

August 1, 2006



Request for Proposals

DEVELOPMENT OF AN AUTOMATED SMN GEM ASSAY SUITABLE FOR MEDIUM-THROUGHPUT SCREENING

RFP No: LD-073106

In support of:

The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS)
The SMA Project: A Collaborative Program to Accelerate Therapeutics
Development for Spinal Muscular Atrophy



*An SAIC-managed program to support the NINDS, National Institutes of Health,
Department of Health and Human Services*

SAIC Prime Contract No.: N01-NS-3-2356



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1. Introduction

The [National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke](http://www.ninds.nih.gov) (NINDS) launched The SMA Project: A Collaborative Program to Accelerate Therapeutics Development for Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) in September 2003. The program aims to accelerate the process of developing a safe and effective treatment for SMA, a paralyzing neurodegenerative disease of childhood. More information about the program can be found at <http://www.SMAProject.org>.

The purpose of this solicitation is to identify a facility for fast-track development of an automated cell-based imaging assay to detect survival motor neuron (SMN) protein in subnuclear particles known as Gems. The assay must be suitable for medium-throughput screening. The Gem assay would be used by the SMA Project in its medicinal chemistry effort for optimizing active compounds.

1.1 Spinal Muscular Atrophy and Gems

SMA is an autosomal recessive neuromuscular disease with variable severity ranging from limited motor neuron loss and normal life expectancy (type III) to progressive infantile paralysis and death (type I). All forms of SMA are caused by loss of function of the survival motor neuron 1 gene (*SMN1*). Reduced levels of SMN protein result in the specific death of motor neurons but not of other cell types in which the gene is normally expressed. *SMN2*, a nearly identical gene, is present in variable copy number and produces low levels of full-length SMN protein. Patients with more *SMN2* gene copies have a milder form of the disease than patients with a low copy number. This suggests that therapeutic strategies to increase the level of *SMN2* produced in motor neurons may compensate for loss of *SMN1* and result in an improved clinical outcome for SMA patients.

Several groups have shown that SMA patient-derived cell lines show a reduction in SMN-containing nuclear protein complexes, known as Gems (Liu and Dreyfuss. *EMBO J*, 1996. 15(14):3555-3565; Coovert et al. *Hum Mol Genet*, 1997. 16 (8):1205–1214). Compounds that increase *SMN2* expression result in an increase in the number of gems in these cell lines (Andreassi et al. *Hum Mol Genet*, 2001. 10(24):2841–2849; Sumner et al. *Ann Neurol*, 2003. 54: 647–654; Andreassi et al. *Eur J Hum Genet*, 2004. 12:59–65; Grzeschik et al. *Ann Neurol*, 2005 Aug, 58(2):194–202; Wolstencraft et al. *Hum Mol Genet*, 2005. 14(9):1199–1210; Jarecki et al. *Hum Mol Genet*, 2005. 14(14):2003–2018).

This Request for Proposal (RFP) is intended to identify a facility capable of developing an automated cell-based imaging assay that is compatible with the Cellomics™ ArrayScan® VTI machine. The assay must be sufficiently robust and reliable to support medium-throughput compound screening. This resource will be a critical component of the SMA Project effort to identify and develop candidate compounds for clinical testing.

1.2 Schedule for This Solicitation

Key dates related to this RFP are as follows:

- Offeror's Intent to Submit Form Due August 16, 2006
- Proposals Due 1:00 P.M. Eastern Time, August 21, 2006
- Supporting Documentation Due August 28, 2006
- Review of Proposals and Supporting Documentation ~August 30, 2006
- Initiation of Negotiations ~September 15, 2006
- Anticipated Start Date ~October 2, 2006
- Notification of Unsuccessful Offerors ~October 4, 2006

1.3 Compliance Requirements for Offerors

Offerors must be based within the United States.

Only Offerors that meet criteria for federal funding eligibility—for example, the continued ban on funding of human embryo research (45 CFR 46.208(a)(2) and Section 498(b) of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 289g-1(b)])—will be considered for award under this RFP.

2. Focus of This Solicitation

The overall goal of this project is to develop an automated cell-based imaging assay capable of quantifying Gems and compatible with the Cellomics ArrayScan VTi machine. The assay must be sufficiently robust and reliable to support medium-throughput compound screening in concentration-dependent format of 50–400 compounds per month. The product of this RFP will be a standard operating procedure (SOP) for a Gem assay using generally available reagents. The assay must have demonstrated reliability at the Offeror's site and be successfully transferred to and shown to be reliable at a separate screening facility.

