the true budget including cost by mission phase, fiscal year, and major activity (so ELV has its own line).
- Include an explanation of the difference between this true budget and the fictional budget in the Concept Study Report.