

BEST PRACTICES FOR
**Biodefense and Life
Sciences Contractors
Amid Federal
Funding
Uncertainty**



Federal funding plays a critical role in supporting biodefense and life sciences initiatives, from vaccine development to biosecurity research. However, funding uncertainties due to shifting priorities, budget constraints, or policy changes can create challenges for contractors in these fields. Here are key strategies to navigate this uncertainty effectively.

DIVERSIFY FUNDING SOURCES

Relying solely on one federal agency for funding can pose significant risks, especially in biodefense and life sciences, where government priorities shift due to emerging threats, political changes and budget limitations. Expanding funding sources can help ensure financial stability and continuity in research, development and manufacturing.

▶ **Explore opportunities with multiple funding agencies**

Federal agencies such as Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Department of Defense (DOD), and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) fund differing aspects and stages of biodefense and life science research based on their specific missions.

▶ **Consider non-federal government funding and international partnerships**

Many states have biosecurity, pandemic preparedness or life science initiatives that fund research and infrastructure projects. Global health organizations (WHO, CEPI, Gavi) and foreign governments provide funding for infectious disease prevention, surveillance and response.

▶ **Engage with the Private Sector**

Venture capital and impact investors focused on public health, biotechnology, and biosecurity may provide funding for transformative or innovative solutions.

▶ **Utilize Nonprofit and Philanthropic Funding**

Foundations such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Wellcome Trust provide grants for public health and biotech research, particularly driven by needs in lower- and middle-income countries (LMIC).

By seeking funding from multiple sources, organizations can reduce dependency on any single federal funding stream and improve resilience against budget cuts or policy shifts.

STAY INFORMED ON FEDERAL PRIORITIES

Government priorities in biodefense and life sciences can shift based on emerging threats, pandemics, or national security concerns. Regularly monitor agency roadmaps and biodefense strategies from key stakeholders, follow Congressional budget discussions and legislation, and subscribe to government alerts and funding announcements to track and anticipate federal priorities.

ENHANCE REGULATORY AND COMPLIANCE READINESS

Changes in funding may impact regulatory requirements or timelines for FDA approvals, clinical trials, or procurement processes. Ensure compliance with evolving guidelines and maintain active communication with key stakeholder agencies to prevent disruptions.

UNDERSTAND CONTRACT TERMS AND RISK MITIGATION

Federal contracts in biodefense and life sciences often include clauses related to milestone payments, cost-sharing, and termination. Carefully review contract terms to identify risks and impact of federal policy changes and negotiate flexible provisions when possible.

BE PREPARED FOR RAPID FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

During public health emergencies or biosecurity threats, the government may release expedited funding opportunities. Ensure your organization is prepared by addressing standard proposal requirements in advance, establishing teaming or subcontractor agreements early, and developing a rapid response strategy to capitalize on these opportunities.

By adopting these best practices, contractors in biodefense and life sciences can more effectively navigate funding uncertainties through risk mitigation to maintain progress and minimize disruption of critical projects that support national preparedness and health security.



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