



USAID | UKRAINE

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Issuance Date: June 15, 2011
Deadline for Questions: July 1, 2011, 08:00 AM Kyiv, Ukraine local time
Closing Date and Time: July 27, 2011, 05:00 PM Kyiv, Ukraine local time

Subject: Request for Applications RFA-113-11-000001
Title: STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY AND INDEPENDENT MEDIA IN BELARUS

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), is seeking applications (proposals for funding) from U.S. or non-U.S. non-profit or for-profit nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and other qualified non-USG organizations to implement the Strengthening Civil Society and Independent Media Project in Belarus. Please refer to the Program Description (RFA section C) for a complete statement of goals and expected results. The authority for this RFA is found in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID plans to provide a maximum of \$12,000,000 to be allocated over a five-year period. USAID intends to award a single cooperative agreement as a result of this solicitation. Cost sharing is not required.

Pursuant to 22 CFR 226.81, it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments. However, all reasonable, allocable, and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the program and are in accordance with applicable cost standards (22 CFR 226, plus OMB Circular A-122 for non-profit organizations, OMB Circular A-21 for universities, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation Part 31 for for-profit organizations), may be paid under the award. USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

For the purposes of this program, this RFA is being issued and consists of this cover letter and the following:

1. Section A - Application Format;
2. Section B - Selection Criteria;
3. Section C - Program Description;
4. Section D - Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of Applicant/Recipient; and
5. Section E - Annexes

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all required information in its application, including the requirements found in any attachments to this www.grants.gov opportunity. Any future amendments to this RFA can be downloaded from www.grants.gov. It is the responsibility of the recipient of the application document to ensure that it has been received from www.grants.gov in its entirety.

If you decide to submit an application, it must be received by the closing date and time indicated at the top of this cover letter at the place designated for receipt of applications. See RFA Section A.I.b regarding late applications. Applicants should take account of the expected delivery time required by the application transmission methods, and are responsible to ensure that proposals are received at USAID in Kyiv by the due date and time specified above.

Applicants shall confirm with the undersigned that their submissions were successfully received by the required due date and time. Applicants are requested to submit the technical and cost portions of their applications in separate volumes so that they may be reviewed separately. Applicants should retain for their records one copy of all enclosures which accompany their application.

Award will be made to that responsible applicant(s) whose application(s) best meets the requirements of this RFA and the selection criteria contained herein. Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of USAID, nor does it commit USAID to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Further, USAID reserves the right to reject any or all applications received. In addition, final award of any resultant cooperative agreement cannot be made until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated, and committed through internal USAID procedures. While it is anticipated that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for award. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant, and all preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

In the event of any inconsistency between the sections comprising this RFA, it shall be resolved by the following order of precedence:

- (a) Section B - Selection Criteria;
- (b) Section A - Application Format;
- (c) Section C - The Program Description; and
- (d) This Cover Letter.

Applicants shall upload applications to www.grants.gov and shall also submit hard copies.

1. Hard copy submission: Applications and modifications thereof shall be submitted in envelopes with the name and address of the applicant and the RFA number (referenced above) inscribed thereon, to:

U.S. Agency for International Development
Marina Orlova, Acquisition and Assistance Specialist
19 Nizhny Val Street
04071 Kyiv
Ukraine

Complete Application packages must be received no later than the closing date and time, July 27, 2011, 05:00 PM Kyiv, Ukraine local time.

2. Electronic submission through www.grants.gov: Complete Application packages shall be submitted electronically through grants.gov, and must be received no later than the closing date and time, July 27 2011, 05:00 PM Kyiv, Ukraine local time.

Applications shall be submitted in two separate parts: (a) technical and (b) cost or business application. Both the technical and cost portions of the application shall have a cover page which includes the point of contact for the organization, including name, title, address, phone and fax numbers and e-mail address. Applications (hard copy and electronic copy) must be in **MS Word** format in Times New Roman Font size 11 with 1" margins on top, bottom, left and right. Budget spreadsheets **must** be in **Excel** format, budget narrative must be in Word format; all signed pages in Word or PDF format.

Faxed applications are not acceptable.

Any questions concerning this RFA should be submitted in writing to the Acquisition and Assistance Specialist Marina Orlova, via email at morlova@usaid.gov. The deadline for submitting questions is July 1, 2011, 08:00 AM Kyiv, Ukraine local time.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,



Karin Kolstrom
Regional Agreement Officer
USAID Regional Mission for Ukraine,
Moldova and Belarus

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SECTION A - APPLICATION FORMAT

I. PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

a. All applications (both hard and electronic copy) received by the deadline (July 27, 2011, 05:00 PM Kyiv, Ukraine local time) will be reviewed for responsiveness and programmatic merit in accordance with the guidelines herein. Section B addresses the evaluation procedures for the applications. Applications shall be submitted in two separate parts: (a) technical, and (b) cost or business application. In addition to electronic submission via www.grants.gov, an original and four (4) hard copies of the technical application and an original and two (2) hard copies of the cost application shall be submitted as described in the cover letter of this RFA. Both the technical and cost portions of the application shall have a cover page which includes the point of contact for the organization, including name, title, address, phone and fax numbers and e-mail address.

b. Applications which are received late or are incomplete run the risk of not being considered in the review process. Such late or incomplete applications will be considered in USAID's sole discretion depending on the status of USAID's application review process as of the time of receipt and/or the quality of other applications received.

c. Applications should be prepared according to the structural format set forth below. Technical applications should be specific, complete and presented concisely. A lengthy application does not in and of itself constitute a well thought out proposal. Applications shall demonstrate the applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this program. Applications should take into account the evaluation criteria found in Section B.

d. To facilitate the competitive review of the applications, applications should conform to the format prescribed below.

e. Preparation of Applications

1. Applicants are expected to review, understand, and comply with all aspects of this RFA. Failure to do so will be at the applicant's risk. Applications (hard copy and electronic copy) must be in **MS Word** format in Times New Roman Font size 11 with 1" margins on top, bottom, left and right. Budget spreadsheets **must** be in **Excel** format, budget narrative must be in Word format; all signed pages in Word or PDF format.
2. Each applicant shall furnish the information required by this RFA. On the hard copies of applications, the applicant shall sign the application and certifications and print or type its name on the cover page of the technical and cost applications. Erasures or other changes must be initialed by the person signing the application. Applications signed by an agent shall be accompanied by evidence of that agent's authority, unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.

3. Applicants which include data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation purposes should:

- (i) Mark the title page with the following legend:

"This application includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the U.S. Government and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed - in whole or in part - for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, a grant is awarded to this applicant as a result of - or in connection with - the submission of this data, the U.S. Government shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting grant. This restriction does not limit the U.S. Government's right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in pages____."; and

- (ii) Mark each sheet of data it wishes to restrict with the following legend:

"Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this application."

Applicants shall acknowledge receipt of any amendment to this RFA by signing and returning the amendment. The Government must receive the acknowledgement by the time specified for receipt of applications.

Explanation to Prospective Applicants

Any prospective applicant desiring an explanation or interpretation of this RFA must request it in writing not later than July 1, 2011, 08:00 AM Kyiv, Ukraine local time to allow a reply to reach all prospective applicants before the submission of their applications. Oral explanations or instructions given before award of an Agreement will not be binding. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this RFA will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment of this RFA, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicants.

II. TECHNICAL APPLICATION FORMAT

The technical application will be the most important item of consideration in selection for award of the proposed cooperative agreement. Therefore, it should be specific, complete and concise. The technical application should contain a cover page and should be divided into (7) seven sections as presented below and separated by tabs. **The aggregate length of sections a. through e. should not exceed 40 pages; cover page, section f. and g. is not subject to the page limitation.** Information submitted over the stated page limitation will not be evaluated. Non-conforming applications will be converted to a document meeting the above requirements and pages above the limit, if any, will not be evaluated. Any page in the technical application that contains a table, chart, graph, etc., not otherwise excluded below, is subject to the page limitation.

Technical Application Format:

Cover Page (not included in 40 pages limit)

- (a) Executive Summary (not to exceed 2 pages and not included in 40 pages limit)
- (b) Technical Approach (included into the 40 pages limit)
- (c) Staffing Plan (included into the 40 pages limit)
- (d) Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMEP) (included into the 40 pages limit)
- (e) Institutional Capacity (included into the 40 pages limit)
- (f) Past Performance Information (not included in 40 pages limit)
- (g) Annexes (not included in 40 pages limit)

Elaborate art work, expensive paper and bindings, and expensive visual and other presentation aids are neither necessary nor wanted.

Requirements to the contents of each section are as follows:

Cover Page

At the minimum, the Cover Page shall identify the applicant, provide the name, title and contact information of the applicant's employee responsible for negotiations (address, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail address), reference the RFA number and Program Title, state application submission date and whether the volume is an original or a copy.

(a) Executive Summary

The Executive Summary should summarize the key elements of the applicant's technical strategy, management approach, implementation plan, expected results and PMEP.

(b) Technical Approach

The technical approach must set forth in detail the conceptual approach, methodology and techniques for the accomplishment of the stated objectives, taking into consideration the special considerations stated in this RFA. The rationale for the appropriateness of the suggested approach in Belarus should be provided. The technical approach must clearly demonstrate the application of innovative tools and lessons learned from other programs. It must also clearly demonstrate plans to build Belarusian capacity, i.e. local Belarusian organizations and their capacities to implement the proposed activities.

The Technical Approach should comprehensively address how the applicant is planning to achieve the objectives outlined in the Program Description over the life of the program. This section should

describe in detail the proposed technical strategy and approach including evidence of its effectiveness, such as references. The proposal should set forth in sufficient detail the conceptual approach, methodology, and techniques for the implementation and evaluation of program activities.

