

**Department of State – U.S. Embassy, Kabul**

**Program Office:** Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy, Kabul,  
Afghanistan  
**Funding Opportunity Title:** Provincial Youth Community Service Projects  
**Announcement Type:** Cooperative Agreement  
**Funding Opportunity Number:** SCAKAB-14-CA-018-SCA-07022014  
**Deadline for Applications:** August 2, 2014, 11:59 p.m., Kabul time  
**CFDA** 19.501- Public Diplomacy Programs for  
Afghanistan and Pakistan

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

- A) For questions relating to Grants.gov, please call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726.
- B) For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, contact **Deborah B. Smith**, Grants Manager, Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy, Kabul, Afghanistan, at:  
Email: [KabulPASProposals@state.gov](mailto:KabulPASProposals@state.gov) (*Preferred method of communication*)

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## **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan is pleased to announce an open competition for assistance awards through this Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP). PAS Kabul invites all eligible organizations (see Section IV for Eligibility Requirements) to submit a proposal to 1) engage youth nationwide in community leadership training; 2) facilitate opportunities for them learn about each other's communities; 3) exchange opinions and ideas about how to improve their local communities; 4) jointly develop proposals for community service projects to address those needs; and 5) return to their home communities to implement the service projects they developed.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

One of the key populations that must be engaged to combat violent extremism is youth, who form the majority of Afghanistan's population. Creating opportunities for youth to identify with and be invested in the success of their local communities is one way to counteract extremist efforts to draw young people away from their villages and engage in violent extremist activities. Being engaged with the development of their home towns provides an identity and a sense of purpose. It gives idle youth a positive and constructive way to help their country. Additionally, learning about other communities and building relationships with youth from other provinces helps facilitate a sense of national identity and breaks down harmful stereotypes and prejudices that are exploited to perpetuate extremist ideologies.

## **III. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Goal**

This project's goal is three-fold: 1) to build links among youth from different provinces to counter prejudices and stereotypes that contribute to ethnic/tribal/religious sectarianism; 2) to help youth invest in and identify with their own communities as well as those of others; and 3) to promote a sense of national identity to counter narratives that encourage division, mistrust, and hatred among young Afghans.

### **Objectives**

Project objectives include:

- Incentivizing youth to work together, across ethnic/tribal/religious differences, and become engaged in the decision making processes that affect their communities;
- Developing amongst youth from a variety of backgrounds a sense of identity with and commitment to the improvement of their communities;

- Fostering camaraderie and trust among participants from diverse regions to promote a sense of national identity, ensuring an environment of openness and honesty in which all participants feel equally valued and respected.

This project will include four phases that will be rolled out in a cascading fashion.

#### Phase One

In Phase One, the grantee will identify up to 15 youth from one community in at least 25 provinces. There will be at least one group per province. Some provinces may have two groups if the grantee deems it useful to create an all-female group in some regions. The grantee will provide each group with a week of leadership and team building activities, which will take place in their province, to help them bond as a group and to familiarize them with the concepts of community service and volunteerism. Activities during this week will also include leadership skill building and community needs assessments, during which the group identifies needs in their local community, and begins a discussion about what they could do to address the need. The needs assessment will also include developing a “community profile”, in which the group compiles a comprehensive picture of key facts about the area in which they live.

A successful proposal will provide a detailed description of these activities and how the applicant will help achieve these objectives. To the extent possible, there should be a gender balance, which may include some all-female groups, and special attention should be paid to including youth enrolled at madrassas.

#### Phase Two

In Phase Two, the grantee will organize a series of week-long youth conferences in Kabul; two youth groups from different geographic regions of the country will participate in each conference. For example, the Kandahar and Balkh groups might participate in one conference. The objective of the Kabul youth conferences is two-fold. First, these conferences will provide an opportunity for youth from different regions of the country to get to know each other and learn about each other’s communities. Second, the conferences will allow youth to work together on developing ways to address needs they’ve identified in their home communities.

