

## QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

# Federal Non-Traditional Contract Types

When to Use OTAs, BAAs, CSOs, SBIRs/STTRs

## CONTACT

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## OTA (Other Transaction Authority)

PROTOTYPE READY

**ESTIMATED TIMELINE TO AWARD:** 30–90 days (after submission or pitch)**WHEN TO USE IT**

You have a prototype or emerging tech ready to be tested and scaled

**BEST FOR**

Prototyping, fielding, and follow-on production (especially defense)

**KEY NOTES**

- Not subject to FAR
- Requires joining a consortium
- Enables fast, flexible acquisition

## BAA (Broad Agency Announcement)

IDEA STAGE

**ESTIMATED TIMELINE TO AWARD:** 3–6 months (review cycles vary)**WHEN TO USE IT**

You're exploring a scientific question or basic/applied research

**BEST FOR**

Early-stage research &amp; technology exploration

**KEY NOTES**

- Governed by FAR Part 35
- Typically grants or research contracts
- Used by R&D-heavy agencies

## CSO (Commercial Solutions Opening)

COMMERCIAL PRODUCT

**ESTIMATED TIMELINE TO AWARD:** 45–120 days (depending on agency and need)**WHEN TO USE IT**

You have a mature commercial product and want to pilot it with government

**BEST FOR**

Adapting/commercializing existing tech for federal use

**KEY NOTES**

- Often posted on SAM.gov
- Two-phase: white paper → full proposal
- May lead to FAR or non-FAR awards

## SBIR/STTR (Small Business Innovation Research / Small Business Technology Transfer)

DISRUPTIVE STARTUP

IDEA STAGE

**ESTIMATED TIMELINE TO AWARD:** 3–9 months (based on agency cycles)**WHEN TO USE IT**

You're a small business/startup with a high-risk, innovative idea

**BEST FOR**

R&amp;D for early-stage tech with commercial/government potential

**KEY NOTES**

- Three phases: Feasibility → Development → Commercialization
- Can lead to sole-source Phase III
- Non-dilutive capital