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Tender

ARIA Opportunity Seeds: Programmable Plants

ADVANCED RESEARCH AND INVENTION AGENCY

F02: Contract notice

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-002159

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-04d556

Published 22 January 2025, 12:07pm

Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

ADVANCED RESEARCH AND INVENTION AGENCY

210 EUSTON ROAD,

LONDON

NW12DA

Email

clarifications@aria.org.uk

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UKI31 - Camden and City of London

Justification for not providing organisation identifier

Not on any register

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://www.aria.org.uk/>

I.3) Communication

The procurement documents are available for unrestricted and full direct access, free of charge, at

<https://aria.org.uk/opportunity-spaces/programmable-plants/programmable-plants>

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

Tenders or requests to participate must be submitted electronically via

<https://aria.org.uk/opportunity-spaces/programmable-plants/programmable-plants>

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Other type

An executive NDPB exempt from the PCRs

I.5) Main activity

General public services

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

ARIA Opportunity Seeds: Programmable Plants

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 73110000 - Research services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

Breakthroughs require finding people who think differently about what's possible - and empowering them to follow their vision. To support scientific and technological breakthroughs, outside of programmes, ARIA Programme Directors can award opportunity seeds to support ambitious research aligned to the opportunity spaces they've identified. To understand how opportunity seeds work within our model, see how we're working here (<https://aria.org.uk/how-we-fund>).

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

Programme Director Angie Burnett's opportunity space, 'Programmable Plants', (<https://www.aria.org.uk/opportunity-spaces/programmable-plants>) asks "how can we programme a plant to do anything we want it to do?". We're looking to fund high potential proposals with up to £500k each.

We're looking for bold ideas that could challenge assumptions, open up new research paths, or provide steps towards new capabilities. If you have an important idea you're

obsessed with, but you don't currently have the resources or support to take it forward, we'd like to hear from you.

Ideas could come from anywhere, so we welcome applications from individuals and teams who are early in their career or who have atypical backgrounds. We care more about your idea and your intrinsic motivation than we do about your CV.

To help you decide if this is the right funding call for you, below is some guidance on the scope.

In scope:

Ideas that sit within the "Programmable Plants" (<https://www.aria.org.uk/opportunity-spaces/programmable-plants>) opportunity space. By this, we mean your proposal should show how your idea either aligns with or challenges the assumptions of the Summary, Beliefs, or Observations in the opportunity space document (<https://www.aria.org.uk/media/uqrip3wp/aria-programmable-plants.pdf>).

Both land plants and aquatic plants (including green algae) are in scope.

Microorganisms influencing plants are in scope, provided that they are being used to alter an aspect of a plant's form or function

The opportunity space document outlines examples of ideas that we are interested in, but there are many more possibilities not mentioned in the document that we would be excited to fund.

Ideas that could change the conversation about what is possible or valuable.

Ideas that range from early stage curiosity-driven research through to pre-commercial science and technology.

Out of scope:

Ideas that target Angie Burnett's goal of Synthetic Plants (<https://www.aria.org.uk/opportunity-spaces/programmable-plants/synthetic-plants/>), as described in her programme thesis (<https://www.aria.org.uk/media/teli101l/aria-synthetic-plants-for-a-sustainable-future.pdf>) and programme funding call (<https://www.aria.org.uk/media/fq1fybgx/aria-synthetic-plants-call-for-proposals.pdf>) (applications for the programme funding call have now closed).

Cyanobacteria.

Ideas that are undifferentiated or that are likely to happen without ARIA support.

Commercial or close-to-commercial stage products.

Beyond this scope and our evaluation criteria outlined in the opportunity seed call for proposals document on ARIA's website here, we don't have preconceptions about what ideas you might send our way. You don't need to contort your project to fit our goals: we want to hear what you really want to do.

II.2.5) Award criteria

Price is not the only award criterion and all criteria are stated only in the procurement documents

II.2.7) Duration of the contract, framework agreement or dynamic purchasing system

Duration in months

36

This contract is subject to renewal

No

II.2.10) Information about variants

Variants will be accepted: No

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: Yes

Description of options

The estimated total funding value is the maximum budget available. We expect to fund multiple applicants. Funding is anticipated to be award via both contracts and grants. Additional funding, scope and duration could be added to any contracts awarded.

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Competitive procedure with negotiation

IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: No

IV.2) Administrative information

IV.2.2) Time limit for receipt of tenders or requests to participate

Date

9 April 2025

Local time

1:00pm

IV.2.4) Languages in which tenders or requests to participate may be submitted

English

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.1) Information about recurrence

This is a recurrent procurement: No

VI.3) Additional information

This call for opportunity seed proposals will initially be open for eleven weeks. We may update timelines based on the volume of responses we receive or other learnings.

- Application deadline: 09 April 2025 (13:00 GMT)
- Shortlisted / unsuccessful applicants notified: 28 April 2025.
- Shortlisted applicants invited to meet with Programme Director: 30 April - 2 May 2025
- Final award decision; successful / unsuccessful applicants notified: 09 May 2025

VI.4) Procedures for review

VI.4.1) Review body

Not Applicable, see the ARIA Act 2022

London

Country

United Kingdom