The assay should accomplish (1) quantitative immunofluorescent detection of subnuclear Gem particles, (2) reliable quantitative immunofluorescent detection of SMN protein localized diffusely in the cytoplasm, and (3) an indicator of cell viability.

Proposals are requested from facilities that have successfully developed an automated Gem assay or other high-content, cell-based imaging assays involving the detection of subcellular, punctate structures. The successful Offeror will deliver (1) an operational assay that can be used to perform an initial screen of up to 100 candidate compounds at the Offeror's facility, (2) data generated during this initial screening, (3) an SOP sufficient to allow successful conduct of the assay at a separate site, (4) complete transfer of the validated assay to another facility with demonstrated successful use of the assay by personnel at the new facility, and (5) if requested, screening of 50–400 compounds per month at the Offeror's facility.

2.1 Statement of Work

The Statement of Work (SOW) for this contract will contain the following four tasks. The Offeror's proposal must demonstrate their ability to support these tasks.

Task 1: Assay Development and Validation

- The successful Offeror shall develop an automated system capable of reliably identifying and counting Gems in cultured mammalian cells.
- The assay and software for image acquisition, processing and analysis will be compatible with the Cellomics, ArrayScan VTi instrumentation.
- The assay will be validated with respect to (1) distinguishing between SMN-deficient cells and controls, e.g., patient cell lines vs. parent or age-matched controls, to the degree reported in the literature; (2) distinguishing SMN-containing Gems from unrelated punctate signals; and (3) detecting an increase in Gems in patient cells treated with a positive control compound with effects comparable to what is reported in the literature.
- The assay will include a readout indicative of cell viability, e.g., cell count per field.
- The assay should be developed for use in a 96-well or higher density plate format and be able to accurately detect immunofluorescence of Gems using readily available antibodies.
- Measured parameters will likely include the number of Gems per cell, percentage of Gem-positive cells, and cytoplasmic SMN immunofluorescence. Other measures may also be required.
- The assay will be tested for sensitivity to DMSO (dimethylsulfoxide) up to at least 2%.

- The validated assay should be sufficiently robust and reproducible to support moderate throughput compound screening, e.g., reliable and reproducible concentration-response testing of up to 100 compounds per week with 10-point curves in triplicate for each compound resulting in approximately 15 plates (96-well).
- Initial assay development can be performed in a cell line that has previously been used in a Gem assay, e.g., GM03813 patient fibroblasts from the Coriell Institute.
- The final validated assay that is to be delivered under this contract should utilize a SMN-deficient cell line, likely a human fibroblast cell line, that is in adequate supply to allow testing of up to 100 compounds per week, with concentration-response curves, over the next 2 years.
- The assay should also include a positive control compound that is known to increase Gem formation in SMN-deficient cell lines. These include, but are not limited to the following: aclarubicin (Andreassi et al. *Hum Mol Genet*, 2001. 10, (24): 2841-2849), indoprofen (Lunn et al. *Chem Biol*, 2004. 11:1489–1493), phenylbutyrate (Andreassi et al. *Eur J Hum Genet*, 2004. 12:59–65), tobramycin (Wolstencraft et al. *Hum Mol Genet*, 2005. 14 (9):1199–1210), and valproic acid (Sumner et al. *Ann Neurol*, 2003. 54:647–654). If justified, another positive control may also be used.
- The assay should be shown to have a Z'-factor of at least 0.25, preferably 0.5 or greater, using at least one positive control and an $n \geq 48$.

Task 2: Initial Screening

- The successful Offeror will provide screening at their facility of an initial batch of up to 100 candidate chemical compounds supplied by NINDS/SAIC.
- Samples will be shipped in a format mutually agreed upon by the successful Offeror and NINDS/SAIC.
- The successful Offeror will deliver data (e.g., spreadsheets) and necessary image files to SAIC in a format mutually agreed upon by the Offeror and NINDS/SAIC suitable for uploading into the SMA Project centralized database.

Task 3: Transfer of Validated Assay to Another Facility

Note: SAIC will provide direction to the contract awardee regarding when and to which facility the assay should be transferred.