The first part of each conference will focus on team building and communication activities between the two groups to build rapport and trust and facilitate the cohesion of one larger group. Additionally, during this time each team will present the “community profile” they developed during their provincial training to the other group. The grantee will facilitate discussions about similarities and differences between the communities. The first part of the conference will also include a review of core precepts about leadership and community services that were introduced during the provincial trainings. Groups will be encouraged to discuss what they previously learned and share their opinions.

Mid-conference the focus will shift to the needs assessments that each group previously conducted in their home community. The grantee will facilitate a discussion for the

entire group (individuals from both communities) during which they will prepare an action plan to address one need they've prioritized in each community. The conference will culminate with each group presenting its proposed action plan to the grantee. If the grantee approves action plan, the community groups will be eligible to receive funds to help implement the plan, with a funding ceiling to be set by the grantee in consultation with PAS. The goal is for each provincial group to create an action plan that is feasible and approved for implementation.

A successful proposal will provide specific descriptions of the activities that will take place during the Kabul conference, including the grantee's previous experience in leading such activities, and how the proposed activities will help support the goals of team building and teamwork.

Note: The Kabul youth conferences may begin before all of the provincial team building weeks are completed so that there is not too long of a lag time between the first provincial trainings and the commencement of the Kabul conferences.

### Phase Three

In Phase Three, each provincial team will implement their action plan to address the need they identified in their community, with regular mentoring, monitoring, and corrective action when needed, by the grantee. This may also require the grantee to make regular trips to the province to help the team garner support from local leadership for their projects and ensure that the team continues to operate as a group during project implementation. The grantee will also monitor how the money is being spent for each project. It will be the responsibility of the grantee to ensure the money is being used properly.

As the provincial teams implement their projects, the progress of each team will be shared on social media for the teams, and others, to keep up with the progress of each group, as security allows. A successful project proposal will include the creation of some form of online presence (for example, a website or a Facebook page) for the teams to document their progress. This may include the teams themselves and /or the grantee taking photos and posting things on social media sites.

Note: Phase Three may begin before all of the Kabul youth conferences in Phase Two have ended to minimize the lag time between when the first groups begin Phase Two and Phase Three.

### Phase Four

In Phase Four, teams that express an interest will be given the opportunity to return to Kabul for a gathering with other teams to give an update on their progress implementing their action plan. With the help of the grantee, they will prepare a presentation on their process, including challenges and how they addressed them. The focus of the presentations and the event will be on the process and what the participants learned to make them better community members and leaders. This capstone event will also focus on how the teams can maintain momentum to continue working together in support of

their communities, and how they can maintain contact with those from other communities as well.

A successful proposal will:

- Provide a detailed plan explaining how each phase will be implemented; a detailed timeline for each phase; a sample schedule including activities that will be included in the provincial trainings and Kabul youth conferences; detailed logistic plans for housing, transport, and food, for both the provincial trainings and Kabul conferences which take security into account; and a recruitment strategy explaining how participants from each province will be selected. The recruitment strategy must specifically address:
  - How the grantee will reach out to local madrassas to ensure youths from these institutions are included in the exchanges;
  - How young women will be included in the project, which may require some all-female groups;
- Address the issue of how the grantee will manage cultural and other sensitivities that may be present among the groups to ensure that all participants feel respected and valued during the exchange programs;
- Provide a detailed plan about how the community service project component of the exchanges will be handled, including the process by which the grantee will work with the exchange groups to identify community needs, develop project ideas; this should also include plans for how the implementing partner will vet and approve the projects in cooperation with PAS, and ensure the project is implemented;
  - The applicant should explain how it will ensure the funds for the community projects are being spent responsibly and used only for their intended purpose.
- Include a detailed plan for the final capstone event in Kabul during which teams present their community service projects, and share what they have learned with each other;
- Explain how social media will be used, as appropriate, to amplify and share the experiences and learning that is produced during the community service project implementation in Phase Three.
- Explain how the grantee will work with local communities, to ensure local support for the project, including community leaders, government officials, civil society groups, and Madrassa officials, as appropriate.

