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Tender

## **ARIA Opportunity Seeds: Smarter Robot Bodies**

ADVANCED RESEARCH AND INVENTION AGENCY

F02: Contract notice

Notice identifier: 2024/S 000-021926

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-047de9

Published 16 July 2024, 5:58pm

### **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/seeds-smarter-robot-bodies/>

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/seeds-smarter-robot-bodies/>

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

Other type

An executive NDPB exempt from the PCRs

**I.5) Main activity**

General public services

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## Section II: Object

### II.1) Scope of the procurement

#### II.1.1) Title

ARIA Opportunity Seeds: Smarter Robot Bodies

#### 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://www.aria.org.uk/how-were-working/>).

#### 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

The opportunity space, Smarter Robot Bodies (<https://www.aria.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/ARIA-Smart-machines-need-smarter-bodies-v1.0.pdf>), led by Programme Director Jenny Read, asks how we can exploit progress in AI, control, materials, and manufacturing to build robots that approach or even exceed the capabilities of living bodies.

We're looking to fund high potential proposals with up to £500k each. We initially expect

to fund up to 10 opportunity seeds in this space.

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 Smarter Robot Bodies (<https://www.aria.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/ARIA-Smart-machines-need-smarter-bodies-v1.0.pdf>) 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/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/ARIA-Smart-machines-need-smarter-bodies-v1.0.pdf>).

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 are within scope of the programme Robot Dexterity - Handling our future (<https://www.aria.org.uk/robot-dexterity/>). Such ideas should be submitted to that programme funding call (<https://www.aria.org.uk/robot-dexterity/>). If you are unsure whether your idea is in scope of the programme, ask us by sending an email to [clarifications@aria.org.uk](mailto:clarifications@aria.org.uk).

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.

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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

27 August 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**

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

- Application deadline: 27 August 2024 (12:00 BST)
- Shortlisted / unsuccessful applicants notified. Shortlisted applicants invited to meet with Programme Director: 10 September 2024
- Final award decision; successful / unsuccessful applicants notified: 18 September 2024

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

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

Not Applicable, see the ARIA Act 2022

London

Country

United Kingdom