- The validated protocol will be transferred and established by the successful Offeror in an in vitro testing facility under contract with SAIC.
- Transfer will include an SOP for running the assay and interpreting the results, validation of performance of the assay at the new site, and training of scientists at the contracted facility to the extent that they can independently perform the assay to the original specifications of the Offeror.
- The successful Offeror will provide consulting support, if requested, after the transfer is completed.

Task 4: Monthly Screening

Note: Task 4 will be included in the resultant contract as an unfunded requirement. It is the current intent of the SMA Project to transfer the Gem assay to another facility. However, unanticipated scheduling or technical, staff, or other limitations may not allow for assay transfer. Therefore, after completion of assay development, validation, and initial screening, and at the direction of SAIC, this unfunded requirement may be activated.

- The successful Offeror will screen 50–400 candidate drug compounds/month in the automated, validated Gem assay. (**Note:** For proposal preparation purposes, the Offeror

should anticipate a need to screen up to 100 compounds per week with 10-point curves in triplicate for each compound.)

- Samples will be shipped in a format mutually agreed upon by the successful Offeror and NINDS/SAIC.
- The successful Offeror will deliver data (e.g., spreadsheets) and any necessary supporting image files to SAIC in a format mutually agreed upon by Offeror and NINDS/SAIC suitable for uploading into the SMA Project centralized database.

2.2 Milestones

The Offeror's proposal must provide a maximally aggressive timeline for reaching the following milestones.

Milestone for Task 1: Demonstration of a validated assay that generates reliable and reproducible dose response data.

Milestone 1a: Demonstration of a validated assay with patient and control cell lines of known characteristics in a Gem assay (e.g., GM03813/3814). Validation = $Z' \geq 0.25$, $n \geq 48$.

Milestone 1b: Demonstration of a validated assay with a cell line that is in adequate supply to allow testing of up to 3,000 compounds over the next 2 years. Validation = $Z' \geq 0.25$, $n \geq 48$, using at least one control compound.

Note: Milestones 1a and 1b may not be mutually exclusive. The Offeror may be able to demonstrate that sufficient quantity/quality of GM03813 cells are available to perform the screening.

Milestone for Task 2: Data from screening up to 100 candidate drug compounds.

Milestone for Task 3: Demonstrated transfer of assay.

Milestone 3a: Initiate transfer of the assay to another facility after request for transfer is received from SAIC.

Milestone 3b: Demonstration of capability of scientists at another facility to run the assay.

Milestone 3c: Regular screening schedule established.

Notes: The timelines for Milestones 3b and 3c will be affected by the schedule/availability of another contractor. Offerors should propose timelines that are based upon their own limitations and should assume optimal scheduling/availability of the other facility.

3. Offerors Provide Information on Intent to Submit

Potential Offerors are requested to complete the Intent to Submit form in Attachment A of this RFP. Submission of the Intent to Submit Form will assist in planning for the expedited review of proposals. Offerors who do not submit an Intent to Submit form may still submit a proposal if all other deadlines and requirements are met.

4. Proposal Preparation Procedures

Before preparing a proposal, Offerors should read over this entire document and visit the SMA Project website (<http://www.SMAProject.org>) to learn more about the program, the nature of SMA Project contracts, and the SMA Project Testing Funnel. Offerors should also review the Subcontract Agreement and the Representations and Certifications document, which are posted on the [Current Solicitations](#) pages of the SMA Project website.

Proposals should only be submitted if the Offeror meets the Compliance Requirements for Offerors (Section 1.3).

To assist Offerors in assembling all the required documents, a Checklist for Submitting a Proposal and Supporting Documentation has been included as Attachment B to this RFP.

4.1 Proposal Face Page

The face page of the proposal must contain the following: the Proposal Title; Name of Offeror Institution; Principal Investigator's name, contact information, and signature; and the Business Representative's name, contact information, and signature.

The following statement should also be included: "This proposal complies with the Salary Rate Limitation pursuant to P.L. 108-199, and the Offeror certifies that no costs for independent research and development, to include any indirect costs have been claimed under this submission." (Please note the certification regarding IR&D applies only to commercial institutions. If IR&D costs are a part of your institution's indirect cost application that portion must be excluded for this proposal.)

4.2 Proposal Body

There is a **8-page limit** on the body of the proposal, including figures, tables, and graphs.