#### **IV. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

Eligibility is open to all U.S., Afghan, and international organizations or companies with direct experience in organizing youth programming as well as working in various regions especially outside of Kabul, and a proven track record of success implementing projects in Afghanistan. Organizations must demonstrate current country registration license

(when applicable), competent programmatic ability and be able to meet reporting requirements. Non-Afghan organizations or companies are required to partner with an Afghan organization or company.

Applicants are not required to include funding from other donors. However, applications that include additional in-kind and/or cash contributions from non-U.S. Government sources will be more competitive, since cost-sharing demonstrates a strong commitment to the planned activities and will be considered to show greater cost effectiveness.

Applicants must:

- A. Be registered in the System for Award Management SAM located at [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov) prior to submitting an application or plan; AND
- B. Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by an agency.

## **V. APPLICANT VETTING AS A CONDITION OF AWARD**

Applicants are advised that successful passing of vetting to evaluate the risk that funds may benefit terrorists or their supporters is a condition of award. Applicants may be asked to submit information required by DS Form 4184, *Risk Analysis Information* (attached to this solicitation) about their company and its principal personnel. Vetting information is also required for all sub-award performance on assistance awards identified by DOS as presenting a risk of terrorist financing. When vetting information is requested by the Grants Officer, information may be submitted on the secure web portal at <https://ramportal.state.gov>, via Email to [RAM@state.gov](mailto:RAM@state.gov), or hardcopy to the Grants Officer. Questions about the form may be emailed to [RAM@state.gov](mailto:RAM@state.gov). Failure to submit information when requested, or failure to pass vetting, may be grounds for rejecting your proposal.

## **VI. NOTIFICATION OF AUDIT REQUIREMENTS**

Foreign organizations that expend \$500,000 or more in a fiscal year in Department of State federal assistance must perform an independent, recipient-contracted Single Audit or Program Specific Audit. Program-specific Audit – means an audit of one Federal award program. Single Audit – means an audit which includes both the entity’s financial statements and the Federal Awards to be conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS). The audits must be independently and professionally executed in accordance with GAGAS either prescribed by a government’s Supreme Audit Institution with auditing standards approved by the Comptroller General of the United States, or the host country’s laws or adopted by the host country’s public accountants or associations of public accountants, together with generally accepted international auditing standards. However, foreign entity audits consistent with International Standards for Auditing or other auditing standards are acceptable with the Grants Officer’s approval.

For sub-recipients expending \$500,000 or more in Department of State award funding during their fiscal year, Department of State standard audit provisions require that Prime recipients certify that audits of sub-recipients are performed annually and according to the standards described above.

The cost of audits required under this policy may be charged either as an allowable direct cost to the award, OR included in the organizations established indirect costs in the award's detailed budget.

## VII. SUBMISSION INFORMATION

**Award Period:** 24 months

**Number of Awards Anticipated:** 1

**Award Amount:** The award Floor is set at \$500,000. The award ceiling is set at \$700,000.

**Application Deadline: All applications must be received on or before August 2, 2014, 11:59 p.m., Kabul time.** Applications received after 11:59 p.m. will be ineligible for consideration. **Applicants are encouraged to begin the application process early**, as this will allow time to address any technical difficulties that may arise in advance of the deadline. There will be no exceptions to this application deadline.

**Question Deadline:** For questions on this solicitation please contact **Deborah B. Smith, Grants Manager, Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy, Kabul, Afghanistan**, at: Email: [KabulPASProposals@state.gov](mailto:KabulPASProposals@state.gov) (*Preferred method of communication*).

**Questions must be received on or before July 14, 2014, 11:59 p.m., Kabul time.** Answers to questions will be posted at <http://www.grants.gov> and <http://kabul.usembassy.gov/pdprp.html>.

