

Question	Answer
Is an English translation mandatory, or would it be acceptable to submit the original Japanese version without translation? Considering that Japanese governmental institutions often accept English documents as part of the application process, I would like to confirm whether an English translation is required or not.	It is required that your pitch deck submission is in English.
What level of technological readiness (ie, TRL level) are you looking for in this solicitation?	We do not specifically screen for the TRL. The evaluation is primarily focused on the strength of your solution. Therefore, we encourage everyone to submit their applications. However, as previously mentioned, a higher TRL may be a better solution for moving forward with an acquisition.
Will the awards be contracted under OTA for Prototype or Research? Is the award intended to fund additional development, testing & evaluation, or wider usage?	The \$300,000 prize pool mentioned comes with no strings attached. While we leave the language open for potential contracting opportunities that could arise after the challenge, there is no direct follow-on pathway formally associated with this challenge beyond the prize award itself and the engagement with the DoD throughout the process. We hope this challenge could lead to follow-on opportunities, such as Other Transactions, but it's important to note that the prize award is independent and carries no obligations.
I have realized that we already have the Article of Incorporation (teikan, 定款) in English, and I was wondering if it could be submitted as "proof of incorporation." Alternatively, should we submit a Certified Copy of the Commercial Register (登記簿全部事項証明書) translated into English?	We kindly request that those documents also be submitted in English. If the referenced documents are the ones in question, please ensure they are translated into English before submission.
Our team plans to apply, concentrating on "Judging Information Accuracy & Countering False Information" as a pre-registered company. Is a pre-established company team eligible to apply?	Companies that are already incorporated and registered as a company are eligible to apply.
Will the government provide any data? Or will we collect it ourselves?	No, we will not be providing any data for this challenge. We encourage participants to utilize data that they have collected, purchased, or obtained through proprietary or organic sources. If you believe data is essential to your solution, demonstrating how you leverage it as part of your proposal would be the best approach.
Are there any specifications regarding social media or media platforms (X, Facebook, YouTube, etc.) that are intended to be used?	To address the counter-disinformation question, I think it's an important point to bring up. In a previous deepfake detection CSO, we did provide government-furnished data. However, for this particular challenge, no data will be provided. It would make sense to focus on some of the most widely used platforms, which can include non U.S. platforms as well. That said, platforms like X, Facebook, and YouTube are excellent options to consider.
Will it target "fake news and hoaxes" in general, or will it focus on specific areas such as defense, disasters, or politics?	The relevance depends on the focus, such as defense-related topics, but we are generally open to broader applications. The challenge with disinformation often lies in its political intent. What we aim to address is categorically false information and the ability to prove its inaccuracy. This could involve defense-related disinformation or more general examples of fake news. The goal is to leverage tools, especially in the realm of generative AI, to accurately identify what is real and what is not.
Do we need to pick up all small-scale misinformation (e.g., a person's cat story) or should we focus on information that has a major social impact?	The impact of your tool really depends on how you intend to use it. For example, you could start with something simple, like distinguishing between a real cat and a generatively created one, to demonstrate the tool's capability. While this example might seem small-scale and inconsequential, it could serve as a foundation to showcase the tool's potential in addressing more significant issues, such as detecting fake content involving a head of state falsely making statements. Both types of examples—simple and more socially impactful—can be effective in telling the story and illustrating the broader applicability of your solution.
Which is more critical: reducing false positives vs. false negatives?	The priority between reducing false positives or false negatives depends on the specific context and the potential impact of each type of error. In some scenarios, minimizing false positives is critical to avoid unnecessary actions or resource allocation, while in others, reducing false negatives is more important to ensure that critical issues are not overlooked. The decision should be guided by the objectives of the system and the consequences associated with each type of error. Ultimately, the balance between the two should align with the specific risks and requirements of the application.
