

Minerals Management Service Technology Assessment and Research (TAR) Proposal Guidelines

The TAR Program of the Minerals Management Service (MMS) has developed the following guidance to foster consistency among research proposals submitted to the MMS for funding consideration.

MMS will evaluate the proposal by reviewing how well it fits the MMS mission and how well it fills a void in scientific research or increases the understanding of the subject matter under review. We will evaluate the clarity of the proposal, the importance of the project, past performance of the contractor, and reasonableness of the cost.

Contents of each suggested section is provided below. Other data deemed pertinent to individual sections may also be included to support project objectives. Tables, charts, photos, or other graphics are encouraged where their inclusion will provide a better understanding of the project problem statement, objectives, or methodologies. Clarity in presentation is important so that the reviewer can easily understand what the objectives of the project are, how they will be accomplished, and what outcomes can be anticipated without having to contact the preparer for additional data or clarification.

Suggested Proposal Format

a. Cover Page

Data that we suggest that you include on the cover page are:

1. Date of Proposal and duration that proposal will be honored
2. MMS Request for Proposal (RFP) or Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) number
3. MMS announcement title and topic number
4. Project title
5. Point of contact name, title, phone number, fax number, and E-mail address
6. Name and address of firm submitting proposal
7. Dun and Bradstreet Number and Tax Identification Number
8. Total project cost/ MMS portion
9. Duration of project

b. Table of Contents

We suggest that your proposal include a table of contents with the numbering and titles that follow. We have also included a general description of each section.

<u>Section Number and Title</u>	<u>General Section Description</u>
1. Executive Summary	Stand alone synopsis of proposal.
2. Organizational Capabilities	Qualifications of firm to conduct proposed research.
3. Problem Statement	Research question and/or problem to be addressed.
4. Project Description	Expanded narrative on processes and products.
5. Background	Relevant findings from previous research problem.
6. Goals and Objectives	Target goals, objectives and expected impacts.
7. Methodology	Planned activities to achieve goals and objectives.
8. Evaluation	Data and criterion to evaluate processes.
9. Deliverables	Reports, models, protocol to be developed.
10. Schedule	Chart showing milestones.
11. Staff	Expertise of key personnel to be engaged.
12. Funding	Alternative sources of funds.
13. Cost Proposal	Breakdown of costs for each project milestone

c. Proposal Content Descriptions

We suggest that each section of your proposal address the subject areas noted below.

1. Executive Summary

We suggest that this section contain data for the proposal reviewer to have a basic, but complete, understanding of the proposed work. The summary should briefly allude to all other sections of the proposal and have adequate depth to be able to stand on its own as a summary of the proposal without having to refer to the more detailed sections of the document. Include the key objectives of the proposals and the benefits of the completed research. We suggest that the overview not exceed one page to two pages in length.

2. Organizational Capabilities

We suggest that this section include a discussion on your organization. Information provided should give an accurate depiction of the organization, its' capabilities, and its' level of expertise

in the subject matter under investigation. Information on the organization's size, facilities, and personnel that can be brought to bear on the project should be provided. The ability of the organization to carry out the project should be supported by a discussion of similar successful research that has been conducted in the past.

3. Problem Statement

While your proposal may have been submitted under the heading of a particular research category under the BAA, we suggest that this section articulate the particular problem(s) that your proposal seeks to address. State why the research is considered to be an issue, risks associated with delaying research, and the expected benefits from addressing the problem.

4. Project Description

We suggest that this section include a description of the project and data not incorporated in other parts of your proposal. Please list if the effort is a continuation of a previous effort.

5. Background

We suggest that this section briefly discuss any relevant historical research upon which your work would draw upon. Confirm that either this is the first time such research has ever been attempted or list previous failed research attempts by other firms and how your approaches would be an improvement. The purpose of the section is to establish the research history on the subject area under review, prove that the proposed research has not already been conducted, and provide evidence that you are knowledgeable on current research in the subject area and have taken new findings into account when preparing the proposal.