**Application Submission Process:** There are two submissions methods available to applicants. Applicants may submit their application using Submission Method A or Submission Method B outlined below.

- **Submission Method A:** Submitting all application materials directly to the following email address: [KabulPASProposals@state.gov](mailto:KabulPASProposals@state.gov). Applicants opting to submit applications via email to [KabulPASProposals@state.gov](mailto:KabulPASProposals@state.gov) **must** include the Funding Opportunity Title and Funding Opportunity Number in the subject line of the email.
- **Submission Method B:** Submitting all application materials through grants.gov. For those opting to apply through Grants.gov, thorough instructions on the application process are available at <http://www.grants.gov>. For questions relating to Grants.gov, please call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726. Please note, [KabulPASProposals@state.gov](mailto:KabulPASProposals@state.gov) is unable to assist with technical questions or problems applicants experience with grants.gov.

Applicants utilizing Grants.gov must register with Grants.gov prior to submitting an application. **Registering with Grants.gov is a one-time process; however, it could take as long as two weeks to have the registration validated and confirmed. Please begin the registration process immediately to ensure that the process is completed well in advance of the deadline for applications.** Until that process is complete, you will not be issued a user password for Grants.gov, which is required for application submission. There are four steps that you must complete before you are able to register: (1) Obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet (if your organization does not have one already) by calling 1-866-705-5711; (2) Register with System for Award Management (SAM); (3) Register yourself as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (4) Be authorized as an AOR by your organization. For more information, go to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Please note that your SAM registration must be annually renewed. Failure to renew your SAM registration may prohibit submission of a grant application through Grants.gov.

## VIII. APPLICATION CONTENT

Applicants must follow the RFGP instructions and conditions contained herein and supply all information required. **Failure to furnish all information or comply with stated requirements will result in disqualification from the competition.** Applicants must set forth full, accurate, and complete information as required by this RFGP. The penalty for making false statements in proposals to the USG is prescribed on 18 U.S.C.1001.

Applications are accepted in English only, and final grant agreements will be concluded in English. Proposals may not exceed 22 double-spaced pages in 12-point, Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins. Shorter applications are encouraged. Longer applications will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed. This requirement excludes the allowable appendices, which are identified in Section 6 below. The proposal must consist of the following:

### **Section 1 - Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) and SF424A:**

The SF424 is the standard cover sheet for grant applications. The SF424A is a budget summary sheet for grant proposals. Please refer to page 6-8 for a description of budget categories. Both these forms can be found on-line at: <https://statebuy.state.gov/fa/Pages/Forms.aspx>.

### **Section 2 - Abstract:**

The abstract is limited to 300 words in length. It must provide a summary of the project to be undertaken, expected timeline, and cost.

### **Section 3 – Implementation Plan:**

The applicant must specify the goals and objectives of the project. Goals are general statements of intent; Objectives define a specific problem or task to be accomplished. The applicant should describe in detail the steps which will be taken to achieve these

goals. This description should include all components of the proposed project including, as needed, design and training. The proposal should clearly demonstrate how each of these project components directly relates to the project's stated goals. -- This section should also describe how success will be measured, and should propose specific performance indicators which can be used to track progress and determine the project's success. This section must include a time-task plan that clearly identifies the timeline for carrying out the project's major activities.

Applicants are recommended to present the following for each project component:

- An overview of the proposed project component and its respective activities.
- A description of how the project component supports the overall goal of the project.
- A detailed outline of the methodology that will be used to implement the proposed component.
- An analysis of anticipated implementation risks and challenges.
- A summary of expected outputs with their expected impact, using performance indicators that will be used to track progress towards the anticipated results.

The proposal should also describe the applicant's sustainability plan and what measures will be taken to ensure that the benefits of the proposed project continue to be realized after the completion of grant performance.