- The proposal is expected to reflect its understanding of the civil society and media sectors in Belarus and existing challenges in the sector as well as the role of other donors in improving the sector.
- The applicant is encouraged to propose innovative implementation designs to reach the expected results, in keeping with existing U.S. Government (USG) strategic approaches and programmatic guidance, and an aggressive but realistic schedule of performance milestones as steps towards reaching those results.
- The technical proposal should demonstrate creative and innovative, yet feasible, approaches to achieve results under each of the four indicated objectives.
- The proposal should clearly describe how the four objectives are synchronized to maximize impact.
- The proposal should also clearly show how implementation of activities can be carried out within Belarus while maintaining an office in Ukraine.
- The technical approach must include a detailed draft Implementation Plan (Work Plan) for achieving the expected program results clearly outlining links between the proposed results, conceptual approach, and performance indicators, and propose a realistic timeline for achieving the program results. Applicants shall submit a draft implementation plan for the entire period of performance which should clearly outline links between the proposed results, conceptual approach, performance milestones, and a realistic timeline for achieving the semi-annual, annual, and end-of-program results. The implementation plan serves several purposes including a guide to program implementation, a demonstration of links between activities, strategic objectives and intended results, a basis for budget estimates and the foundation for the monitoring and evaluation plan.

The implementation plan, at a minimum, shall include:

- Brief situation analysis in the context of what other donors and implementing partners and host-country governments are contributing;
- Life-of-program results;
- Milestones (or benchmarks) toward achieving those results over the duration of the program;
- Partner involvement and contributions to achieving the results;
- Timeline.

- Applicants are expected to show how they will collaborate with all relevant stakeholders to implement this project.

(c) Staffing Plan

Applicants must submit a detailed Staffing Plan for USAID's review. Staffing Plans must, as a minimum, address the following:

- Placement of the program team within the larger organization(s); Program organizational charts with linkages to the key staff's parent organization are recommended.
- Identification of key personnel and long-term staff positions, including their technical and managerial roles and responsibilities and qualifications and abilities of proposed key personnel relevant to successful implementation of the proposed technical approach. Note: only the Chief of Party and Deputy Chief of Party will be designated as Key Personnel under the resulting award.
- A clear chain of authority on the project/program team, including subawardee staff, if applicable (subawardee/subcontractor excludes local CSOs receiving support under this project).
- A clear line of communication and reporting which allows for early identification and proposed resolution of problems by the prime awardee and provision of related information to USAID.
- A clear, regular, and concrete means of communication between program staff in the field and their backstop officers in the headquarters office that functions without creating unnecessary overlap.
- A clear, regular, and concrete means of communication between the prime recipient and its subawardees (including Belarusian CSOs) which ensures a cohesive working relationship and achievement of results;
- A use of both international and Belarusian expertise, with attention to gender balance, and the development of indigenous Belarusian capacity.
- A regular means of informal communication with the Agreement Officer's Technical Representative (AOTR), in addition to the required programmatic and financial reporting.

(d) Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMEP)

This section should contain the applicant's strategy for conducting monitoring and evaluation of the program's progress in achieving the expected results and objectives.

The application shall contain an illustrative PMEP responding to objectives and expected results listed in this Program Description, in Section C, III, C. Expected Results and Activities, of this RFA. Applicants are encouraged to propose other indicators which will assist in managing program performance. Applicants should include plans for monitoring and evaluation inside Belarus. The PMEP shall contain program objectives and results, performance indicators, data sources and collection methods, baseline information or a plan for collecting it, annual targets, and names of individuals responsible for data collection and analysis. PMEP data should be based on the fiscal year calendar.

The PMP will have the following structure:

- List of key project objectives, expected results and program outputs (output is a count of services delivered or items produced) and outcomes as well as brief description of the linkages between the program outputs and its expected results.
- Definition and detailed description of the performance indicators to be tracked including: unit of measure and disaggregation by sex, as appropriate and feasible; justification/management utility; annual baselines/targets; schedule for data collection; and detailed plans for data analysis, review and reporting.

(e) Institutional Capability

The applicant must offer evidence of ability to efficiently manage and administer the proposed program. Applicants must provide evidence of their technical, programmatic and administrative resources and expertise in administration of an NGO grants program, in addressing problems and issues related to civil society development. This includes evidence of a successful record of implementing similar programs, organizational strengths as represented by breadth and depth of prior experiences managing large-scale civil society programs, with a strong emphasis on institutional capacity building, and monitoring and evaluation expertise. Information in this section should include (but is not limited to) the following:

- Brief description of organizational history/expertise;
- Past experience and examples of accomplishments in developing and implementing similar programs;
- Relevant experience with proposed approaches;
- Institutional strength as represented by breadth and depth of corporate experience in project relevant disciplines/areas;
- Sub-awardee or subcontractor capabilities and expertise (excluding local partners receiving support under this project); and
- Financial controls.

(f) Past Performance References

This section is not subject to page limitation. Applicants must list all contracts, grants and cooperative agreements which the organization, both the primary applicant as well as any substantive sub-grantees, has implemented **involving similar or related programs** over the **past three years**. Please include the following: name and address of the organization for which the work was performed; current telephone number and e-mail address of responsible representative of the organization for which the work was performed; contract/grant name and number (if any), and beginning and ending dates; brief description of the project/assistance activity.

(g) Annexes

In the annex the applicant shall include resumes for all key personnel candidates. Resumes may not exceed three pages in length and shall be in chronological order starting with most recent

experience. Each resume shall be accompanied by a SIGNED letter of commitment from each candidate indicating his/her: (a) availability to serve in the stated position, in terms of days after award; (b) intention to serve for a stated term of the service; and (c) agreement to the compensation levels which correspond to the levels set forth in the cost application. As references may be checked for all proposed long-term personnel, a minimum of four references for each proposed long-term person is required. Applicants should provide current phone, fax and email address for each reference contact. Applicants shall also include signed letters of commitment for sub awardees and any partners that will have significant role in the implementation of the proposed project (excluding Belarusian CSOs receiving assistance under this project).

III. COST APPLICATION FORMAT

The cost or business application is to be submitted under separate volume from the technical application. Certain documents are required to be submitted by an applicant in order for an Agreement Officer to make a determination of responsibility. However, it is USAID policy not to burden applicants with undue reporting requirements if that information is readily available through other sources. While there is no page limit for this portion, applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible while providing the necessary detail for USAID to make an informed decision. The following sections describe the documentation that applicants for assistance awards must submit to USAID prior to award.

a. Budget

The budget should include an accompanying budget narrative which provides in detail the total costs for implementation of the program your organization is proposing. The budget should be submitted using Standard Forms 424, 424A and 424B which can be downloaded from the USAID web site at: http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aapproved_standard_forms.jsp#1, and accompanied by a spreadsheet showing the components of each element of cost, and a narrative providing support for the proposed costs. Budget spreadsheets must be in Excel format and budget narrative must be in Word format. At a minimum the budget and supporting documentation should include:

- The breakdown of all costs according to each partner organization, if any (major sub-awardees excluding local partners) involved in the program, in the format described herein.
- The costs associated with home office, expatriate, and local in-country labor, i.e. identification of positions, daily or hourly compensation, hours/days to be worked, fringe benefits, etc.
- A breakdown of all other direct costs to include cost elements (communications, office supplies, equipment, vehicles, office rent, subcontracting, etc.), unit of measure (monthly estimate, cost per unit), number of units, basis of the estimate and programmatic need for the expenditure. [Note: the authorized geographic code for procurement of goods and services under this award will be 000 and 110 – see Section A.VI. Title of property shall vest in the recipient.]
- Details of travel, per diem and other transportation expenses to include number of international trips, expected itineraries, cost of travel, number of per diem days and per diem rates.
- At least 25% of funding will be set aside for small grants to Belarusian CSOs, Movements and Individuals. Funding amounts for small grants should range between \$3,000-\$20,000.
- Support for any indirect costs and fringe benefits charged by the prime and all sub partners.

b. Other Required Documents

In addition to the requirements for the budget described above, the business or cost application submission should also include the following:

- A current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA).
- Any required certifications and representations (as attached and as stated in the Section D).
- Certificate of Compliance: Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance.

Applicants who have never received a grant, cooperative agreement or contract from the U.S. Government shall also submit the following information:

- Copies of the applicant's financial reports for the previous 3-year period, which have been audited by a certified public accountant or other auditor satisfactory to USAID;
- A projected annual budget, annual cash flow projection and organizational chart;
- A copy of the organization's accounting manual.

Applicants should also submit any additional evidence of responsibility deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to make a determination of responsibility. The information submitted should substantiate that the Applicant:

- Has adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain such resources as required during the performance of the award;
- Has the ability to comply with the award conditions, taking into account all existing and currently prospective commitments of the applicant, nongovernmental and governmental;
- Has a satisfactory record of performance. Past relevant unsatisfactory performance is ordinarily sufficient to justify a finding of non-responsibility, unless there is clear evidence of subsequent satisfactory performance;
- Has a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics; and
- Is otherwise qualified and eligible to receive a grant under applicable laws and regulations (e.g., EEO).

IV. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT AWARD

The Agreement Officer may conduct negotiations with one or more applicants but reserves the right to make an award without discussions. USAID's objective is to award a cooperative agreement to the organization or consortium whose application is in USAID's sole discretion the most likely to achieve USAID's goals as described in the RFA. The awardee will be the applicant whose application is determined by the Agreement Officer to be the most advantageous to the United States Government.

Negotiations or discussions conducted after receipt of an application do not constitute a rejection or counteroffer by the Government. Neither financial data submitted with an application nor

representations concerning facilities or financing, will form a part of the resulting cooperative agreement unless explicitly stated otherwise in the agreement.

To be eligible for award of a cooperative agreement, in addition to other conditions of this RFA, organizations must have a politically neutral humanitarian mandate, a commitment to non-discrimination with respect to beneficiaries and adherence to equal opportunity employment practices. Non-discrimination includes equal treatment without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, gender, age, and political affiliation.

Applicants are reminded that U.S. Executive Orders and U.S. law prohibits transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. It is the legal responsibility of the recipient to ensure compliance with these Executive Orders and laws. This provision must be included in all subcontracts/subawards issued under this contract/agreement.

V. AUTHORITY TO OBLIGATE THE GOVERNMENT

The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed agreement may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed Agreement or a specific written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

VI. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

In responding to this RFA, potential applicants should bear in mind the following considerations:

a. Authorized Geographic Code

The authorized Geographic Codes for procurement of goods and services under the proposed award are 000 (United States) and 110 (NIS) except for the following:

Origin of commodities procured in Belarus:

Pursuant to a blanket waiver signed on November 24, 2010 by the Administrator, code 935 origin is authorized for up to \$5,000,000 worth of commodities procured in the cooperating country with the exception of restricted commodities set forth in 22 CFR 228 and ADS 312 (e.g., motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals, and agricultural commodities).

b. Third Country Participant Training

Third-country training must **not** take place in countries that are

- Considered unfriendly by the U.S. Department of State and to which travel by U.S. citizens is prohibited; or
- Identified as terrorist countries by the Department of State.

c. Prohibition on Support to Organizations Associated With Terrorism

The Recipient is reminded that U.S. Executive Orders and U.S. law prohibit transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. It is the legal responsibility of the Recipient to ensure compliance with these Executive Orders and laws. This provision must be included in all subcontracts/subawards issued under this agreement.