6. Goals and Objectives

We suggest that this section contain goals and objectives of the project. The goals and objectives should be clear, realistic, achievable, and measurable. We also suggest that you state the anticipated outcomes of your proposal and how they will advance knowledge in the area under consideration. We suggest that you include an explanation of stakeholders that would be impacted by your research.

7. Methodology

We suggest that this section address how you will meet the stated goals and objectives. We suggest that you include a discussion of the organization that will conduct the work and explain where the various activities will take place. Acknowledge potential impediments to work

completion. Discuss if other alternatives were considered to achieve the same stated goals and objectives, along with rationale for their exclusion from the project.

8. Evaluation

We suggest that this section discuss the process you will use to conduct quantitative and/or qualitative analyses to evaluate progress throughout the duration of the project. List what data you will collect and the source of the data. Discuss how you will evaluate your planned activities as well as the products or deliverables to be generated. Also list the processes that you will use to identify problems that could impact the success of the proposed project.

9. Deliverables

a. Interim Status Reports

We suggest that you provide for interim status reports not less than every six months, or as required by the RFP. The reports should include: 1) a brief summary of all preceding work and overall progress made against the schedule, 2) a brief summary of any resolutions agreed to between Contractor and MMS regarding these problems, 3) a brief summary of significant technical, schedule, or cost problems encountered, including an assessment of their probable effects on meeting contract provisions, and 4) a list of all significant meetings held, consultations, or other contacts made in connection with the contract, including a brief summary of the participants and subject, date, location, and outcome of each such contact or meeting.

Depending on the project scope, complexity, and duration, MMS may require more frequent status reports, which would be defined in the resultant contract.

b. Draft Final and Final Reports

We suggest that you provide for the production of a draft final and a final, camera-ready report. MMS needs 30 days to review a draft final report. We will submit comments to you and you should send the final report that responds to all of our comments prior to the contract end date.

MMS will require a final digital version of the report and a PowerPoint compatible presentation of the results in MS Word and PowerPoint versions that are compatible with MMS computers. In addition, MMS will require additional hard copies as specified in the contract.

c. Presentation of Research Findings

As appropriate, your project should provide the option for formal presentation(s) of the research that was conducted. The presentation may be scheduled to take place during an MMS-sponsored regional information transfer meeting – at our option. We also encourage you to present findings at other conferences or meetings, as appropriate; but please provide details of your plans and include estimated travel costs in your proposal.

10. Schedule

We suggest that you separate work activities into discreet elements where either project deliverables or key tasks are completed. If company time or seasonal constraints dictate that your project take place during a specific time frame, for each activity, show the anticipated start and end dates on a Gantt chart along with the title of the activity. If time constraints are not an issue and the project can be initiated any time during the fiscal year, the Gantt chart should show the project start at time zero and the running total number of days as the project progresses.

11. Staff

Identify the Principal Investigator for the project and provide information on his/her educational background, practical or analytical work experience, scientific publications or other data. All other support staff should also be identified with similar background materials. Delineate roles that the support staff will play. Provide statements on the continuity of personnel affiliated with the project throughout its duration.

12. Funding

a. By firm

If you will be providing in-kind match of any kind to support the proposed project, provide details on the amount and type.

b. Financial commitments by others

If this is a joint project, provide details on the amount of money or in-kind support that will be provided by others, provide the name of the firm, the amount and type of support to be provided, and if the commitment has been formalized through a contract. Please list if the support has contingencies, and any project restrictions that will be imposed by others as a result of their participation in the project.

13. Cost Proposal

The MMS anticipates that it may award a Firm Fixed Price contract for this project so the proposal cost estimates should be listed accordingly.

a. Current tasks

For each key deliverable and/or task, list the number of hours that each individual on the project team will dedicate to the project. Hourly rates and total costs for each individual for each key deliverable and/or task must also be provided. Expenses related to travel, acquisition of capital equipment, overhead, or other administrative costs must be broken down to show under which task item the costs will be incurred.

b. Optional tasks

If the proposed project may continue with optional future tasks, discuss the estimated costs for all other estimated future phases of the research.