#### **Section 4 - Organizational Capability:**

Applications must include a clear description of the applicant's management structure, previous experience working in Afghanistan, experience working with Afghan government institutions (if applicable), previous experience with U.S. Government grants, and the organizational experience and background in Afghanistan related to the proposed activities. Besides information about the organization as a whole, this section must also identify the proposed management structure and staffing plan for the proposed project. The applicant should describe how its previous experience relates to the proposed project.

#### **Section 5 – Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:**

Applications must include a monitoring and evaluation plan (M&E plan), sometimes also referred to as a performance monitoring or performance management plan. The M&E plan is a systematic and objective approach or process for monitoring project performance toward its objectives over time. The plan consists of indicators with baselines and targets; means for tracking critical assumptions; plans for managing the data collection process; and regular collection of data. The indicators in the plan should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-framed).

The M&E plan for this project must include the following indicators.

#### Phase 1: Provincial team building and training

Indicator 1: Number of youths in each province identified to participate in the project  
Indicator 2: Approval from the relevant groups to ensure youth are allowed to participate in the exchanges  
Indicator 3: Number of youths from madrassas who participate in the provincial trainings  
Indicator 4: Number of girls who participate in the provincial trainings  
Indicator 5: Number of provincial trainings successfully completed  
Indicator 6: Number of community profiles and community needs assessments successfully completed  
Indicator 7: “Community Views” Survey: Pre-program survey of youth selected to participate to determine how they view themselves and their identity in relation to their local community, what their views are of their local community itself, and what their opinions are about other areas of the country.  
Indicator 8: “Leadership Pre-Survey”: Pre-program survey of youth about how they view themselves as agents of change, their ability to create change and affect their future, and what they view as good leadership traits.

#### Phase 2: Kabul cross-provincial youth conference and community service project development

Indicator 1: Number of Kabul youth conferences conducted  
Indicator 2: Number of youth from provinces who attended the youth conferences  
Indicator 3: Number of community profiles and needs assessments presented at the Kabul conferences  
Indicator 4: Number of community service project action plans developed at the Kabul conferences  
Indicator 5: Number of community service projects approved for implementation

#### Phase 3: Community service project implementation

Indicator 1: Number of mentoring engagements grantee has with each of the provincial teams to keep the community service projects on track  
Indicator 2: Number of community service projects that are successfully implemented on budget  
Indicator 3: Establishment of online presence to document community service project implementation  
Indicator 4: Number of social media postings regarding the community service projects’ implementation  
Indicator 5: Post program “Community Views” Survey: Post-program survey of youth selected to participate to determine how they view themselves and their identity in relation to their local community, what their views are of their local community itself, and what their opinions are about other areas of the country.  
Indicator 6: “Leadership Post-Survey”: Post-program survey of youth about how they view themselves as agents of change, their ability to create change and affect their future, and what they view as good leadership traits.

#### Phase 4: Capstone conference in Kabul

Indicator 1: Number of groups who present their community service projects at the Kabul

conference

Indicator 2: Establishment of network for groups to maintain contact post-project.

Evaluations should be scheduled and carried out throughout the course of the program. More information on M&E plans is located <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/c35797.htm>.

### **Section 6 - Appendices:**

The proposal submission must include four appendices. Only the appendices listed below may be included as part of the application:

- 1. Budget Detail (Required)** – Applications will not be considered complete unless they include budgets that respond to the solicitation guidelines. Complete budgets will include detailed line-items outlining specific cost requirements for proposed activities. Applicants must adhere to the appropriate regulations found in 2 CFR 220 (previously OMB circulars A-21, cost principles for education institutions) and 2 CFR 230 (previously OMB circular A-122, cost principles for non-profits).

Detailed Line-Item Budget (in Microsoft Excel or similar spreadsheet format) that delineates funds requested from the Embassy and cost-share (see below for more information on budget format). Costs must be in U.S. Dollars. The budget must identify the total amount of funding requested, with a breakdown of amounts to be spent in the following budget categories: personnel; fringe benefits; travel; equipment; supplies; consultants/contracts; other direct costs; and indirect costs. The following provides a description of the types of costs to be included in each budget category.