The names of individuals and entities designated as being associated with terrorism can be found at the web site of the Office of Foreign Assets Control within the Department of Treasury at: <http://treasury.gov/ofac>.

VII. APPLICABLE REGULATIONS & REFERENCES

Mandatory Standard Provisions for U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients

<http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/ads/300/303maa.pdf>

Mandatory Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients

<http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/ads/300/303mab.pdf>

22 CFR 226

http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_02/22cfr226_02.html

AAPD 11-01

http://www.usaid.gov/business/business_opportunities/cib/pdf/aapd11_01.pdf

OMB Circular A-122

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a122_2004

OMB Circular A-21

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a021_2004

Federal Grants and Cooperative Agreement Act, 31 U.S.C. 6306

<http://uscode.house.gov/download/pls/31C63.txt>

ADS Series 300 Acquisition and Assistance

<http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/ads/>

Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR)

<https://www.acquisition.gov/far>

VIII. BRANDING STRATEGY AND MARKING PLAN

USAID's framework legislation, the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, section 641, requires that all programs under the Foreign Assistance Act be identified appropriately overseas as "American Aid." 22 C.F.R. 226.91(f) requires that, after the evaluation of the applications, the USAID Agreement Officer will request the Apparently Successful Applicant to submit a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan. When requesting a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan, the Agreement Officer will establish a reasonable time frame for submittal, review, and negotiation. If the Apparently Successful Applicant(s) fail(s) to submit or negotiate an acceptable Branding Strategy within the time specified by the Agreement Officer, that/those Applicant(s) become(s) ineligible for award.

USAID will not competitively evaluate the proposed Branding Strategy and Marking Plan. The Agreement Officer will review the proposed Branding Strategy and Marking Plan for adequacy to ensure that it complies with the Agency branding and marking guidance that can be found at <http://www.usaid.gov/branding/> and at <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/320.pdf>. During the review of the Apparently Successful Applicant(s)'s Branding Strategy and Marking Plan, the Agreement Officer will coordinate as necessary with the Activity Manager, the Technical Evaluation Panel and the communications specialist. Following completion of the review, the Agreement Officer will negotiate any required changes with the Apparently Successful Applicant(s), approve the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan, and include them as part of the assistance award. The Agreement Officer will ensure that any estimated costs associated with branding and marking are included in the Total Estimated Amount of the grant or cooperative agreement or other assistance award."

IX. ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

1) The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 117 requires that the impact of USAID's activities on the environment be considered and that USAID include environmental sustainability as a central consideration in designing and carrying out its development programs. This mandate is codified in Federal Regulations (22 CFR 216) and in USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) Parts 201.5.10g and 204 (<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ADS/200/>), which, in part, require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all activities. Applicant's environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs of this RFA.

2) In addition, the recipient must comply with host country environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. In case of conflict between host country and USAID regulations, the latter shall govern.

3) No activity funded under this award will be implemented unless an environmental threshold determination, as defined by 22 CFR 216, has been reached for that activity, as documented in a Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE), Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), or Environmental Assessment (EA) duly signed by the Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO). (Hereinafter, such documents are described as "approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.")

4) In 2011 the award will be covered by the following IEE: 2008-BYE-002 (Attached, Section E, Annex C). USAID has determined that a **Negative Determination with conditions** applies to one or more of the proposed activities. This indicates that if these activities are implemented subject to the specified conditions, they are expected to have no significant adverse effect on the environment. The Recipient shall be responsible for implementing all IEE conditions pertaining to activities to be funded under this award. The Negative Determination with conditions is as follows: the procurement, storage, transportation, and use of any equipment shall be done in an environmentally sound manner. The implementer will provide USAID with evidence that the recipient organization(s) followed all applicable environmental laws.

In the subsequent years the award will be covered by a new IEE.

5) As part of its initial Implementation Plan, and all Annual Implementation Plans thereafter, the Recipient, in collaboration with the USAID Cognizant Technical Officer and Mission Environmental Officer or Bureau Environmental Officer, as appropriate, shall review all ongoing and planned activities under this award to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.

6) If the Recipient plans any new activities outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, it shall prepare an amendment to the documentation for USAID review and approval. No such new activities shall be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments.

7) Any ongoing activities found to be outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation shall be halted until an amendment to the documentation is submitted and written approval is received from USAID.

SECTION B - SELECTION CRITERIA

The criteria presented below have been tailored to the requirements of this RFA. The Applicant should note that these criteria serve to identify the significant issues that Applicants should address in their applications, and to set standards against which all applications will be evaluated.

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria set forth below:

- Technical merits of the applications;
- Past performance of the applicant;
- Cost effectiveness and cost realism of the application.

I. TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Technical Approach

(60 points)

- A. Extent to which the applicant demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the issues and problems faced by Belarusian civil society. (15 points)
- B. Extent to which the proposed approach is well-conceived, clear, detailed, technically sound and ambitious, yet feasible in achieving all the objectives and special considerations identified in this RFA (40 points):
 - Extent to which the application sets forth three clear and justifiably sound sectors and priority issues under each sector, upon which objective 1 will focus (20 points);
 - Extent to which the approach to the small grants program in objective 2 is innovative and strategic (7 points);
 - Extent to which the development approach towards improving organizational capacity of media organizations and Belarusians' access to information is demonstrated (8 points);
 - Extent to which creative approaches towards civic education programs in Belarusian realities are identified (5 points).
- C. Clarity, appropriateness and soundness of the illustrative Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMEP). (5 points)

Project Team

(20 points)

- A. Extent to which the proposed Key Personnel convincingly demonstrate the qualifications to successfully implement the proposed program. (10 points)
- B. Extent to which the Applicant convincingly demonstrates an effective management approach and staffing plan to implement the proposed application and the range of interventions and activities included herein. (10 points)

Institutional Capacity**(10 points)**

- A. Demonstrated experience and capacity by the applicant and consortium members/ major subpartners (defined as receiving more than 15% of the total budget) in planning, managing and monitoring similar civil society programs;
- B. Demonstrated experience and capacity of the applicant in and effectively staffing a project and launching program activities in risky environments, similar to Belarus (i.e countries where media freedom and civil society organizations are restricted, such as Russia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Zimbabwe, Burma).

Past Performance**(10 points)**

- A. The applicant's past performance will be evaluated in accordance with ADS 303.3.6.3(a)(1) with particular emphasis on applicants' demonstrated ability to achieve results in similar projects, preferably in similar development contexts.

USAID reserves the right to obtain past performance information from other sources beyond those named in the application.

TOTAL (Technical Evaluation Criteria)**100 Points****II. COST EVALUATION**

Cost has not been assigned a score but will be evaluated for cost reasonableness, allocability, allowability, cost effectiveness and realism, adequacy of budget detail and financial feasibility and cost sharing. Cost sharing is not required for this award.

The technical merit of applications under this RFA is substantially more important than costs. However, cost effectiveness may become a determining factor in the final award(s) decision, especially between closely ranked applicants. The percentage of funds spent on programming versus administrative costs will be taken into consideration, i.e. the cost of staff salaries, equipment, and facilities vs. costs of field activities and interventions that directly impact the target beneficiaries.

An analysis of the proposed cost will be conducted to determine the validity and the extent to which it reflects performance addressed in the technical application. An assessment will be made of the applicant's capability to accomplish the objectives within the estimated cost proposed. The cost application will be used as an aid to determine the applicant's understanding of the technical requirements.

To facilitate review of Cost Applications, please use the Budget Format provided in the Annex B of this RFA. While it is not required, the Government requests that you use it when submitting the Cost Application required by this RFA.

SECTION C – PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY AND INDEPENDENT MEDIA IN BELARUS

I. PURPOSE

The **Strengthening Civil Society, Civic Engagement and Independent Media in Belarus Program** seeks to increase the number and effectiveness of citizens engaging in Belarus civil society¹ by strengthening formal and informal civic groups, as well as the capabilities of individuals, to address issues of public concern at both local and national levels, thereby strengthening the culture of civic participation and increasing the flow of, and access to, independent information. Given the often blurred line between civil society and political parties in Belarus, the program is strongly encouraged to coordinate with other donors and USAID programs in the Political Processes field. This program is not designed to address Political Processes or Election Observation activities and programs.

USAID will provide up to \$12 million, subject to availability of funds, for the five-year Strengthening Civil Society and Independent Media Project in Belarus.

II. DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

Strengthening Civil Society

Belarus' civil sector, still deemed the least sustainable among all countries included in the 2009 Non-Governmental Organization Sustainability Index (NGOSI) , is strictly controlled by the government; Article 193 imposes criminal liability for participation in a non-registered Civil Society Organization (CSO)²; and requirements to register all aid projects with the government³. Although the various sectors within civil society face differing levels of scrutiny or harassment, the environment is not friendly to civic activity – especially those related to human rights or the political environment. Nations In Transit's 2010 report considers Belarus a Consolidated Authoritarian Regime.⁴ Even though civil society activity is gradually focusing on engagement with the population to reform public attitudes and attract broader audiences, 58% percent of the general populace is skeptical about civic initiatives.⁵ But, in the face of these somewhat dire statistics, 65% of the population in a 2010 poll by the Eastern European Studies

¹ Civil Society is defined here by The London School of Economics' Centre for Civil Society as: the arena of uncoerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power.

² Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are defined in this paper as: organizations such as charities, development non-governmental organizations, community groups, women's organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, trade unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups.

³ 2009 NGO Sustainability Index.

⁴ Nations in Transit scores are based on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing the highest and 7 the lowest level of democratic progress. Within the scores, Freedom House describes the regime type based on the numerical score given. 1-2 represent a consolidated democracy where 6-7 represent a consolidated authoritarian regime. <http://www.freedomhouse.eu/images/nit2010/NIT-2010-Methodology.pdf>

⁵ Over the Hedge: Attitudes on Civil Society in Belarus and Lithuania. Eastern European Studies Centre.

