

ADVANCED RESEARCH PROJECTS AGENCY
Office of Continuity and Future Planning
Washington 25, D.C.

ARPA RFP No. 58-C-014

Date: October 9, 1959

Classification: TOP SECRET - LIMITED DISTRIBUTION

TO: Director, Silver Strand Institute
Point Hueneme, California

SUBJECT: Request for Proposals — Cognitive Control and Public Stability:
Tools for Executive Communication Management

REFERENCE: ARPA Directive Series 58-EPI-A through 59-A-F

PURPOSE - The Advanced Research Projects Agency requests a comprehensive research proposal from the Silver Strand Institute for the design and development of computational and behavioral systems intended to assist national leadership in measuring and managing collective sentiment under conditions of accelerated information exchange.

The intent is to create an analytical framework and prototype capability enabling executive decision-makers to monitor, interpret, and adjust public perception through adaptive communication techniques.

2. BACKGROUND - Postwar advances in communication and computation have produced an unprecedented feedback loop between policy actions and public response. Traditional polling and psychological studies lack the temporal resolution and analytic sophistication necessary for real-time leadership guidance.

ARPA recognizes the strategic importance of maintaining domestic and allied coherence through the management of informational equilibrium. This requirement parallels the established principles of control theory — applying feedback mechanisms to maintain stability within complex dynamic systems.

Preliminary consultations with Dr. John G. Trump (MIT) and Dr. Vannevar Bush (Advisory) indicate that the emerging field of electronic data processing can now support limited sentiment quantification and message optimization at operational speeds.

3. OBJECTIVES

- a. Define quantifiable indicators of population sentiment and attention.

- b. Develop computational methods to correlate executive communication variables (tone, vocabulary, frequency) with shifts in those indicators.
- c. Establish a predictive feedback system capable of recommending message adjustments to maintain desired sentiment levels.
- d. Produce pilot demonstrations validating the relationship between linguistic form and population response.

4. SCOPE OF WORK

- a. Conduct a literature and data survey of public-opinion modeling, behavioral psychology, and control theory relevant to sentiment feedback.
- b. Design algorithms for linguistic and emotional classification of broadcast, press, and recorded communications.
- c. Develop experimental apparatus for continuous sampling of media and audience reaction.
- d. Construct simulation environments for testing executive communication as an input variable.
- e. Propose methods of presenting analytic results to decision-makers in a usable format (dashboard, index, or trend visualization).

5. DELIVERABLES

- a. Report 1: Quantitative Sentiment Indices and Collection Protocols (Due 12 months).
- b. Report 2: Prototype Predictive Algorithm Suite (Due 24 months).
- c. Report 3: Executive Communication Feedback System - Concept and Demonstration (Due 30 months).
- d. Final Report: Comprehensive summary with recommendations for operational deployment (Due 36 months).

6. ADMINISTRATION - The program will be administered under Project 58-A-EPI, "Continuity of Governance."

Quarterly progress reviews shall be held at the Silver Strand Institute, Point Hueneme, California.

Funding will originate from Behavioral Systems and Information Processing allocations for Fiscal Years 1960-1962.

7. SECURITY - All personnel assigned to this contract must hold appropriate clearances. Data, notes, and correspondence are to be handled in accordance with ARPA Regulation 32-4A. No findings may be published without prior written authorization.

8. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

The Institute is requested to submit:

- a. Technical and managerial plan, including key personnel.
 - b. Estimated time schedule and cost breakdown.
 - c. Detailed description of methods and anticipated deliverables.
- Proposals must be received no later than December 15, 1959.

9. REMARKS - The Agency views the stabilization of national cognition as integral to strategic defense. Development of tools for executive communication management will form a cornerstone of future governance under high-velocity information conditions.

Lawrence P. Gise
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Advanced Research Projects Agency

cc: Dr. John G. Trump (MIT)
Dr. Vannevar Bush (Advisory Correspondent)
AEC RAND MITRE Silver Strand Institute (File)