What should be the Solution Granularity: for example, do we need to retrain the solution separately for each smaller unit (region for example) or the solution has to be a global and the smaller unit will just be another metadata?	From a bio-defense perspective, the level of granularity largely depends on the maturity of your solution and its specific focus. For instance, if you're targeting the collection of genomic data using tools like nanopore sequencers, that's a highly granular approach. You could take it further by conducting an in-depth analysis of genetic material beyond standard PCR analysis. The proposal or approach a company takes will influence how the data is interpreted and presented to analysts to assess the level of bio-threat it may indicate. While it's challenging to provide a definitive answer without specifics, I hope this offers some guidance to those considering different approaches. Regarding disinformation, I would lean toward a broader, global solution that can also incorporate smaller, metadata-focused aspects. When considering regional contexts—specifically the U.S. and Japan—it's important to account for the unique influence campaigns affecting each region. Ultimately, we're looking for solutions with a global scope that can also include tailored elements to address the particular needs of specific regions like ours. Keep this balance in mind when designing your approach.
Is it necessary to detect it immediately after posting, or is some degree of offline processing acceptable?	I would say as soon as possible immediate detection is really something that we would favor. In terms of offline processing, this depends if you're talking about days that's probably too slow. If we're talking about within a day maybe within an hour or so because it's something that information can spread very quickly. We want that lead time to be quite short for it to be something that is flagged, then delivered to those stakeholders that need to respond to it quickly.
How closely do the pitch materials submitted in January need to align with the content of the final presentation? Specifically, there will be about two months between January and the final presentation, during which we plan to update the demonstration content. Would it be possible to reflect t	If selected to move forward, applicants have a chance to make edits to their pitch deck. Don't worry about the first submission being your final pitch deck. You can always make edits at a later date prior to the actual pitch event. Then, there will be two months between January and the final presentation during which we plan to update the demonstration content.
Will the costs of travel for finalists to pitch in Japan be covered?	Cost of travel is not covered for finalists. It is your decision as to whether or not you want to make the travel out to the pitch event in person. You will be given the opportunity to record your pitch and then pitch it virtually.
What biosurveillance targets (types of threats, environments, geographies, etc.) are the focus of this opportunity?	Specifically, you can think of all the different types of viral or bacterial threats that are naturally occurring. That would sort of be one category of synthetic not naturally occurring threats are probably a bit harder (the environment and geography). Obviously, the Pacific Region is of interest for this challenge.
Are there any special data rights considerations for the outputs of this opportunity?	This opportunity is not tied to a long-term, ongoing contract. It's a prize challenge award, and we are not negotiating data rights as we would in a traditional defense contract, such as an OTA or similar agreements. Therefore, those considerations don't apply here.
What kind of tools are biosurveillance analysts using on the daily jobs right now?	The full answer is quite extensive. Here's the short version: it could range from the collection side—like using nanopore sequencers to gather wastewater or other genomic materials—to a fully integrated, enriched data enterprise software system. Along that value chain, there are numerous components that could play a role. Ultimately, analysts need all of these elements to create a usable end product that allows them to interpret data, identify bio-threats, and determine how to address them.
What existing systems should a solution integrate with, if any?	For the counter-disinformation component, we are not specifically seeking solutions that are already integrated into existing systems. While it's certainly valuable if a solution is already working with other parts of the DoD or Ministry of Defense and has established integrations, our primary focus for this challenge is on the technology's viability.
	To echo Derek's response, at some point in the future, if your solution is adopted by the Department of Defense or the Ministry of Defense, integration into their systems will likely be required. However, that is not the challenge we're addressing right now. The emphasis here is solely on evaluating and advancing the technology itself.

Who owns the developed solution (as it relates to IP)?	You as the company and owners own all the IP and data rights.
What are the big concerns that biosurveillance analysts currently have?	Key considerations in bio-surveillance and bio-defense include questions like: Is the threat naturally occurring or synthetic? Where is it originating? What are the high-risk locations where infrastructure might be necessary? What are the most effective collection methods, whether through wearable devices or other innovative technologies?