Center expressed willingness to join a civil society initiative in the future. These seemingly contradictory statistics may be an indication that while most Belarusian are ambivalent about existing civic initiatives, they are open to considering joining a civic initiative in the future. It is yet unclear how events on December 19⁶ may have affected these statistics – whether people are now more or less willing to be involved in civic initiatives and how existing civil society organizations in each sector will proceed.

In the past, USAID-supported programs have engaged a community of civic organizations rooted in strong traditions of human rights and independent civic activism. Partners have been mobilizing citizens to advocate for change and reform, and have rallied citizens on a wide range of causes from free elections to legal support to civic education. The last several years have seen a continuing deterioration of conditions for CSOs. The community of civic activists has been diminished, large numbers of CSOs have reduced their formal activities, and many people have emigrated or moved to the commercial sector. A large number of organizations remain unregistered or otherwise operate without official status and legal address (leaving them vulnerable to punishment under the criminal code).

Years of operation in a hostile environment, limited freedom, increased intimidation and censorship have shrunk the third sector and blurred the line between political parties, civic movements, and CSOs. Third sector actors spend a great deal of energy and focus on fulfilling the official, legal requirements for registration simply to continue their existence. Due to limited resources, political parties were pushed to fight more vigorously for resources, which resulted in the creation of more quasi-civic groups and “pocket” CSOs whose activities are hard, if not impossible, to separate from actual civic CSOs.

Belarusian political actors are a part of the third sector – creating a blurred line between traditional civil society activities and activities carried out by political parties. These activities need to be differentiated. Civic organizations need to be responsive to the needs of the people, while still informing citizens of basic civic and human rights. The program aims to increase community-based civic engagement on issues of public concern.

The civil society sector continues to be represented by a limited group of actors that are often disconnected from the population. This deficit can be explained first and foremost by the operating environment; independent civic actors encounter harassment and Belarusian authorities engage in active efforts to prevent and suppress their activities – especially in the areas of human rights and freedom of information.

The challenging environment, however, cannot fully account for the sector’s weak standing. Civic organizations have not effectively engaged with the Belarusian population in order to respond to citizen concerns or increase citizen engagement in public life. In short, the civil society sector is not talking with citizens about their needs but is more reactive to donor priorities, operates mostly amongst themselves and is limited in organizational capacity

⁶ Although events on the night of December 19 still remain in question as to who initiated the attack on the government building, the government of Belarus reacted forcefully against those who gathered on the square to protest the results of the presidential elections. Hundreds were arrested – including 7 opposition candidates – during the post-election crackdown. 40 individuals were charged with “organizing or participating in a public order disturbance” which is punishable by up to 15 years in jail.

Civic Education and Civic Engagement

Due to the legacy of Communism where the populace expected the State to deliver social goods, and under the current rule of Lukashenka, the Belarusian populace has not developed a legacy of civic action, service (defined as activities performed by an individual or group for a common good), or civic responsibility. The State provided for one's needs – be it social, cultural, financial or medical and provided economic predictability – which has probably been the leading cause of popular support. Many analysts believe that the economy is weakening and will continue to suffer as negotiations over gas prices continue and foreign borrowing increases. The result may be a decrease in the State's ability to fulfill the role of the 'provider.'

Analysts are seeing inflation rates rising (World Bank data shows inflation in Belarus in 2006 at 7.0, 2007 at 8.4%, 2008 at 14.8% and 2009 at 12.9%), devaluation of the currency, continuation of high debt ratios,⁷ increasing price of gas from Russia and possible limits or withdrawal of subsidies from Russia – all of which could cause economic instability and civil unrest. Therefore, it is imperative to provide Belarusian citizens with the tools and skills necessary to function in a civic culture – a culture less dependent on the State and more dependent on the Belarusian people – as citizens are the true engine of change in any society.

In turn, there is a need to deepen the culture of civic participation in Belarus to promote the sense that service to one's community is a core part of Belarusian life. By deepening civic participation, citizens – in time - will create a civic culture that will help build strong communities by empowering citizens with the tools and skills needed to function as part of the society, but not be exclusively dependent on the State.

Independent Media

The three main media indices which measure media freedom consider Belarus to be a repressive state. The 2010 edition of the IREX *Media Sustainability Index* ranks Belarus' media environment as "Unsustainable, Anti-Free Press," with little substantive change recorded over the past ten years. *Reporters Sans Frontieres 2010 Freedom of the Press Worldwide Index* ranks the country at 154 out of 175 countries surveyed. *Freedom House's Nations in Transit* reported similar negative findings, but did note that anticipated censorship restrictions on normal internet use failed to materialize. Belarus' state-sponsored media have maintained their dominant position, which has limited growth in the variety of voices and opinions normally present in a vibrant society. A decision by the Ministry of Information in 2003 resulted in the suspension or closure of numerous newspapers throughout the country. Other non-state broadcast media were similarly forced to close, or substantially alter their approach to information programming. The multiple state television and radio channels are now the only nationwide news and information broadcast services, and directors of these enterprises are directly appointed by the President.

⁷ The World Bank data, Inflation and Consumer Prices
<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/FP.CPI.TOTL.ZG>

Different actions have stifled the growth of a more diverse media environment, including issuance of official warnings for minor infractions, revoking accreditation (which is a legal requirement to work as a journalist inside Belarus), instigating criminal or civil lawsuits for alleged libel offenses against government authorities or “Discrediting the Republic of Belarus,” and denying official registration for media, which effectively prevents their operation. Following the December 2010 presidential election, many non-state media offices were raided, equipment was confiscated, and journalists and their families were questioned by the state security services. Several online media were blocked by unknown sources, subjected to denial of service attacks, or had their users re-directed to duplicate websites with content that was not under the original website owner’s control. As of this writing, most in-country media practitioners believe they are under some form of surveillance.

Despite these difficult conditions, independent voices continue to survive – particularly through Belarus’ fast-growing use of digital technologies and local media. Through production of regionally significant content, alternative distribution systems, and increased use of online media, independent journalists and media operating inside Belarus are delivering information not available on state- media systems. The growth of online platforms, use of social media, locally-oriented newspapers, magazines and community-based newsletters are all working to increase the number and variety of sources of information available to Belarusian citizens.

III. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A. Program Objectives:

The **Strengthening Civil Society, Civic Engagement and Independent Media in Belarus Program** will focus on the following major objectives:

Objective 1 (35%): Strengthen formal and informal civic groups, movements and individuals in the selected⁸ priority sectors to increase capacity in order to advocate for change.

Objective 2 (25%): Increase the number of grassroots initiatives which create avenues for citizen involvement in addressing issues of concern at both local and national levels.

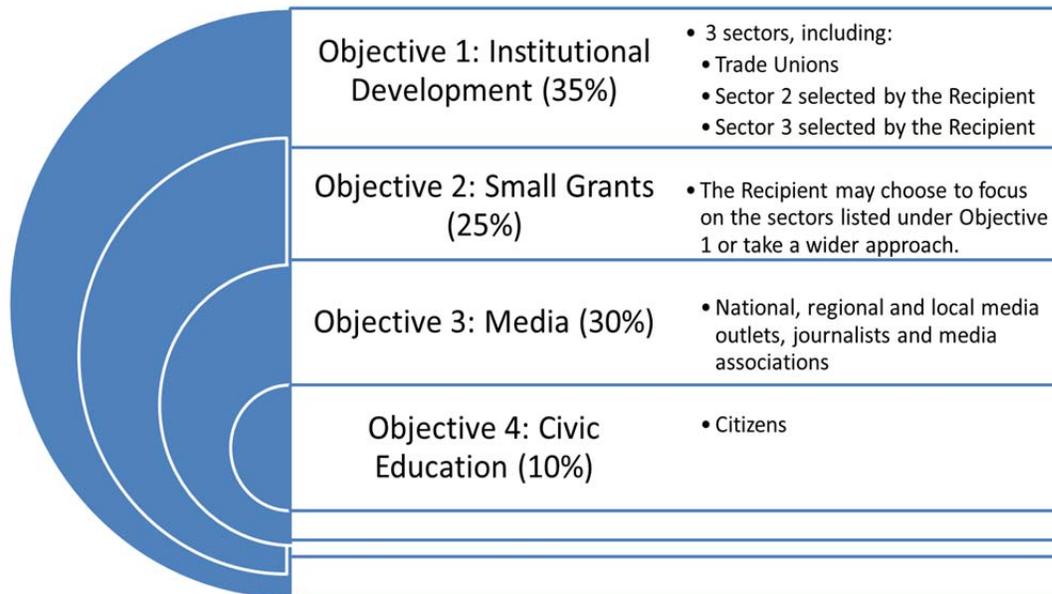
Objective 3 (30%): Increase the flow of and access to independent information for Belarusian citizens.

Objective 4 (10%): Nurture the culture of voluntary civic participation of Belarusian citizens through civic education.

Picture 1: Basic Structure of the Program

⁸ One selected priority sector is trade unions. Other two sectors will be determined by the Applicant.

Basic Structure of the Program



B. Special Operational Considerations Unique to the Belarus Program:

The Recipient is encouraged to seek innovative approaches to staffing and/or partnerships with other organizations, and explore new avenues for improving assistance to Belarusian partners, given the restrictive environment. The Recipient is expected to establish its project office in Kyiv, Ukraine, but implement activities as much as possible in Belarus. Despite the Recipient's office location in Kyiv, Ukraine, the Recipient will place high priority on activities conducted inside Belarus. Carrying out activities inside Belarus is necessary in order to reduce the gap between CSOs and the populace, and operating primarily outside the country results in programs that are disconnected from the reality. It is anticipated that the majority of program activities, including monitoring and evaluation and coaching sessions, take place inside Belarus. In lieu of classroom-like trainings, which should be used as a last resort, the Recipient shall develop a cadre of Russian or Belarusian speaking consultants/trainers/coaches who can enter Belarus and work consistently, on-site, hand-in hand with program beneficiaries to conduct in-country mentoring activities and/or coaching sessions to develop strategic plans with each group/individual that is action-oriented and demand-driven, deepening the culture of civic participation.