The body of the proposal should:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the goals of this RFP and the capability to efficiently accomplish the SOW tasks and milestones (see Section 2).
- Demonstrate successful experience developing and screening compounds in similar assays. Successful experience with an automated Gem assay or other high-content, cell-based imaging assays involving the detection of subcellular, punctate structures should be emphasized. Describe relevant experience with human fibroblasts or similar cell lines.
- Demonstrate successful experience in transferring similar assays to other facilities. Demonstrate the capability for accurate data exchange with other facilities.
- Describe the technical approach for achieving the milestones listed in Section 2.2 and the overall project goals. Describe approaches for quality control and assurances. Include a description of the problems that are likely to occur and how they will be corrected.
- **Include an aggressive timeline for meeting the milestones** listed in Section 2.2 in the minimum amount of time. The feasibility of achieving the milestones according to the proposed timeline should be clearly demonstrated. The Offeror may propose an alternative set of milestones than those listed in Section 2.2 if it is appropriately justified and the alternative supports a more aggressive development schedule.
- Identify a source or potential source of SMN-deficient cells appropriate for assay development and screening. Describe an approach for evaluating the appropriateness of the cells for this assay.
- Describe the experience and level of effort of personnel proposed to accomplish the work and the management structure for the project.
- Demonstrate the availability of necessary facilities and equipment.

The successful Offeror shall provide all labor, tools, material, and other resources necessary to provide Gem assay development and validation to support automated, medium-throughput screening for the SMA Project. The successful Offeror will develop and validate a Gem assay compatible with a Cellomics ArrayScan VTi.

4.3 References

No page limit. List relevant references using a standard reference format that includes the full citation (i.e., author(s), year published, title of article, publication, volume, chapter, page numbers, and publisher, as appropriate).

4.4 General Format Specifications

Proposals will be submitted electronically as an Acrobat PDF file or in Microsoft Word; proposals will be submitted via e-mail or on compact disk. The following format instructions must be followed when preparing the Proposal Body and References **or the application may be returned without review**. Prepare the documents so they will have the following appearance when printed single-sided on 8½ × 11 inch paper:

- The documents must be clear, readily legible i.e., 10-point type font or larger, not more than 15 characters per inch (cpi) including spaces, single-spaced (6 lines of type within a vertical inch), and ½ inch margins in all directions.
- The Principal Investigator's (PI's) name and consecutive page numbers should be included on the Body, References, and Proposal Appendices.

Charts, tables, figures, figure legends, and footnotes may be smaller in size but must be readily legible. It is recommended that all graphs, tables, diagrams, and charts be prepared for printing with black ink. The application should contain only material that reproduces well when photocopied or printed in black and white since some reviewers may only receive a printed version. We discourage use of Internet website addresses to provide information necessary for the review since reviewers are under no obligation to view the Internet sites. Moreover, reviewers are cautioned that directly accessing an Internet site could compromise their anonymity.

4.5 Biographical Sketches

No page limit. An unlimited number of biosketches are allowed. In general, each biosketch should be no longer than 4 pages in length; a full curriculum vitae should not be submitted. Biosketches for key personnel, including the PI, should accompany the proposal. The National Institutes of Health's (NIH's) biosketch form (<http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/biosketch.pdf>) can be used. Required elements of a biographical sketch are as follows: Education/Training, Positions and Honors, Publications, and Research Support.

4.6 Past Performance

Five-document limit, No page limit. To demonstrate successful performance on work that is similar to that required, the Offeror should submit documentation to support past experience and success in developing an automated Gem assay or other high-content, cell-based imaging assays involving the detection of subcellular, punctate structures. This documentation can be in the format of the Offeror's choice, e.g., letters of recommendation, performance surveys, publications, and/or patent information. A two-page summary of past performance can be used as a cover/summary for this section.

4.7 Letters of Intent

No page limit. Provide evidence of intent (e.g., letters and e-mail) from all proposed subcontractors, collaborators, and consultants.

4.8 Proposed Budget/Pricing Information

No page limit. A Cost Plus Fixed Fee (CPFF) with Completion subcontract is anticipated.

- The Offeror shall provide a budget to support the technical plan, staffing, and timeline proposed in the Body of the proposal. The budget should be subdivided for each of the four tasks and/or milestones. For planning purposes, please include a budget for Task 4; this unfunded requirement will be negotiated at a later time if it is deemed necessary and in the best interest of NINDS/SAIC.

