



## Common Questions and Answers

### **Q: What qualifies a company as a startup?**

A: AFFOA evaluates companies on an individual basis to determine if they are a startup company, using the following guidelines.

1. Less than or equal to Series A
2. Little to no contracts with the DoD
3. Size of employees/years in operation
4. Whether or not they have an explicit federal sales/relations role. If a company is mature enough to have a sales role specifically targeting the federal government, it may have moved beyond product/market fit analysis or early-stage venture.

We recommend seeking a consultation to discuss your company's 'startup' status. Please use the [Questions and Consultations Request Form](#) to schedule a consultation.

### **Q: What is AFFOA's annual membership fee?**

A: AFFOA's annual membership fee is \$1500 for startups and \$2500 for universities and other industries. Please find more information regarding AFFOA membership [here](#).

### **Q: Can a non-member to AFFOA apply for PAFF?**

A: If a proposal is selected by a non-member, it is expected that they become a member as a condition of receiving the funding. Please find more information regarding AFFOA membership [here](#).

### **Q: Can a university be a lead on a proposal in PAFF?**

A: No, the PAFF is designed to help accelerate product commercialization of AFFOA industry or startup member organizations. Universities can be partners on the proposal team but the team must be led by a startup/industry organization to be qualified for the PAFF.

### **Q: What is the most important thing the applicant needs to demonstrate in the pre-proposal to get AFFOA's support for this exciting collaboration?**

A: For the PAFF program, we emphasize technologies that are mature enough to have a reasonable expectation of commercialization within 12-24 months. We prefer that proposers

engage with the capabilities and expertise of AFFOA at a juncture where their product is nearing commercial launch, as opposed to the nascent stages of development. Successful teams will also effectively describe how they will leverage AFFOA's capabilities.

**Q: Can a company with headquarters outside the US but a branch in the US participate and submit a proposal?**

A: While participation in the pre-proposal submission is open to all, regardless of AFFOA membership, it's essential to highlight that the PAFF selection process places significant importance on the intention to manufacture in the U.S. We value the commitment to collaborating with a U.S.-based manufacturing supply chain as a key criterion. Successful applicants must ultimately become AFFOA member companies, and a substantial amount of the work must be done in the US branch of the company.

**Q: How do we set up consultations and apply?**

A: All of the information needed to apply and request a consultation can be found on the [PAFF Resources Website](#).

**Q: Who has access (externally) to the outcome of the PAFF Program participants?**

A: All IP will be kept confidential (if the NDA is signed). Foreground IP developed will carry government purpose rights and, as such, would be shared with AFFOA's Government Program Manager. AFFOA requests to share high-level outputs of the project with the membership (no IP or data). Information sharing will be vetted with the awarded party(s).

**Q: Collaboration with external partners (PAFF cover letter and section 4.3). In your cover sheet you ask for external partners listing. What level of formal agreements with these external/3<sup>rd</sup> party partners do you require? Do the external/3<sup>rd</sup> party partners need to have AFFOA membership?**

A: Please be advised that it is not mandatory for your external or third-party partners to hold membership with AFFOA. We are interested in understanding the specific capabilities and areas of expertise these partners will contribute to the commercialization of your product. Your elucidation on how these collaborations will enhance your product's market readiness would be highly valuable to our assessment.

**Q: Are there any restrictions on the cost share requirement?**

A: The 1:1 cost share requirement must be met using non-federal funding. In other words, you can use state, local, or private funds to meet the cost share requirement. Additionally, the cost share does not need to be a direct monetary match. It can include related labor or materials that your organization will provide in support of AFFOA's program. Cost-share contributions do not need to come from a single source; they can be aggregated from multiple sources.