In Belarus, the Recipient shall strengthen civil society and media writ large by not merely working with existing established CSOs and media organizations. The program should seek to strengthen civil society, civic education initiatives and independent media through a wide array of program activities that shall include capacity building, training, technical assistance, and financial support. The project shall actively seek to work with new players – registered and unregistered NGOs, initiatives and individuals who have not been previously supported. The program shall take a broad-based geographic approach that prioritizes regional and village level actors while understanding that some emphasis with national level stakeholders is needed. The program will require creative in-country programming. The program should work with the third sector to deepen and expand membership in civil society organizations, broaden constituencies, and develop new programming areas that directly appeal to citizens' interests. Funding priorities should include areas of concern for much of the general population, such as environmental policy, health care and education. The media component should concentrate support for working journalists and media actors inside Belarus. The program should also work with civic activists working in community organizing. This may include small grass-roots and often unknown groups, some of which have never received any external funding.

The Recipient shall build the ability of civic actors to function within the arbitrary regulatory environment set by the Government of Belarus (GOB). Given Belarus' Article 193.1, which criminalizes unregistered activities, the new program should look to help Belarusian partners, where possible, work within the rules the GOB has set. In addition the Recipient shall prepare Belarusian partners in terms of USAID risk assessments, security training (specific to each program area) and alternative programming scenarios. Security should be a priority in each program area and each program area should incorporate a specific security plan based on the nature of realized or perceived security threats.

C. Expected Results and Activities:

This program is not intended to be simply a pass-through/re-granting mechanism. USAID envisions that a major portion of the award will be used toward institutional support activities and 25 percent of funding will be set aside for small grants to build upon the work of the former. Given the realities on the ground, the **Strengthening Civil Society, Civic Engagement and Independent Media in Belarus Program** will seek to strengthen civil society in Belarus through a wide array of program activities that engage citizens in civic life. It will work with CSOs, civic movements, civically active youth and motivated individuals to increase meaningful civic participation, with an emphasis on strengthening ties between CSOs and citizens. The program will focus on the following four objectives, but will also allow flexibility to capitalize on unanticipated windows of opportunity as they arrive.

Objective 1 (35%): *Strengthen formal and informal civic groups, movements and individuals (such as NGOs, think tanks, independent labor unions, etc.) in three priority sectors to increase capacity in order to advocate for change.*

Activities under this objective are aimed at strengthening institutional capacities of the civil society actors and individuals to help them develop and grow into stronger, more trusted, influential and effective institutions. Previously, USAID's Civil Society/Media program worked with a variety of civil society and media actors and organizations in numerous sectors and regions. In order to obtain sustainable results, USAID seeks to move away from this broad approach and develop expertise in specific sectors within civil society, civic education, and media that address unmet citizen demands. The **Strengthening Civil Society, Civic Engagement and Independent Media in Belarus Program** aims to strengthen civil society and increase the flow of and access to independent information in Belarus by identifying and working in the selected areas.

A. Activities:

The program shall at a minimum engage in the activities discussed below; additional innovative, transparent, and participatory activities are desired.

Demand-driven, hand-in-hand, consistent, in-country coaching, consulting, mentoring, and peer support, via a cadre of Belarusian/Russian speaking consultants for civil society on topics such as:

- Financial management;
 - Strategic planning;
 - Constituency building;
 - Networking;
 - Advocacy;
 - Legal and regulatory environment;
 - Fund-raising;
 - Engagement with local government;
-
- Cross border exchanges in order to increase contact with open societies per the USG's assistance priority in Belarus;
 - Forums/workshops conducted largely in country on salient civil society issues that bring political, civic, local government, and/or youth leaders together in a dialogue in order to create a base for improvements in the legislative environment in the long term;
 - Analytical research articles and workshops for civil society to more effectively inform constituents and broader audiences on topics of concern;
 - Scenario-based security training based on lessons learned;
 - Public opinion polling.

B. Sectors:

Interventions are expected to support three sectors, independent trade unions plus two additional sectors proposed by the Recipient (excluding media, which will be addressed under Objective 3).

****During the Application process, Applicants will propose the two additional sectors. After award, the Agreement Officer's Technical Representative (AOTR) will provide final approval for the selected sectors through the Work Plan approval. The Applicant can provide its definition of 'the sector.' For example, sectors may be chosen based on a type of organization (such as professional associations, think tanks, social service NGOs etc.) or on a set of issues (such as legal enabling environment or the like). The proposal should also identify a maximum of 3 issue areas per each sector. For example, under the illustrative sectors listed above, issue areas could include: policy analysis, education, youth, disabilities, gender, health, etc. Each sector and issue area should be accompanied with a justification that explains the sector and issue area's importance to achieve the stated objective. Such an approach should be woven into all capacity-building and network development activities. Proposed targeted sectors, issue areas and accompanying rationales will be formally evaluated as part of USAID's competitive technical evaluation process.

Applicants should consider the following criteria when making a choice of sectors and issue areas:

- Potential to serve as a catalyst of change in the long term;
- Ability to make a meaningful impact over the duration of the program;
- Demonstrated unmet constituent need and demand for services;
- Ability to address the needs of the target constituency;
- Potential for internal professional growth within the sector;
- Potential to attract citizens from outside the traditional civil society circle;
- Potential to leverage past work in the sector or issue areas;
- Potential for nationwide scale-up and networking;
- Ability to integrate gender and anti-corruption mandatory factors.

C. Results:

- Institutional capacity of CSOs is strengthened;
- Population shows increased level of trust of the CSO sector;
- CSOs and civic movements are increasingly informed by emergent think tanks' political, social and economic research;
- Increased knowledge, awareness and usage of security measures of CSOs⁹.

D. Indicators:

- Number of CSOs using USG assistance to improve internal organizational capacity (per year);
- Number of USG assisted CSOs that engage in advocacy and watchdog functions (per year).

⁹ Security herein is referred to all measures that minimize information and physical security risks for individuals, groups and organizations. These include security of electronic data and print materials. Computer security, individual, organizational and office security and minimization of damage in case of seizure of equipment, detentions, arrests of the group members.

Objective 2 (25%): *Increase the number of grassroots initiatives which create avenues for citizen involvement in addressing issues of concern at both local and national levels.*

In order to provide institutional support for the development of local organizations, and increase professionalism and outreach, the Recipient will implement a small grants program. ****The Recipient may choose to focus on a number of sectors [ie. the sectors chosen for objective one] or take a wider approach.* The program should be open (but not limited) to supporting registered NGOs, informal initiative groups, and emerging new groups/leaders which propose to work across a range of issues. Support for media-related activities is envisaged under objective three and therefore should not be included into this small grants program.

The small grants program should promote well-informed citizen participation in community-based civic initiatives with the ultimate aim of revitalizing civil society as a sector capable of actively, effectively operating within Belarusian society, and as part of larger regional and international communities. The grants should emphasize outreach to new audiences¹⁰, organizational strengthening, constituency-building, and advocacy initiatives, as well as developing groups' abilities to build resources and develop and implement programming responsibly and effectively. Funding amounts for small grants should range between \$3,000-\$20,000. The Recipient should provide oversight and, wherever possible, technical support throughout the grants-making process.

Results:

- Civil society organizations are more responsive and connected to social needs;
- Civil society organizations increase engagement in civic and community organizing initiatives;
- Increased participation of populace in civic activities.

Indicators:

- Number of CSO advocacy campaigns supported by USG (per year);
- Number of new members attracted to join CSOs;
- Increased level of trust/support for CSO activities among the population;
- Number of local issues brought to the attention of/solved by local authorities;

Objective 3 (30%): *Increase the flow of and access to independent information for Belarusian citizens.*

The overall strategy under this objective is to support development of the existing and emerging media outlets, not merely to cover their operational expenses. Therefore, the program should contain both institutional development and grant components, as well as closely monitor the development progress with each partner. Activities under this objective will be aimed at development of the media outlets as current/perspective business units, production of unique content and analysis, conducting and applying audience research, as well as increasing audience media literacy. It is strongly encouraged to weave

¹⁰ Herein ordinary people, mainstream population beyond a group of individuals and organizations who were previously supported through a variety of development programs.

internal and external coordination between donors, media outlets and associations into the design of this component.

A. Activities:

The program shall at a minimum engage in the activities discussed below; additional innovative, transparent, and participatory activities are desired.

- Demand-driven, hand-in-hand, consistent, in-country coaching, consulting, mentoring, and peer support, via a cadre of Belarusian/Russian speaking consultants, for local and regional media outlets, journalists, and media associations on topics such as, but not limited to:
 - Capacity development of multimedia, topic-specific journalism skills (e.g., health, financial, education, legal reporting);
 - Editorial techniques and shared best practices;
 - Business, financial and operations management;
 - Online news, data visualization and other multimedia applications;
 - Social media integration;
 - Advocacy networking, coalition building and links to international media support organizations;
 - Legal support and security training for journalists and other media practitioners;
- Cross border exchanges to increase awareness of how media and civil society works in other countries;
- Support to regionally based media platforms;
- Support for media to cover local, regional and national civic initiatives;
- Regional media workshops and event coverage.

B. Results:

- Increased capacity of local, regional and national media to deliver fact-based, objective news and information, including the development of alternative distribution systems;
- Increased access by citizens to fact-based, objective information;
- Increased use of social network tools by the online media as well as sites of traditional media outlets;
- Increased use of independent online media by Belarusian citizens;
- Increased usage of analytical research from independent think tanks;
- Increased use of third party research services, which may include, but are not limited to: web metrics, focus groups and statistically valid, quantitative audience surveys.

C. Indicators:

- Increase in the audience regularly accessing non-state media for news information
- Percentage of articles per publication by targeted print and internet outlets that meet professional journalism quality standards
- Number of non-state news outlets assisted by USG
- Number of journalists trained with USG assistance (per year).

Objective 4 (10%): *Nurture the culture of voluntary civic participation of Belarusian citizens through civic education.*

Activities under this objective should help citizens tackle their issues and problems, enhance Belarusians' understanding of the value of coordinated citizen action in a democratic society, as well as improve public perception and support for individual initiatives and NGO work as a whole. The activities should strive to engage Belarusians of all age groups.

A. Activities:

The program shall at a minimum engage in the activities discussed below; additional innovative, transparent, and participatory activities are desired.