**A. Personnel** – Identify staffing requirements by each position title and brief description of duties. For clarity, please list the annual salary of each position, percentage of time and number of months devoted to the project. (e.g., Administrative Director: \$30,000/year x 25% x 8.5 months; calculation:  $\$30,000/12 = \$2,500 \times 25\% \times 8.5 \text{ months} = \$5,312.$ )

**B. Fringe Benefits** - State benefit costs separately from salary costs and explain how benefits are computed for each category of employee - specify type and rate.

**C. Travel** - Staff and any participant travel

- 1) International Airfare
- 2) In-country Travel
- 3) Domestic Travel in the U.S., if any
- 4) Per diem/maintenance: Includes lodging, meals and incidentals for both participant and staff travel. Rates of maximum allowances for U.S. and foreign travel are available from the following website: <http://www.policyworks.gov/>. Per diem rates may not exceed the published U.S. government allowance rates; however, institutions may use per diem rates lower than official government rates. Please explain differences in fares among travelers on the same routes.

Please note that all travel, where applicable, must be in compliance with the Fly America Act.

**D. Equipment** – Please provide justification for any equipment purchase/rental, defined as tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more.

**E. Supplies** - List items separately using unit costs (and the percentage of each unit cost being charged to the grant) for photocopying, postage, telephone/fax, printing, and office supplies (e.g., Telephone: \$50/month x 50% = \$25/month x 12 months).

**F. Contractual -**

a) **Sub-grants and sub-contracts.** For each sub-grant/contract please provide a detailed line item breakdown explaining specific services. In the sub-grant budgets, provide the same level of detail for personnel, travel, supplies, equipment, direct costs, and fringe benefits required of the direct applicant.

b) **Consultant Fees.** For example lecture fees, honoraria, travel, and per diem for outside speakers or independent evaluators: list number of people and rates per day (e.g., 2 x \$150/day x 2 days).

**G. Construction** – For this solicitation, construction costs are not applicable.

**H. Other Direct Costs** - these will vary depending on the nature of the project. The inclusion of each should be justified in the budget narrative.

**J. Indirect Costs** - See OMB Circular A-122, "Cost Principles for Non-profit Organizations or the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) at 48 CFR part 31"

1) If your organization has a negotiated indirect cost-rate agreement (NICRA) with the U.S. Government, please include a copy of this agreement. This does not count against submission page limitations.

2) If your organization is charging an indirect cost rate, please indicate how the rate is applied--to direct administrative expenses, to all direct costs, to wages and salaries only, etc.

**Cost-Effectiveness/ In-Kind Contributions** – There is no minimum or maximum percentage of cost sharing required for this competition. However, the Embassy encourages applicants to provide the highest possible levels of cost sharing in support of its projects. Cost sharing demonstrates the applicant's commitment to the project, belief in the achievability of its goals, and prospects for long-term sustainability. When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its application and later included in an approved grant agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability,

written records must be maintained to support all costs which are claimed as contributions, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with OMB Circular A-110, (Revised), Subpart C.23—Cost Sharing and Matching.

- 2. Budget Narrative (Required)** - The purpose of the budget narrative is to supplement the information provided in the budget spreadsheet by justifying how the budget cost elements are necessary to implement project objectives and accomplish the project goals. The budget narrative is a tool to help the Embassy staff fully understand the budgetary needs of the applicant and is an opportunity to provide descriptive information about the costs beyond the constraints of the budget template. Together, the budget narrative and budget spreadsheets should provide a complete financial and qualitative description that supports the proposed project plan and should be directly relatable to the specific project components described in the applicant's Implementation Plan. The description provided on the budget spreadsheets should be very brief.
- 3. Resume (Required)** – a resume, not to exceed 1 page in length, must be included for the proposed key staff person, such as the Project Director. If an individual for this type of position has not been identified, the applicant may submit a 1-page position description, identifying the qualifications and skills required for that position, in lieu of a resume.
- 4. Letters of Intent (Required)** – for this project, local partnerships, including with the Afghan government, are critical. Letters of intent should be included with the concept paper. The letters must identify the type of relationship to be entered into (formal or informal), the roles and responsibilities of each partner in relation to the proposed project activities, and the expected result of the partnership. Please note that these are not letters of support, and should only be included for those organizations that will play an active role in the project, including those that receive financial support through the project budget. The individual letters cannot exceed 1 page in length, and applicants are limited to submitting up to five letters per proposal.