What level of proof of concept or demo is required by March 18? Can we use fully synthetic data for creating our demo? And are there metrics we need to hit around the number or types of biothreats detected?	All of these factors are critical because bio-threats are often difficult to trace and understand, making it challenging to determine their origin and assess their potential impact on specific populations. These are just a few of the major concerns, but there are undoubtedly many other related aspects that warrant attention in this field.
Does the 10 slide limit include a cover slide?	The number of types of bio threats will largely depend on the maturity of whatever solution or how you're developing that product. It's totally okay to use synthetic data and understand that since we're not providing data, that might be your best source of collection data to test and demo the system. The same also applies for the counter disinformation.
Is this challenge open to companies based in the U.S.?	Yes, the ten page slide limit does also include your cover slide.
Who are we assuming as a possible target users? Are we considering the solution is applying to DIU in the US or ALTA in Japan?	Yes, the challenge is open to companies based in the U.S. For additional information, please refer to the eligibility section on the U.S.-Japan Global Innovation Challenge Event Page on the NSIN Website.
Is it correct that the end goal is for government datasets to be integrated into our systems? Will information on the types of data + be given so we can create a system accordingly?	You could assume that the primary target and audience is going to be the US DOD as well as Japan MOD and it's being facilitated by ATLA and Distance Innovation Science Technology Institute of Japan as well as DIU.
Which would be evaluated more highly: meeting all seven judging criteria evenly, or having an outstanding point that stands out as particularly exceptional?	While this question touches on important considerations, it does go a bit beyond the scope of how we've framed the problem and the solutions requested for this prize challenge. That said, it's fair to assume that if your solution is successful and leads to future contracts with the DoD or MoD, integration with government datasets would likely be required to ensure its effectiveness. However, for this specific challenge, that requirement falls outside the immediate scope of what we're evaluating.
Is there any specific item we should include onto the proposal slides? (ex. budget required for the development, timeline of the development plan.)	To add to that, as Derek mentioned, based on observations from similar CSOs, many of our mission partners are not necessarily looking for solutions that integrate directly into company systems. Instead, they're often seeking tools that can be easily deployed across various organizations—essentially, a drop-in capability. This is an important factor to keep in mind when considering your approach.
In addition to data science tools, would proposing a new sensor be within the scope of problem 1?	It really depends, but generally speaking, we've seen solutions that excel in one specific area—often much more so than others in the market—and that can be a compelling factor. While there are likely minimum criteria that all solutions need to meet, it's possible for a solution that is particularly exceptional in one area to stand out and be selected. I want to emphasize that organizations shouldn't self-select out just because they don't offer a one-stop solution for everything. Excelling at one thing exceptionally well can still make your solution highly competitive.
I have a question about problem statement 1. I have the impression that it strongly focuses on data analysis. In fact, it provides no description about the type of biological data and how to obtain it. Does this challenge include the development of biosensors to detect biological data/threats?	To add to that, as Eric mentioned, product differentiation is especially critical for bio-defense and bio-surveillance work. We have a good understanding of what's currently available in the market, so it's important to clearly articulate how your product is truly differentiated from existing solutions. Highlighting what sets your product apart will not only make your solution stand out but also significantly enhance its competitiveness during the review process.
What is the period of performance intended to be?	The most important focus should be on clearly explaining your solution and its capabilities. If you need to choose between discussing your solution and addressing details like budget development or timelines, I strongly recommend prioritizing the solution. Discussions about budget, development timelines, and other logistical aspects typically take place during follow-on engagements or contract negotiations.
What kind of content should be included in the 10-page document? Is it necessary to include specific information about the development structure and company profile? Or can I focus on the explanation of technology and capabilities?	Given the limited space available, it's crucial to make the most of it by providing a clear, compelling explanation of your solution. This will ensure that your proposal stands out and effectively communicates its value.