- Public awareness campaigns;
- Analytical research on effects of civil society services;
- Curriculum development for civic education (out of classroom);
- Conducting civic education programs.

B. Results:

- Increased understanding of civic participation in a Belarusian context;
- Increased understanding of the importance of being involved in civic life;
- Increased awareness of the role, work and value of non-governmental entities;
- Increased trust in CSOs and fellow citizens.

C. Indicators:

- Number of people who have completed USG assisted civic education programs (per year)

D. Mandatory Factors

Gender: Although women in Belarus have risen to high ranks within the government and civil society, women are still underrepresented in decision-making positions both at the local and national levels. Thus, the program will place a considerable focus on the integration of gender considerations throughout the program, ensuring that men and women both benefit from USAID's support and that gender awareness is a built-in component of the program activities. USAID policy requires that gender issues be addressed as appropriate in all USAID-funded activities.

The Recipient shall make a special effort to increase the number of women and women-oriented groups in targeted trainings. In order to increase women's voice in civic life, the implementer should strive for an equal balance of gender participation in all proposed program activities.

The monitoring and performance management system of this program will acknowledge the impact of gender relations on program results and the influence of program activities on gender relations. The social impact of this program will be assessed through appropriate performance indicators. The PMEP must include gender-sensitive indicators and data disaggregated by sex.

Anti-Corruption: USAID's Anti-Corruption Strategy, dated June 2005, charges Missions with incorporating anti-corruption goals into all programs. USAID's Kyiv Regional Mission reflects this mandate in its Mission Order 201 on Project Design.

An effective, well-functioning civil society (political parties, CSOs, independent media) help hold governmental and non-governmental actors accountable. While the proposed program is not designed to address specific anti-corruption issues in Belarus, it should include a focus on increasing the transparency of civil society organizations, and encourage them to hold government more accountable.

Public-Private Partnerships: Where possible, the implementing partner can identify and incorporate potential public-private partnerships into its application.

IV. PROGRAM REPORTING

The Recipient will provide the following reports to USAID Agreement Officer's Technical Representative (AOTR) and the Agreement Officer, as specified below, in accordance with 22 CFR 226.51 and 226.52 and Substantial Involvement Provisions.

a. Initial Implementation Plan

Within 60 days of the signing of Cooperative Agreement, the Recipient will present an annual implementation plan to the USAID AOTR for review and approval (two hard copies and an electronic copy). The AOTR must provide written comments on the draft plan within 30 days after receipt of the draft and when the plan is finalized, the AOTR will provide written approval.

The implementation plan should include a list of the tasks to be completed during the year, grouped under the objective that they seek to support. For each task, the awardee shall:

1) explain in brief its connection to the objective; 2) define the necessary steps to complete the tasks; 3) assign responsibilities for completing those tasks; 4) provide any quantitative or qualitative targets (e.g. number of grants to be awarded, number of CSOs or journalists to be trained); and 5) a timeline for the implementation of the task. The plan should indicate the legal/regulatory issues that the awardee will target for that year.

b. Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The Initial Implementation Plan must include the recipient's proposed **Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMEP)**, which must establish specific impact indicators, targets, progress benchmarks for the life of the award, and the date by which all baseline data will be established. All people-level indicators must be dis-aggregated by sex.

Sixty (60) days after the award is made, the recipient will submit the Final PMEP to USAID together with the Annual Work Plan. The recipient and USAID will agree upon the final choice of performance indicators useful for timely management decisions and credibly reflecting the actual performance of the program. The recipient should explain how the PMEP will be implemented. PMEP data should meet reasonable quality criteria of validity, reliability, timeliness, precision and integrity, and disaggregated by gender whenever possible. In designing the PMEP, the recipient should also weigh human and financial resources necessary to implement it.

The PMEP is subject to final approval by USAID and is separate from the regular financial and other reports required by the standard contract provisions.

USAID reserves the right to propose to the recipient to integrate a number of indicators into the PMEP to help USAID measure the immediate program results. In addition to indicators designed to measure the program, the PMEP should include standard indicators from the Foreign Assistance Framework (FAF), Objective Governing Justly and Democratically (GJD – 2), Program Area Civil Society (2.4), Program Element Civic Participation (2.4.1), Program Element Media Freedom and Freedom of Information (2.4.2). The recipient shall set up annual targets, collect actual data and report on the following FAF standard indicators based on fiscal year calendar:

- Number of civil society organizations using USG assistance to improve internal organizational capacity.
- Number of CSO advocacy campaigns supported by USG.
- Number of positive modifications to enabling legislation/regulation for civil society accomplished with USG assistance.
- Number of people who have completed USG assisted civic education programs.
- Number of participants in USG-funded programs supporting participation and inclusion of traditionally marginalized ethnic minority and/or religious minority groups.
- Number of independent and democratic trade/labor unions supported by USG to promote international core labor standards.

- Number of USG assisted civil society organizations that engage in advocacy and watchdog functions.
- Number of policies that have been influenced by CSOs.
- Number of media outlets that received USG supported training to promote financial sustainability.
- Number of positive modifications to enabling legislation/regulations for media drafted with USG assistance.
- Number of non-state news outlets assisted by USG.
- Number of journalists trained with USG assistance.
- Number of media civil society organizations and/or support institutions assisted by USG.
- Number of people who received internet access as a result of USG funded programs.

All information collected for the PMEP shall be compiled and submitted to USAID with the annual and final reports. Annual reports shall be due by the end of the fiscal year – by September 30 of each year. Additionally, the progress in meeting the expected program results will be monitored through Implementation Plans, covered below in Section IV d.

c. Mid-term Evaluation

At the mid-point of this activity, USAID will organize and carry out an independent evaluation of this program. The evaluation may be formative, summative, or impact-based. It is expected that the implementing partner(s) will cooperate fully with USAID and the evaluation team to ensure that the evaluation accurately reflects program processes, results, outcomes, and/or impacts.

d. Annual Implementation Plans

Annual implementation plans for subsequent years are due to the AOTR 60 days before the end of the preceding award year (two hard copies and an electronic copy). Annual implementation plans should include all the sections as the initial implementation plan discussed above. In addition, the subsequent annual work plans shall review the activities of the year that is ending, the activities that were implemented, the results achieved, and problems that existed and how they were resolved. These subsequent annual plans shall propose program adjustments to reflect any lessons learned. As with the first annual plan, the AOTR will review the plan and provide comments and recommendations for changes no later than 30 days after receipt of the draft. The recipient shall incorporate AOTR comments and recommendations into the final version of Implementation Plan and submit two hard copies and an electronic copy for AOTR written approval within 15 days. In addition, all substantial changes in work plan require prior written approval of the AOTR.

e. Monthly Activity Schedule

USAID also expects the awardee to submit (electronically) to the AOTR by the 25th calendar day of each month, a calendar of planned events for the upcoming month. USAID will use the monthly calendar to plan site visits in a timely manner.

f. Quarterly Financial Reports

Pursuant to 22 CFR 226.52, USAID intends to require quarterly financial reporting [unless the conditions described in 22 CFR 226.52(iv) exist]. The financial reporting forms to be used by the recipient will be specified in the award.

In addition, fifteen days prior to the end of each quarter, the recipient shall submit accruals information to the AOTR, in accordance with 22 CFR 226.52(a)(1)(ii). Accruals information shall consist of current status of the expenditures and accrued amounts from the inception of the award through the end of the upcoming Quarter or the award end date and shall be submitted in the following format:

Name of Recipient: _____

Award Number: _____

Total Obligated Amount: _____

Total Estimated Cost of the Award: _____

A. Total Cumulative Amount Disbursed by USAID to date: _____

B. Total Estimated Expenses as of end of the Quarter: _____

g. Semi-annual Performance Reports

Pursuant to 22 CFR 226.51, the Recipient shall submit semi-annual performance reports (two hard copies and an electronic copy) to the AOTR. These reports must summarize the outcomes of the Recipient's activities during the particular reporting period, document any program accomplishments or progress towards results during the reporting period, compare those results to the planned tasks in the Implementation Plan and Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, and discuss any potential constraints that might prevent the Recipient from meeting agreed upon targets and benchmarks. Reports should also contain, as an attachment, a list of all subgrants issued under the award during the reporting period. The list should contain the name and contact information for each subgrantee, the title and duration of the program, the amount of the award, and a brief description of the program.

The second semi-annual report of each award year will provide USAID *annual* data on the agreed upon performance indicators as well as any additional qualitative results information the awardee would like to include to demonstrate the results achieved vis-à-vis the program's objectives during that particular reporting period. The second semi-annual reports shall be due by the end of the fiscal year – by September 30 of each year.

The reports may be submitted by email and shall contain the following information at a minimum:

a) A brief description of the political context and/or enabling environment of the country in which program activities are implemented. This section may include significant political developments and/or relevant events reported in the press or by local informants which affect the overall implementation environment. This section is important for establishing the overall environment for implementation and is useful for considering how changes in the environment that may affect program implementation.

- b) An analytical description of overall program progress toward results that reflects and synthesizes achievements of all partners. This should not be a description of activities from each partner, but rather a broader analysis that examines the progress of all partners in the context of program objectives and expected results.
- c) Data on all indicators established in the Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. Data should be disaggregated by gender and other historically disenfranchised populations where relevant.
- d) A comparison of accomplishments to the goals and objectives established for the period.
- e) Problems encountered, reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate, and how challenges or problems will be overcome during the next reporting period.
- f) A comparison of actual expenditures with budget estimates, including analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs, and any other pertinent information.
- g) Priorities for programming during the next reporting period.

h. Final Report

Pursuant to 22 CFR 226.51(b), a final performance report (two hard copies and one electronic) will be required under this award. USAID will review and comment within 30 days of receipt. The final performance report will:

- Contain an overall description of the activities under the Program during the period of this Cooperative Agreement, and the significance of these activities;
- Describe the methods of assistance used and the pros and cons of these methods;
- Present life-of-program results towards achieving the program objectives and the performance indicators, as well as an analysis of how the indicators illustrate the program's impact on the development of civil society in Belarus;
- Summarize the program's accomplishments related to the strengthening the development of civil society in Belarus, as well as any unmet targets and the reasons for them;
- Elaborate the issues and problems that emerged during program implementation and the lessons learned in dealing with them; and
- Provide comments and recommendations regarding unfinished work and/or future needs and directions for further strengthen civil society and independent media in Belarus as well as recommendations for what issues no longer require donor assistance.