- The Project Management budget can be included with each task or covered as a separate budget element. Project Management costs should include time to consult with SMA Project members and participation in one 2-day SMA Project meeting.
- The Proposed Budget/Pricing Information should be accompanied by appropriate justification and assumptions.
- To support your indirect costs, provide your most recent audit, by a federal government audit oversight agency. Alternatively, if no audit was conducted previously, please note this is your justification.
- Offerors should submit their most competitive offer initially since best and final offers will not be requested.
- The Summary of Costs form, which is available on the [Current Solicitations](#) page of the SMA Project website, may be used to submit pricing information.

5. Supporting Documentation

The following documents must be provided 1-week after the proposal submission date.

- **Subcontract Agreement:** When completing this document, pay particular attention to the Contract Clauses in Schedule B, Part II. This section contains numerous items pertinent to laboratory research (e.g., Animal Welfare Assurance, Continued Ban on Funding of Human Embryo Research, Recombinant DNA and Human Gene Transfer Research, and Research Misconduct). **This section also contains intellectual property management provisions.**
- **Representations and Certifications**

Both documents are available on the [Current Solicitations](#) page of the SMA Project website.

6. Submission of Proposals and Supporting Documentation

To assist Offerors in the preparation of the required documents for submission, a Checklist for Submitting a Proposal and Supporting Documentation is included as Attachment B to this RFP.

6.1 Submission of Proposals

The Business Representative (the individual at the offering institution who is authorized to conduct subcontract negotiations and contractually bind the offer) must submit an electronic version of the proposal (PDF or Microsoft Word) so that it is received by **1:00 P.M. Eastern Time (ET) on August 21, 2006.**

Proposals may be submitted via e-mail to Lynne Darby at darbylm@saic.com or on CD to:
 Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC)
 Attn: Lynne Darby
 5340 Spectrum Drive, Suite N
 Frederick, MD 21703-7357
 Phone: 301-698-7459

The electronic file should contain all items covered in Section 4, Proposal Preparation Procedures.

Signatures on the cover page can be submitted electronically or via fax to Lynne Darby at 301-698-6188 by the deadline stated above.

Offerors may submit a paper copy of the proposal via overnight carrier, to the address listed above. This duplicate will only be used to confirm quality of the print version of the proposal submitted on-time via e-mail.

6.2 Submission of Supporting Documentation

Supporting documentation as outlined in Section 5 should be received by **August 28, 2006**. The Offeror's Business Representative must submit an electronic version via e-mail to Lynne Darby at darbylm@saic.com or on CD to SAIC at the address listed in Section 6.1. Signatures can be submitted electronically or via fax to Lynne Darby at 301-698-6188 by the deadline stated above.

Note: Proposals will not be considered further if these documents are not received by 1 week after the full proposal submission deadline.

7. Procedures for Evaluation of Proposals and Selection of Award

7.1 General Information

Final funding decisions will be based on (1) review of proposals that will be performed in accordance with the evaluation review criteria outlined in Section 7.4, (2) recommendations of the SMA Project Steering Committee, (3) priorities of NINDS, and (4) availability of funds.

7.2 Compliance Check

Prior to forwarding proposals for review, all documentation will be checked for compliance to ensure the following:

- Offerors are based within the United States.
- Only Offerors that meet criteria for federal funding eligibility—for example, the continued ban on funding of human embryo research (45 CFR 46.208(a)(2) and Section 498(b) of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 289g-1(b)]—will be considered for award under this RFP.
- The proposal contains a cover page with signatures, a technical approach with the required timeline, a biographical sketch for the PI, and a budget.
- The Supporting Documentation contains required signatures.

Proposals that do not meet the aforementioned requirements will be returned to the Offeror without review.

7.3 Proposal Review Process

A review panel composed of scientists with appropriate expertise will evaluate the proposals based on the criteria listed in Section 7.4, Proposal Review Criteria.

Offerors should be prepared to be available by telephone during the review meeting to answer questions pertaining to their proposal; details of this procedure will be provided to Offerors approximately 1 week prior to the scheduled review meeting.

7.4 Proposal Review Criteria

Please note that responses to this RFP will be evaluated with emphasis on the Offeror's past experience and success developing automated cellular imaging assays and on the Offeror's ability to expedite development and validation of an automated Gem assay.