What does DIU/ATLA you all see as the most successful outcome of this prize?	I think a sensor for the collection of different types of data that's novel in some way that's not already able to be done in the market could be a novel approach to it. Yes, I think the answer is yes to that
At the highest level, what would the steps and timelines to productionize it look like once prizes are won?	Two people were thinking very similarly. Yes, to answer the question, certainly we're looking at how to support the analyst, but collection and being able to have novel sensors to maybe more efficiently or with additional fidelity connect collect information would be of interest in this problem statement.
Can you address partnerships? are companies expected to partner? Will DIU/ATLA pair groups?	There is not a period of performance because the prize challenge award is not attached to any following contract or any other requirement for performance or deliverables.
For the disinformation solution, is there a priority on identification over counter-measures? Or vice versa?	I just wanted to emphasize that the criteria that's being used outlines five different areas that will be addressed in the grading rubric. I would first take a look at that and ensure that you're covering each and every one of those areas. Then from there, it's up to your discretion how you want to prioritize focusing more in on any of the other areas.
	The most successful outcome would be identifying a promising capability and initiating follow-on discussions and prototyping to potentially place it on a prototyping contract. This step allows us to validate the solution's viability and scalability. From there, the next step could be transitioning to a production contract.
	As for the timeline, it's difficult to provide a definitive estimate. Aligning with follow-on mission partners and ensuring budget availability are critical factors that influence the timeline. However, I can say that the process is generally faster than the traditional legacy acquisition system used by the U.S. DoD. That said, unlike a CSO, which typically has more defined timelines, a prize challenge is less structured in this regard. For instance, I can't commit to saying that three months after the challenge, we'd have discussions finalized and a contract set in place. The timeline will vary depending on the circumstances.
	Regional understanding is a key aspect of this challenge. Having conducted similar challenges with various allies and partners, we want to ensure that this bilateral effort with Japan reflects a solid understanding of the region and, ideally, a presence or capability within Japan. Japanese companies naturally have an advantage in this area due to their local presence. For U.S.-based or other international companies, having a presence in Japan or expertise specific to the region is an important factor in our evaluation. Demonstrating this regional awareness, particularly regarding Japan, will strengthen your proposal.
	While threats themselves know no borders, as we saw with COVID-19, for the purposes of this prize challenge, we are especially focused on how solutions address and impact both Japan and U.S. defense contexts. There isn't a specific weighting applied to this aspect, but it's important to clearly articulate in your proposal how your solution would be effective in both regions. This dual applicability is a significant consideration in the evaluation process.
	In general, there's no expectation that there's partnering going on. However, it's up to you if you'd like to do so. It's not part of the plan to pair groups. We do require that there's a primary company that is participating and signing up submitting the actual solution. If there is pairing going on at your discretion, it will be up to you on how you allocate if you were to win any funds to that partner company.
	Both are important. However, I would say if I were put to place a slight edge on priority, I would say identification. Depending on whether it's the US applying it or Japan applying it, how counter measures are applied very vastly. Because of the sensitivity of information and controlling information so I would say that identification is definite. If you don't have the identification, then I would say it probably doesn't meet a viable solution.

What is the scope of desired solution. Is this for US for at a global scale?	For disinformation, I would say that it's not just for the U.S. and Japan, we're really looking like a broader capability. I would say placing first emphasis on the two regions of the organizing countries. However, I would say a global scale is probably what we were intending on for a long-term solution.
Outside of this opportunity, how are US-Japan partnering in disinformation identification and countermeasures?	There's multiple areas of collaboration beyond what DIU is doing working with ATLA. I can't really speak to all of the efforts, but I do know that there's whole of government partnerships on countering disinformation.
About Challenge 2. Do the solutions of the data pathway and data management system that ensures data authenticity fall in the scope?	I think that does fall in the scope. I think data authenticity is a part of it.
In responding to the key intel Qs questions, Eric mentioned that the focus is supporting analysts in determining threats...etc. Is the assumption same for disinformation as well? As in the focus of the pitch should be to present a product that aims to support existing analysts? Or a full-on solution	I would describe it as a tool. Our aim is to identify something that can function effectively on its own or as a component to enhance existing tools. If there's a fully developed solution, that's fantastic and highly welcomed. However, we are equally interested in tools that can augment or integrate with existing systems, providing added value and functionality.