V. KEY PERSONNEL

Key personnel are those considered to be essential to the work being performed under this cooperative agreement. Key personnel and changes to key personnel are subject to approval by the USAID AOTR prior to their employment under this award. USAID has determined that two non-rotating, permanent key personnel positions are required for this award:

- Chief of Party
- Deputy Chief of Party

At least one of the key personnel should be Belarusian nationals or persons from the Newly Independent States.

Chief of Party (COP)

The COP must have outstanding English and Russian/Belarusian communication skills – both written and oral – and proven experience in facilitating dialogue among various stakeholders in a developing or transition country context; 10-15 years of relevant experience in civil society development and project management. Prior experience in organizational capacity building, preferably in Eastern Europe or the Former Soviet Union, and 5 years of experience as a senior project manager or Chief of Party for civil society or media development field. The COP must possess the ability to establish strong working relationships with different stakeholders, including Belarusian leaders and groups of different generations and international donors. The COP should have substantial technical experience in one, or more, component areas of this project. A graduate level education in a relevant discipline is required.

Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP)

The Deputy Chief of Party must have at least 7 years of relevant experience in civil society and/or media development and project management. The Deputy COP must have sound knowledge of the Belarusian environment and stakeholders. Prior experience in CIS, and/or other Eastern Europe/Former Soviet Union countries as well as close to native proficiency in English and Belarusian/Russian are required. Graduate level degree is desired.

VI. SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT

USAID considers collaboration with the awardee crucial for the successful implementation of this program. The proposed award implies a level of “substantial involvement” by USAID through the Agreement Officer’s Technical Representative (AOTR). The intended purpose of the AOTR’s involvement during the award is to assist the recipient in achieving the supported objectives of the agreement.

Substantial involvement under the proposed award shall include the following:

- Review, approval, as well as extension on submission of the Recipient’s Initial Implementation Plan, Annual Implementation Plans (Work Plans), including the Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMEP). Any significant changes to the approved Implementation plan or the PMEP will require additional approval of the AOTR.
- Review and approval of Semi-Annual Performance Reports;
- Review and approval of key personnel and any changes by the AOTR; and
- Subawards: Approval of all proposed sub awards and sub grants including extensions prior to award, as well as:

- (i) Participation in preparation of solicitation documents including the topics, program descriptions, match requirements, selection criteria and funding levels for applications; and
- (ii) Participation on technical review panels for all sub-grants and sub-contracts, and selection of the final list of applications accepted for funding.

SECTION D - CERTIFICATIONS, ASSURANCES OF APPLICANTS

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CERTIFICATIONS, ASSURANCES, AND OTHER STATEMENTS OF APPLICANTS [1][2]

[To be submitted as part of an Applicant's cost proposal. To be signed by an authorized agent of the applicant at the end of this Section D.]

PART I - CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

1. ASSURANCE OF COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING NON-DISCRIMINATION IN FEDERALLY ASSISTED PROGRAMS

(a) The recipient hereby assures that no person in the United States shall, on the bases set forth below, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under, any program or activity receiving financial assistance from USAID, and that with respect to the grant for which application is being made, it will comply with the requirements of:

(1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Pub. L. 88-352, 42 U.S.C. 2000-d), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin, in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance;

(2) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance;

(3) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (Pub. L. 95-478), which prohibits discrimination based on age in the delivery of services and benefits supported with Federal funds;

(4) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681, et seq.), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance (whether or not the programs or activities are offered or sponsored by an educational institution); and

(5) USAID regulations implementing the above nondiscrimination laws, set forth in Chapter II of Title 22 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) If the recipient is an institution of higher education, the Assurances given herein extend to admission practices and to all other practices relating to the treatment of students or clients of the institution, or relating to the opportunity to participate in the provision of services or other benefits to such individuals, and shall be applicable to the entire institution unless the recipient establishes to the satisfaction of the USAID Administrator that the institution's practices in designated parts or

programs of the institution will in no way affect its practices in the program of the institution for which financial assistance is sought, or the beneficiaries of, or participants in, such programs.

(c) This assurance is given in consideration of and for the purpose of obtaining any and all Federal grants, loans, contracts, property, discounts, or other Federal financial assistance extended after the date hereof to the recipient by the Agency, including installment payments after such date on account of applications for Federal financial assistance which were approved before such date. The recipient recognizes and agrees that such Federal financial assistance will be extended in reliance on the representations and agreements made in this Assurance, and that the United States shall have the right to seek judicial enforcement of this Assurance. This Assurance is binding on the recipient, its successors, transferees, and assignees, and the person or persons whose signatures appear below are authorized to sign this Assurance on behalf of the recipient.

2. CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, United States Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that: If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee

of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

3. KEY INDIVIDUAL CERTIFICATION NARCOTICS OFFENSES AND DRUG TRAFFICKING

I hereby certify that within the last ten years:

1. I have not been convicted of a violation of, or a conspiracy to violate, any law or regulation of the United States or any other country concerning narcotic or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances.
2. I am not and have not been an illicit trafficker in any such drug or controlled substance.
3. I am not and have not been a knowing assistor, abettor, conspirator, or colluder with others in the illicit trafficking in any such drug or substance.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Title/Position: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

NOTICE:

1. You are required to sign this Certification under the provisions of 22 CFR Part 140, Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers. These regulations were issued by the Department of State and require that certain key individuals of organizations must sign this Certification.

2. If you make a false Certification you are subject to U.S. criminal prosecution under 18 U.S.C. 1001.

4. CERTIFICATION REGARDING TERRORIST FINANCING

By signing and submitting this application, the prospective recipient provides the certification set out below:

1. The Recipient, to the best of its current knowledge, did not provide, within the previous ten years, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it does not and will not knowingly provide, material support or resources to any individual or entity that commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated, or participated in terrorist acts, as that term is defined in paragraph 3.

2. The following steps may enable the Recipient to comply with its obligations under paragraph 1:

a. Before providing any material support or resources to an individual or entity, the Recipient will verify that the individual or entity does not (i) appear on the master list of Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons, which list is maintained by the U.S. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) and is available online at OFAC's website: <http://www.treas.gov/offices/eotffc/ofac/sdn/t11sdn.pdf>, or (ii) is not included in any supplementary information concerning prohibited individuals or entities that may be provided by USAID to the Recipient.

b. Before providing any material support or resources to an individual or entity, the Recipient also will verify that the individual or entity has not been designated by the United Nations Security (UNSC) sanctions committee established under UNSC Resolution 1267 (1999) (the "1267 Committee") [individuals and entities linked to the Taliban, Usama bin Laden, or the Al Qaida Organization]. To determine whether there has been a published designation of an individual or entity by the 1267 Committee, the Recipient should refer to the consolidated list available online at the Committee's website: <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/1267/1267ListEng.htm>.

c. Before providing any material support or resources to an individual or entity, the Recipient will consider all information about that individual or entity of which it is aware and all public information that is reasonably available to it or of which it should be aware.

d. The Recipient also will implement reasonable monitoring and oversight procedures to safeguard against assistance being diverted to support terrorist activity.

3. For purposes of this Certification-

a. "Material support and resources" means currency or monetary instruments or financial securities, financial services, lodging, training, expert advice or assistance, safehouses, false documentation or identification, communications equipment, facilities, weapons, lethal substances, explosives, personnel, transportation, and other physical assets, except medicine or religious materials."

b. "Terrorist act" means-

(i) an act prohibited pursuant to one of the 12 United Nations Conventions and Protocols related to terrorism (see UN terrorism conventions Internet site: <http://untreaty.un.org/English/Terrorism.asp>); or

(ii) an act of premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents; or

(iii) any other act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or to any other person not taking an active part in hostilities in a situation of armed conflict, when the purpose of such act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act.

c. "Entity" means a partnership, association, corporation, or other organization, group or subgroup.

d. References in this Certification to the provision of material support and resources shall not be deemed to include the furnishing of USAID funds or USAID-financed commodities to the ultimate beneficiaries of USAID assistance, such as recipients of food, medical care, micro-enterprise loans, shelter, etc., unless the Recipient has reason to believe that one or more of these beneficiaries commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated or participated in terrorist acts.

e. The Recipient's obligations under paragraph 1 are not applicable to the procurement of goods and/or services by the Recipient that are acquired in the ordinary course of business through contract or purchase, e.g., utilities, rents, office supplies, gasoline, etc., unless the Recipient has reason to believe that a vendor or supplier of such goods and services commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated or participated in terrorist acts.

This Certification is an express term and condition of any agreement issued as a result of this application, and any violation of it shall be grounds for unilateral termination of the agreement by USAID prior to the end of its term.

Signed: _____

Name and Title: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Date: _____

5. SURVEY ON ENSURING EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR APPLICANTS

<http://www.usaid.gov/forms/surveyeo.doc> contains a survey on ensuring equal opportunity for applicants. The applicant's completion of the survey is voluntary. The absence of a completed survey in an application may not be a basis upon which the application is determined incomplete or non-responsive. Applicants who volunteer to complete and submit the survey under a competitive or non-competitive action are instructed within the text of the survey to submit it as part of the application process; applicants who chose to submit the survey shall include it in the technical application in the "annexes" section.

PART II - OTHER STATEMENTS OF RECIPIENT**1. AUTHORIZED INDIVIDUALS**

The recipient represents that the following persons are authorized to negotiate on its behalf with the Government and to bind the recipient in connection with this application or grant:

Name	Title	Telephone No.	Facsimile No.	Email Address
<hr/>				
<hr/>				
<hr/>				

2. TAXPAYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (TIN)

If the recipient is a U.S. organization, or a foreign organization which has income effectively connected with the conduct of activities in the U.S. or has an office or a place of business or a fiscal paying agent in the U.S., please indicate the recipient's TIN:

TIN: _____

3. CONTRACTOR IDENTIFICATION NUMBER - DATA UNIVERSAL NUMBERING SYSTEM (DUNS) NUMBER

(a) In the space provided at the end of this provision, the recipient should supply the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number applicable to that name and address. Recipients should take care to report the the number that identifies the recipient's name and address exactly as stated in the proposal.

