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Tender

## **Scaling compute: AI at 1/1000th the cost (Technical Area 4)**

ADVANCED RESEARCH AND INVENTION AGENCY

F02: Contract notice

Notice identifier: 2024/S 000-018247

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-046f93

Published 12 June 2024, 5:17pm

### **Section I: Contracting authority**

#### **I.1) Name and addresses**

ADVANCED RESEARCH AND INVENTION AGENCY

96 EUSTON ROAD,

LONDON

NW12DB

#### **Email**

[clarifications@aria.org.uk](mailto: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://www.aria.org.uk/scaling-compute/>

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

Tenders or requests to participate must be submitted electronically via

<https://www.aria.org.uk/scaling-compute/>

**I.4) Type of the contracting authority**

Body governed by public law

**I.5) Main activity**

General public services

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## Section II: Object

### II.1) Scope of the procurement

#### II.1.1) Title

Scaling compute: AI at 1/1000th the cost (Technical Area 4)

#### II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 73430000 - Test and evaluation

#### II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

#### II.1.4) Short description

ARIA is an R&D funding agency built to unlock scientific and technological breakthroughs that benefit everyone. We empower scientists and engineers to pursue research at the edge of what is technologically or scientifically possible.

We reach across disciplines, sectors and institutions to shape, fund and manage projects across the R&D ecosystem, from startups to universities, to break down silos and discover new pathways.

We're looking for proposals for our Scaling compute: AI at 1/1000th the cost programme for info see <http://aria.org.uk/scaling-compute>

#### II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

### II.2) Description

#### II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 73110000 - Research services

#### II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

#### II.2.4) Description of the procurement

The digital electronics industry that has transformed our lives in immeasurable ways is defined by the simple fact that, for 60+ years, we have benefited from exponentially more computing power, at lower cost.

This fact is no longer true. For the first time in history, increased performance requires increasing costs and this coincides with an explosion of demand for more compute power driven by AI.

Our current mechanisms for training AI systems utilise a narrow set of algorithms and hardware building blocks, which require significant capital to develop and manufacture. The combination of this significance and scarcity has far-reaching economic, geopolitical and societal implications.

What we're shooting for:

We see an opportunity to draw inspiration from natural processing systems, which innately process complex information more efficiently (on several orders of magnitude) than today's largest AI systems.

Our goal: to increase + open up new vectors of progress in the field of computing by reducing the cost of AI hardware.

In doing so, we'll open up new opportunities to reap the economic + social benefits of AI, from accelerating scientific research to improving the efficiency of our public services.

In this Request for Proposals, we are looking for teams to submit proposals for Technical Area (TA) 4, as outlined here <http://aria.org.uk/scaling-compute>

TA 4 represents the test and evaluation component of the programme. Applicants for TA 4 will be asked to develop testing frameworks which can be used to evaluate Creator outputs through the lifecycle of the programme.

#### **II.2.5) Award criteria**

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

#### **II.2.6) Estimated value**

Value excluding VAT: £830,000

#### **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

Additional budget, scope and duration could be added to any contracts awarded.

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## **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

26 June 2024

Local time

12:00pm

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

English

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## **Section VI. Complementary information**

### **VI.1) Information about recurrence**

This is a recurrent procurement: No

### **VI.3) Additional information**

Detailed timelines can be found in the programme call information on ARIAs website <https://www.aria.org.uk/scaling-compute>.

The application process for Technical Area 4 consists of one stage. The deadline for proposals is 26 June 2024 (12:00 BST).

The total funding value is the estimated budget available. We expect to fund multiple applicants.

### **VI.4) Procedures for review**

#### **VI.4.1) Review body**

Not Applicable, see the ARIA Act 2022

London

Country

United Kingdom