Reviewers will evaluate proposals against the review criteria that follows. The relative importance of each criterion is indicated by the assigned point weights. The maximum total score possible is 100 points. The sample questions provided for each criterion are examples of items to be considered in review.

- **Past Experience (35 points)** – Did the Offeror demonstrate a history of experience in developing, validating, and successfully implementing high-content, cell-based immunohistochemical imaging assays involving the detection of subcellular, punctate structures? Does the Offeror have

experience at acquiring, characterizing, and utilizing cell lines (e.g., human fibroblast cell lines) that would be appropriate for automated Gem assays? Does the Offeror demonstrate a history of timely and accurate data exchange/assay transfer with other facilities?

- **Timeline (25 points)** – Have all conceivable efficiencies been considered? Is the timeline technically feasible? Is the timeline to achieve the milestones as aggressive as possible? Has the Offeror developed similar assays on a timeline that is similar to the one proposed?
- **Technical Approach (15 points)** – Does the Technical Approach address feasible strategies and methods to meet the milestones, tasks, and overall project goals? Have quality control and assurance issues been addressed?
- **Personnel and Project Management (15 points)** – Are the available personnel adequately trained and experienced in use of the equipment, reagents, and procedures needed for establishing, validating, and utilizing the proposed assays?
- **Facilities/Equipment (10 points)** – Has the Offeror demonstrated that the appropriate facilities and equipment are available to meet the milestones, tasks, and overall project goals?

In addition to the review criteria listed previously, reviewers will consider the appropriateness of the **pricing information** supplied by the Offeror.

7.5 Funding Recommendations and Award Negotiations

Upon completion of the technical review, Steering Committee members will evaluate submissions. The Steering Committee will make funding recommendations to SAIC and NINDS for approval by NINDS.

NINDS and SAIC reserves the right to conduct site visits within 6 weeks of proposal submission. With prior notification from SAIC, each Offeror should make the facility available during normal business hours.

SAIC will formally notify your organization of the technical merit review results. Notification of award status will be made in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations 15.503.

Awards will be made in the form of contracts. SMA Project contracts will be “subcontracts” to SAIC to support the NINDS. However, for simplicity, in this RFP, the terms “Contractor” and “Contract” refer to the successful Offeror and award.

8. Additional Information for Offerors

8.1 General Information

The Offeror is to furnish all information required by this RFP to SAIC. Any erasures or changes to a proposal must be initialed by an individual authorized to submit the offer, on behalf of the Offeror. The individual submitting the offer must have the authority to contractually bind the offer.

This RFP does not commit SAIC to pay any costs associated with the Offeror’s preparation and submission of a proposal. The SAIC Subcontracts Representative is the only individual legally authorized to contractually bind SAIC for this solicitation. This is not an authorization to proceed with the work referenced herein.

8.2 Contact Information

Please contact Lynne Darby at 301-698-7459 or darbylm@saic.com for contractual questions. Technical questions can be e-mailed to smaproject-fd@saic.com.

8.3 Progress Monitoring of Awards

Progress on each contract and task order will be monitored. Offerors who receive funding will be asked to submit brief monthly reports/updates on overall progress and separate reports with detailed results. Offerors will propose a reporting plan to concisely summarize overall project efforts, separate reports with detailed assay results, and if applicable, additional means to share data. A format and schedule for delivery of data and reports will be negotiated.

Through open communication between SMA Project investigators and SAIC's professional staff of doctoral-level scientists, regulatory affairs specialists, and project control specialists, any issues or concerns will be efficiently addressed. As needed, SMA Project Steering Committee members and technical experts who are formally associated with SAIC will also review reports/ updates.

Offerors should note that continued funding during the period of performance of the SMA Project contract will be dependent on successful completion of the assay according to the timeline specified in the proposal. SAIC will work with an SMA Project contractor to adjust the timeline if necessary to best meet the needs of the SMA Project.

8.4 Resource Sharing, Data Sharing, and Intellectual Property Management

As the full name of the program (The SMA Project: A Collaborative Program to Accelerate Therapeutics Development) suggests, the SMA Project is intended as a **collaborative program**. Collaboration is deemed essential for identifying and rapidly completing preclinical development of the SMA therapeutics that are most likely to be safe, effective, and approved for clinical use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. In making award recommendations to NINDS, the Steering Committee and SAIC will consider whether the Offeror's plans for resource sharing, data sharing, and intellectual property management are consistent with the goals of this program and NIH policies.

