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Tender

## **ARIA Opportunity Seeds: Scalable Neural Interfaces**

ADVANCED RESEARCH AND INVENTION AGENCY

F02: Contract notice

Notice identifier: 2024/S 000-038766

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-04c181

Published 2 December 2024, 2:11pm

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

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

ADVANCED RESEARCH AND INVENTION AGENCY

210 EUSTON ROAD,

LONDON

NW12DA

#### **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/scalable-neural-interfaces-opportunity-seeds>

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/scalable-neural-interfaces-opportunity-seeds>

**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: Scalable Neural Interfaces

#### 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

Programme Director Jacques Carolan's opportunity space, Scalable Neural Interfaces (<https://www.aria.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/ARIA-Precisely-interfacing-with-the-human-brain-v1.0.pdf>), asks if we could solve the mysteries of neurological disorders by interfacing in new ways - at scale - with the human brain. 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 ideas 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 Scalable Neural Interfaces opportunity space (<https://www.aria.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/ARIA-Precisely-interfacing-with-the-human-brain-v1.0.pdf>). 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/2023/12/ARIA-Precisely-interfacing-with-the-human-brain-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 target Jacques Carolan's programmatic goal to unlock new methods to understand, identify, and treat neurological and neuropsychiatric disorders, as described in the programme thesis (<https://www.aria.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/ARIA-Precision-Neurotechnologies-for-Human-Therapeutics.pdf>) and programme funding call (<https://www.aria.org.uk/precision-neurotechnologies/>) (applications for the programme funding call have now closed).

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

13 February 2025

Local time

1:00pm

#### **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 eleven weeks. We may update timelines based on the volume of responses we receive or other learnings.

- Application deadline: 13 February 2024 (13:00 GMT)
- Shortlisted / unsuccessful applicants notified. Shortlisted applicants invited to meet with Programme Director: 12 March 2025
- Final award decision; successful / unsuccessful applicants notified: 21 March 2025

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

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

Not Applicable, see the ARIA Act 2022

London

Country

United Kingdom