



BTI Institute

Borders • Trade • Immigration

A Department of Homeland Security Center of Excellence

Process to Identify and Compete New Projects of Interest

Executive Summary

This document outlines the methodology used by the Borders, Trade, and Immigration Institute to identify, coordinate, conduct and compete new projects of interest to the Department of Homeland Security.

A. Goal

To clearly explain the process and delineate requirements to identify and compete research projects in subjects of interest to the Department of Homeland Security related to borders, trade, and immigration. Such initiatives may also address the BTI Institute's inherent responsibility to promote the safety and resilience of individuals and communities in our Nation's border and coastal regions.

B. The Process

1. **Identify the Problem.** Regardless of whether the issue is raised by a member of a client agency/jurisdiction or another interested party, the BTI Institute solicits and/or works with the client agency/jurisdiction to develop a clear, concise statement of the problem to be addressed and research requested. Ultimately, this problem statement is approved by the representative of the client agency/jurisdiction.
2. **Determine How the Project Supports Client Agency Mission and Priorities.** The BTI Institute seeks to ensure it attains a full understanding of the client agency/jurisdiction's mission, its strategic and operational priorities, performance metrics, and how the project requested will support them. This information is included in concept papers and proposals as the initiative moves forward.

As a consideration, not as a requirement, the BTI Institute's Director or designated official may seek the insight and guidance of BTI Institute's External Advisory Board members on the initiative.
3. **Confirm the Project's Nexus to the BTI Institute Mission.** BTI Institute representatives ensure that the project/initiative has a nexus to the Institute's mission.
 - a. Should a nexus to the BTI Institute mission be established, the project will move forward to the next step.

- b. Should it be determined that the project/initiative is *not within the BTI Institute's purview*, and is more appropriately addressed by another Center of Excellence, the Executive Director, Strategic Partnerships: contacts that Center directly; provides them the problem statement; brief them on the initiative; provides them background on client agency mission and priorities; and provides introductions to client agency/jurisdiction representatives to ensure a smooth project transition.
- 4. Appointment with the Agency's Sector Chief or Agency Headquarters.** As a prequel to any further commitment of time and resources, the BTI Institute receives a commitment by agency/jurisdiction representatives for a meeting with the appropriate executive of that agency/jurisdiction (i.e., Chief Sector Agent, Special Agent in Charge)
- 5. Concept Paper.** After receiving confirmation of the aforementioned meeting, the BTI Institute conducts a meeting with appropriate faculty, researchers, and staff to develop a concept paper (one page, front and back) that incorporates: the problem statement, supported agency mission and priorities, proposed course(s) of action, anticipated costs, and any outstanding or related issues.
- 6. Meeting with Agency Executive(s).** As previously agreed, a BTI Institute representative(s) meets with the Agency Sector Chief or appropriate executive official before further commitment of resources. The objectives of this meeting is to:
 - Confirm the problem statement
 - Confirm strategic and operational priorities
 - Receive the agency/jurisdiction's commitment to the project
 - Discuss proposed course of action moving forward
 - Determine funding.
- 7. Funding the Project.**
 - a. **Through Agency Funding (Basic Ordering Agreement).** Should the Agency' Executive Official make funds available, the BTI Institute representative will explain and answer relevant questions for use of the Basic Ordering Agreement.

Should funding not be available, the project can be forwarded to the Agency's Headquarters in Washington, D.C., for consideration.
 - b. **Request for Proposals.** Should funding not be available, but need for the research confirmed, the BTI Institute Director will submit the problem statement to the OUP PM for consideration to be included in future BTI Institute Request for Proposals, as funded by DHS.
- 8. Project Approval.** Once approved, the project proceeds in accordance with the procedures outlined by the Department of Homeland Security Office of University Programs.