In awarding funds to successful Offerors, SAIC will act as a contractor to NINDS. As such, these funds are subject to the provisions of the *Principles and Guidelines for Recipients of NIH Research Grants and Contracts on Obtaining and Disseminating Biomedical Research Resources* (64 FR 72090, December 23, 1999) and the *NIH Grants Policy Statement* concerning the availability of research results: publications, intellectual property rights, and sharing biomedical research resources. An intellectual property plan will be negotiated as part of the Subcontract Agreement.

To ensure that intellectual property claims are adequately protected and/or appropriately pursued, program participants who are not employees of the Federal Government will be required to read and sign the program's Data Sharing Plan (see the [Subcontract Agreement](#)). Enforcement of the Plan will be carried out by NINDS with assistance from SAIC. To facilitate data and resource sharing and the generation of new ideas, funded investigators will be required to participate in quarterly investigator teleconferences and meetings.

The following section is intended primarily for the Offeror's Business Office. Offerors should familiarize themselves with the information contained in this section and forward the material to their Business Office as soon as possible.

9. Information Related to Subcontracts

9.1 General Information

CPFF subcontracts will be issued for one or more offers received in response to this RFP. Awards will be made for the base subcontract to support Tasks 1, 2, and 3 in the SOW outlined in Section 4 of this RFP. Based upon the needs of the SMA project, Task 4 unfunded screening requirement may be requested.

Any subcontract resulting from this solicitation shall resemble the Subcontract Agreement posted on the SMA Project website, with the exception of appropriate modifications made at the time of award, including all applicable provisions required for flow-down by the prime contract to SAIC and any provisions required by law on the date of execution of the subcontract. The terms and conditions set forth or referenced herein shall apply, and SAIC objects to and shall not be bound by any additional alternate terms and conditions proposed by the Offeror. The Offeror agrees, if an offer is accepted, to furnish any or all services for which the offer is submitted at the price(s) proposed and upon the terms and conditions contained in this RFP, and the proposal shall be inclusive of all costs associated with performing the work, including profit/fee.

9.2 Restrictions on the Use of Human Subjects and Human Tissues/Specimens

Research involving human subjects shall not be conducted under SMA Project subcontracts. Research involving tissues or other biological specimens derived from living or deceased humans and cell lines derived from human tissues may only be conducted if Offerors have demonstrated their compliance with all appropriate guidelines pertaining to the use of human specimens and approval of the Contracting Officer. Please see the NIH brochure [Research on Human Specimens: Are You Conducting Research Using Human Subjects?](#), which is based on *Regulations for Protection of Human Subjects* (45 CFR Part 46), for more information.

9.3 Proposal Validity

To be considered valid, your proposal must be addressed to Lynne Darby and remain firm for 180 calendar days.

9.4 Qualifications of Prospective Offeror

The Offeror must have adequate resources to perform any resulting subcontract, in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFP, and upon request furnish proof of the same. The SAIC Subcontracts Representative may request verification of the Offeror's financial status, cost data related to the proposal, verification of insurance, anticipated technical approach, preliminary project scheduling, and/or any other pertinent data needed to establish the responsibility of the Offeror. Offers will not be accepted from any SAIC employee or business unit.

9.5 Procurement of Certain Equipment

Offerors will not be reimbursed for the purchase, lease, or rental of any item of equipment listed in the following Federal Supply Groups, regardless of the dollar value, without the prior written approval of the government contracting officer:

- 67 - Photographic Equipment
- 69 - Training Aids and Devices
- 70 - General Purpose ADP Equipment, Software, Supplies, and Support (Excluding 7045-ADP Supplies and Support Equipment)
- 71 - Furniture
- 72 - Household and Commercial Furnishings and Appliances
- 74 - Office Machines and Visible Record Equipment
- 77 - Musical Instruments, Phonographs, and Hometype Radios
- 78 - Recreational and Athletic Equipment

When equipment in these Federal Supply Groups is requested by the Offeror and determined essential by the contracting officer, the government will endeavor to fulfill the requirement with equipment available from its excess personal property sources, provided the request is made under a cost reimbursement contract. Extensions or renewals of approved existing leases or rentals for equipment in these Federal Supply Groups are excluded from the provisions of this article.