Are teams who are not chosen as finalists/awarded (perhaps because they don't meet all the criteria) but their solution is still of value considered for additional funding/follow-ons/other opportunities?	As part of the prize challenge process, making it through the first down-select as a finalist puts you into the competitive process, which could open the door to follow-on OTs if one of our mission partners' contracting officers determines that your solution meets their requirements. While not being selected as a finalist makes follow-on opportunities less likely, we often share information about the solutions and pitch decks within the government, which can lead to additional engagement with mission partners. So, even if you're not selected as a finalist, there is still potential for follow-on discussions. To build on what Angela said, that's accurate. Even if a company or group's capability isn't selected, it's still an opportunity to create awareness and open the door for conversations outside the context of this specific challenge.
Will the solution / top 5 companies that win be announced, post competition	Lastly, even if your solution isn't chosen, you could very well hear from myself or others who are interested in your work in the future. Participation in this challenge is an important first step in becoming part of the broader defense ecosystem, and we strongly encourage you to respond.
Is there any budget restriction? (ex. maximum budget is XXX USD for one proposal)	In terms of announcing, the intent is to announce the winners at the pitch event at the conclusion of the pitch event. Of course, there's going to have to be a little bit of a deliberation period on that on the day of. As far as announcing the top winners, we will announce it post competition. That's the intent. We also intend to have a press release of those companies to also provide you some awareness and publicity.
For problem statement 1: if you can expand on some of the key Intel Q's warfighters or policy makers may be looking to answer	No, there is no specified budget cap. For Problem Statement 1, key intelligence questions for warfighters or policymakers may focus on: Detection and Attribution: Which satellites or objects are currently transiting over the INDOPACOM AOR? What are the origins and intent of detected satellites? Operational Threat Assessment: Are any detected objects behaving anomalously, suggesting potential counter-UAS threats? What is the potential risk posed by these objects to military assets or infrastructure? Real-Time Tracking and Response: How can near-real-time tracking enhance decision-making during active operations? What are the fastest reacquisition strategies for satellites that temporarily exit tracking coverage? Data Quality and Accuracy: How reliable and actionable are the provided state vectors or orbit predictions? Is there a degradation in tracking accuracy, and does it affect critical regions of interest? Policy Implications:
Is there any requirements for team members / founders location or background?	How can collected data inform broader regional policies or enhance strategic cooperation (e.g., within the INDOPACOM region)? Are there opportunities to standardize data sharing with allied nations (e.g., Japan) for coordinated counter-UAS measures? There are no specific requirements for the individual location or background of team members or founders. However, eligibility is contingent on the following: Company-Level Eligibility: The company must be an early to mid-stage entity (little to no DoD contracts, equal to or earlier than Series B funding) or a non-traditional defense contractor as defined in the 2023 DoD Other Transactions Guide. The company must be owned and operated in a non-covered foreign country as defined in 48 CFR 225.772-1. It must have the ability to secure active registration in SAM.gov if selected as a finalist (with exceptions considered on a case-by-case basis). It must demonstrate the solution's capabilities by March 2025. Disqualifications: Companies associated with anti-social forces or entities with a history of direct or indirect interactions with such forces are not eligible to apply. Judging Criteria Relevant to Team Members' Background: While there is no explicit requirement for individual backgrounds, the Team Qualifications criterion evaluates the qualifications of proposed principals, support staff, and consultants. Demonstrating relevant experience and expertise tied to the problem areas will strengthen the application. Regional Understanding: Although not a strict eligibility requirement, showing an understanding of the regional context (U.S. and Japan) may positively impact the evaluation. This aligns with the emphasis on operational alignment and broader collaboration between the U.S. and Japan. In summary, while individual team members or founders' specific locations and backgrounds are not restricted, the company must meet the eligibility requirements and demonstrate strong qualifications to align with the judging criteria, particularly under Team Qualifications and Operational Alignment.