(b) The DUNS is a 9-digit number assigned by Dun and Bradstreet Information Services. If the recipient does not have a DUNS number, the recipient should call Dun and Bradstreet directly at 1-800-333-0505. A DUNS number will be provided immediately by telephone at no charge to the recipient. The recipient should be prepared to provide the following information:

- (1) Recipient's name.
- (2) Recipient's address.
- (3) Recipient's telephone number.
- (4) Line of business.
- (5) Chief executive officer/key manager.
- (6) Date the organization was started.
- (7) Number of people employed by the recipient.
- (8) Company affiliation.

(c) Recipients located outside the United States may obtain the location and phone number of the local Dun and Bradstreet Information Services office from the Internet Home Page at <http://www.dbisna.com/dbis/customer/custlist.htm>. If an offeror is unable to locate a local service center, it may send an e-mail to Dun and Bradstreet at globalinfo@dbisma.com.

The DUNS system is distinct from the Federal Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) system.

DUNS: _____

4. LETTER OF CREDIT (LOC) NUMBER

If the recipient has an existing Letter of Credit (LOC) with USAID or another US federal agency, please indicate the LOC number:

LOC: _____

5. PROCUREMENT INFORMATION

(a) **Applicability.** This applies to the procurement of goods and services planned by the recipient (i.e., contracts, purchase orders, etc.) from a supplier of goods or services for the direct use or benefit of the recipient in conducting the program supported by the grant, and not to assistance provided by the recipient (i.e., a subgrant or subagreement) to a subgrantee's sub Recipient or subrecipient in support of the subgrantee's sub Recipient's or subrecipient's program. Provision by the recipient of the requested information does not, in and of itself, constitute USAID approval.

(b) **Amount of Procurement.** Please indicate the total estimated dollar amount of goods and services which the recipient plans to purchase under the grant

\$ _____

(c) **Nonexpendable Property.** If the recipient plans to purchase nonexpendable equipment which would require the approval of the Agreement Officer, please indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types, quantities of each, and estimated unit costs. [Note that the authorized geographic code under the resulting award will be 000:]

Nonexpendable equipment for which the Agreement Officer's approval to purchase is required is any article of nonexpendable tangible personal property charged directly to the grant, having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION(Generic)	QUANTITY	ESTIMATED UNIT COST
---------------------------	----------	---------------------

6. TYPE OF ORGANIZATION

The recipient, by checking the applicable box, represents that -

(a) If the recipient is a U.S. entity, it operates as a corporation incorporated under the laws of the State of _____, an individual, a partnership, a nongovernmental nonprofit organization, a state or local governmental organization, a private college or university, a public college or university, an international organization, or a joint venture; or

- a. If the recipient is a non-U.S. entity, it operates as a corporation organized under the laws of _____ (country), an individual, a partnership, a nongovernmental nonprofit organization, a nongovernmental educational institution, a governmental organization, an international organization, or a joint venture.

7. CERTIFICATION OF RECIPIENT

The recipient certifies that it has reviewed and is familiar with the proposed cooperative agreement format and the regulations applicable thereto, and that it agrees to comply with all such regulations.

Solicitation (RFA) No. _____

Application/Proposal No. _____

Date of Application/Proposal _____

Name of Recipient _____

Typed Name and Title _____

Signature _____ Date _____

SECTION E – ANNEXES

ANNEX A

LIST OF ANALYTICAL RESOURCES

Links to the following documents are provided to prospective applicants as reference only. None of the information contained in these documents should be viewed as an official endorsement of a particular approach or strategy in responding to this RFA.

2009 Non-Governmental Organization Sustainability Index (NGOSI)

http://www.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/dem_gov/ngoindex/2009/complete_document.pdf

Article 193-1 of the Criminal Code of Belarus

<http://www.belhelcom.org/en/node/13068>

Nations In Transit's 2010 report

<http://www.freedomhouse.eu/images/Reports/NIT-2010-Belarus-final.pdf>

Over the Hedge: Attitudes on Civil Society in Belarus and Lithuania Eastern European Studies Centre

<http://www.eesc.lt/en/Activities/publications>

The World Bank data

<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/FP.CPI.TOTL.ZG>

2010 edition of the IREX Media Sustainability

http://www.irex.org/system/files/Europe%20MSI%202010_Full%20Version.pdf

Reporters Sans Frontieres 2010 Freedom of the Press Worldwide Index

<http://en.rsf.org/press-freedom-index-2010,1034.html>

ANNEX B**BUDGET FORMAT**

	<u>Yr.1</u>	<u>Yr.2</u>	<u>Yr.3</u>	<u>Yr.4</u>	<u>Yr.5</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>LABOR</u>						
US						
CCNs/TCNs						
Consultants						
TOTAL LABOR:						
Fringe Benefits						
<u>TRAVEL</u>						
International						
In-Country						
TOTAL TRAVEL:						
<u>OTHER DIRECT COSTS</u>						
Program Related Costs (ex. Activities described in the PD including Capacity Building; Institutional Strengthening, Trainings; Cross Border Exchanges, Public Opinion Polling, Project Workshops, etc.)						
Subawards to Belarusian CSOs, Movements and Individuals						
Office Expenses (including equipment)						
Other costs						
TOTAL OTHER DIRECT COST:						
Indirect Costs:						
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:						

ANNEX C

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE FACESHEET – (ATTACHED, 2008-BYE-002)

[End of Request for Applications]



ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE FACESHEET & REQUEST FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

Program Objective/Area: Governing Justly and Democratically/Civil Society
Program Element: Civic Participation & Media Freedom and Freedom of Information
Title of Activity: Organizational Development Support (ODS) in Belarus
Country/Region: Belarus/E&E
Funding Period: 9/2008 – 9/2013 **Resource Levels/Amount(s):** \$ 7,030,000
Life of Project: 9/2005 – 9/2013 **Life of Project Funding:** \$10,000,000
Statement Prepared by: Yana Zhambekova, ODG
 July 2, 2008

IEE Amendment? Yes No **DCN of Original IEE:**

Environmental Media and/or Human Health Potentially Impacted (check all that apply):
 Air Water Land Biodiversity Human health Other None

Environmental Action(s) Recommended (check all that apply):

- 1. *Categorical Exclusion(s)*
- 2. Initial Environmental Examination:
 - Conditional Negative Determination: procurement, storage, transportation, and use of any equipment shall be done in an environmentally sound manner.* USAID Contracting Officer will specify this wording in USAID grant agreements. The implementer will provide USAID with evidence that the recipient organization followed all applicable environmental laws.

1. Summary of Findings:

This IEE will cover both original and extended civil society project aimed at promoting well-informed citizen participation in community-based civic initiatives in Belarus. Project activities will be anchored to several core principles: maximization of the role of local partners; assistance for increased sustainable strategic thinking on the part of civil society and independent media; and balance between Minsk-based and regional initiatives. Main themes will include the following four areas: (1) civil society development; (2) strengthened media support and information dissemination; (3) legal protection; and (4) engagement with independent trade unions. USAID assistance will specifically target CSO constituencies linked to entrepreneur, green, youth, and women’s movements.

USAID technical assistance will be provided in the form of consultations, training and grants. Most Project’s funds will be used to finance salaries of technical and administrative staff, travel expenses, and costs of production and dissemination of training materials. A limited amount of funds may be used to provide grants, which include office equipment purchases.

Recommended Action: Categorical Exclusion

The proposed actions are entirely within the categories listed in paragraph (c) (2), “Categorical Exclusions”, of Section 216.2, “Applicability of procedures”, of title 22 CFR Part 216, “AID Environmental Procedures”. Pursuant to 22 CFR 216.2(c)(3), “procedures” the originator of the proposed actions has determined that the proposed action is fully within the following classes of actions:

- The action does not have an effect on the natural or physical environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.) [22CFR216.2(c)(1)(i)];

- Education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction) [22CFR216.2(c)(2)(i)];
- Analysis, studies, academic or research workshop and meetings [22CFR216.2(c)(2)(iii)].
- Document and information transfers [22CFR216.2(c)(2)(v)].

Recommended Action: Conditional Negative Determination

Pursuant to 22 CFR 216.3(a)(2)(i), the originator of the proposed activities recommends a conditional negative determination with the condition that procurement, storage, transportation, and use of any equipment shall be done in an environmentally sound manner. USAID Grant Officer will specify this wording in USAID grant agreements. The implementer will provide USAID with evidence that the recipient organization followed all applicable environmental laws.

2. Limitations of the IEE:

This IEE does not cover activities involving:

- Assistance for the procurement (including payment in kind, donations, guarantees of credit or use including handling, transport, fuel for transport, storage, mixing, loading, application, clean up of spray equipment, and disposal) of pesticides or activities involving procurement, transport, use, storage, or disposal of toxic materials. Pesticides, cover all insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides, etc. covered under FIFRA – “Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act”
- Construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, or renovation work
- Activities involving support to agro-processing, industrial enterprises, and regulatory permitting.
- Procurement or use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs)
- DCA or GDA programs

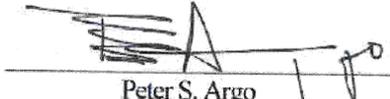
Any of these actions would require an amendment to the IEE approved by EE/BEO.

3. Revisions:

Pursuant to 22 CFR 216.3(a)(9), if new information becomes available which indicates that activities covered by this IEE might be considered “major” and their effect “significant”, or additional activities are proposed that might be considered as "major" and their effect “significant”, this recommendation for Categorical Exclusion and Conditional Negative Determination will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised by the Mission Environmental Office with concurrence of the E&E Bureau Environmental Officer. It is the responsibility of the USAID Activity Manager and CTO to keep the MEO and BEO informed of any new information or changes in the activity that might require revision of this Categorical Exclusion.

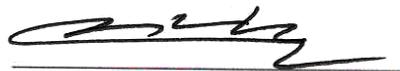
USAID APPROVAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION(S) RECOMMENDED:

Clearance:
Acting Mission Director:


Peter S. Argo

Date: 08 Jul 08

Concurrence:
Bureau Environmental Officer:


Mohammad Latif

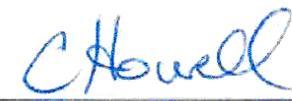
Date: 10 July 08

Approved:

Disapproved:

Additional Clearances:

Country Director:


Chuck Howell

Date: 07/08/08

Mission Environmental Officer:


Petro Luzik

Date: 07/08/08