ARPA-I Ideas Challenge Stage 2—Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

March 13, 2026

1) **Q: If a Stage 1 winning proposal was submitted with an individual as the Team Lead, could the Stage 2 application be submitted with an entity affiliated with that individual (e.g., a university, a company) as the Team Lead instead of the individual?**

   A: No. Only Stage 1 winning Team Leads are eligible Team Leads for Stage 2.

2) **Q: If a winning Stage 2 applicant wants prize money to be distributed to other entities or individuals that are members of the team, will U.S. DOT do that?**

   A: No. If selected as a winner in Stage 2, the prize will be paid to the Team Lead and any further distribution between team members will be up to the Team Lead.

3) **Q: Can the composition of a Stage 1 winning team change for Stage 2?**

   A: Yes, as long as the Team Lead remains the same and all team members (both entities and individuals) each comply with the respective eligibility criteria for individuals and entities, including the restriction that they may only participate as a member of one Stage 2 team.

4) **Q: Can Stage 2 teams make changes to team composition after submitting the Stage 2 application?**

   A: No.

5) **Q: Can Stage 1 winning teams, including individuals or entities from those teams, continue to engage with panelists from the Stage 1 Bootcamp event during Stage 2?**

    A: Yes, unless the panelists are from USDOT and are directly involved in the Stage 2 evaluation. Any Stage 1 Bootcamp panelists from USDOT who will participate in the Stage 2 evaluation will be instructed to terminate contact with applicants until Stage 2 is over.

6) **Q: Is there a required Technology Readiness Level (TRL) or target TRL that ARPA-I expects for projects proposed in Stage 2?**

    A: No.