Additional unallowable items include accountable government property (defined as both real and personal property with an acquisition cost of \$1,000 or more and a life expectancy of more than 2 years) and “sensitive items” (defined and listed in the *Contractor’s Guide for Control of Government Property*, <http://knownet.hhs.gov/log/AgencyPolicy/HHSLogPolicy/contractorsguide.htm>, 1990), regardless of acquisition value.

9.6 Late Offers

Formal offers, amendments, or requests for withdrawal of offers received after the date specified for submittal may not be considered.

9.7 Offer Acceptance and Award

SAIC reserves the right under all circumstances to select and award to the Offeror, in whole or in part, any portion of this project that is in the best interest of SAIC and its client.

Of note:

- SAIC may accept any offer regardless of whether there are negotiations conducted subsequent to its receipt. Any such negotiations shall not constitute a rejection or counteroffer on the part of SAIC.
- SAIC reserves the right to reject the offer, to waive minor informalities in offers, and/or to conduct further negotiations with the Offeror.
- SAIC assumes no responsibility for any promise or representation, either oral or written, that a subcontract award will be made, unless done so by the SAIC Subcontracts Representative and only when an SAIC Pro-Forma Subcontract of the type referenced in this RFP is executed with the Offeror.
- SAIC reserves the right to make multiple awards.

9.8 Right of Denial

SAIC reserves the right to deny the services of an Offeror due to inadequate qualifications and/or failure to complete a contract or demonstrated poor performance on contracts similar in nature, or the Offeror who, under investigation, shows is not in a position to perform the contract.

To form a complete offer, the Offeror is required to provide a detailed cost proposal in accordance with this solicitation, a technical proposal that demonstrates the Offeror’s understanding of the requirements, and other pertinent documents as outlined in Section 5 of this RFP.

Intent to Submit: A Proposal for the Development of an Automated SMN Gem Assay Suitable for Medium-Throughput Screening

Submission of this Intent to Submit form will assist in planning for the expedited review of proposals. Offerors who do not submit an Intent to Submit form may still submit a proposal if all other deadlines and requirements are met. Additionally, submission of this form does not bind the Offeror to submit a proposal.

Potential Offerors are requested to provide the following information.

Submitting Organization

Principal Investigator's Name _____

Institution/Organization _____

Principal Investigator's E-mail _____

Probable Consultant/Collaborators

1. Consultant/Collaborator Name _____

Institution/Organization _____

2. Consultant/Collaborator Name _____

Institution/Organization _____

3. Consultant/Collaborator Name _____

Institution/Organization _____

4. Consultant/Collaborator Name _____

Institution/Organization _____

This form can be submitted by August 16, 2006.

1. Via fax to Lynne Darby/SAIC at 301-698-6188

OR

2. You may provide the information noted above in an e-mail to smaproject-fd@saic.com.

Checklist for Submitting a Proposal and Supporting Documentation

Proposal (Deadline: 1:00 P.M. Eastern Time, August 21, 2006)

One electronic copy of the following:

- Proposal Face Page with signatures
- Proposal Body (8-page limit)
- References (no page limit)
- Biographical Sketches (PI biosketch should be included)
- Past Performance (5-document limit)
- Letters of Intent (no page limit)
- Proposed Budget/Pricing Information and Budget Justification (no page limit)

Supporting Documentation (Deadline: August 28, 2006)

One electronic copy of the following:

- Subcontract Agreement
The entire document must be read and completed as necessary. Of note, signatures are needed in the following places:
 - Schedule A, page 10
 - Attachment II (Memorandum – Requirements Related to Human Subjects, Specimens, and Recombinant DNA Research), page 31*Also note that as part of the Subcontract Agreement you must provide the following:*
 - An approved Animal Welfare Assurance from the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare if you propose using animals, page 18
 - An intellectual property management plan that satisfies the requirements outlined in the Subcontract Agreement, page 21*In addition, prior to the start of research involving animals you must provide the following:*
 - Verification of approval (including the date of most recent approval) by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee with appropriate documentation, page 18
- Representations and Certifications document
This document must be read and completed as necessary, including a signature of the person authorized to bind Offeror on page 10.

This form is provided to assist the Offeror in submitting all the required information. This form does not need to be submitted with the Offeror's proposal or Supporting Documentation.