## **IX. AWARD SELECTION CRITERIA**

U.S. Embassy Kabul Public Affairs will review all proposals for eligibility. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance of Federal regulations and guidelines and may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. The U.S. Embassy reserves the right to request any additional programmatic and/or financial information regarding the proposal.

Proposals will be funded based on an evaluation of how the proposal meets the solicitation review criteria, U.S. foreign policy objectives, and the priority needs of the U.S. Embassy. All proposals submitted under this request will undergo a technical review by embassy personnel; all proposals deemed technically eligible will be evaluated by an embassy review committee. Committee members may make conditions and recommendations on any given proposal in order to enhance the proposed program.

Proposals will be scored based on the applicants' response to each Review Criteria listed below. Review criteria will include:

**1. Quality of the program idea and program planning (20%):** The proposed project should be well developed, respond to the design outlined in the solicitation and demonstrate originality. The project should have clear goals and objectives and metrics for determining whether the project goals were met. It should be clearly and accurately written, substantive and with sufficient detail. The program plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above, and should reference the applicant's capacity to meet all needs specified in the RFGP.

**2. Ability to achieve program objectives (25%):** Objectives should be reasonable and feasible. Applications should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan. Proposed personnel, institutional resources and partner organizations should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program goals.

**3. Institution's record and capacity (25%):** The successful applicant will have the organizational capacity, demonstrated through prior successful programming, to work with Afghan youth in the provinces, to organize workshops in Kabul for youth from the provinces, and to foster Afghan solidarity, leadership skills, and community building activities. The application should demonstrate an institutional record, including successful programming, responsible fiscal management, and compliance with reporting requirements, especially for U.S. Government grants.

**4. Sustainability (10%):** Proposed project should address the applicant's strategy for ensuring that the project benefits will continue to be realized on a long-term basis after the conclusion of the period of performance of the grant.

**5. Monitoring and Evaluation (20%):** Applications should demonstrate the capacity for engaging in impact assessments and providing objectives with measurable outputs and outcomes. The applicant should describe its plan for monitoring and reporting project outcomes.

**6. Cost-effectiveness (Acceptable or Not Acceptable):** The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be consistent with prevailing market rates in Afghanistan. All other items should be necessary, appropriate, and directly relatable to the project's goals and objectives. Cost sharing is encouraged but not required.

## **X. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

**Award Notices:** The grant shall be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The Grants Officer is the Government official delegated the authority by the U.S. Department of State Procurement Executive to write, award, and administer grants and cooperative agreements. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the Recipient through email transmission. Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified in writing.

**Anticipated Time to Award:** Applicants should expect to be notified if their proposal has been selected for award within 90 days after the submission deadline. PAS Kabul will provide information at the point of notification about any modification to the proposal or plan of work that will be required to finalize the cooperative agreement.

Issuance of this RFGP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government, nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the U.S. government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received. The U.S. government also reserves the right to make an award in excess of the award ceiling.

- **Reporting Requirements:** Grantees are required to submit quarterly program progress and financial reports throughout the project period. Progress and financial reports are due 30 days after the reporting period. Final programmatic and financial reports are due 90 days after the close of the project period.

## **XI. DISCLAIMER**

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with the award. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the total discretion of the Department of State.

## **XII. AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS**

This RFGP is subject to funds availability. Awards will be granted only if appropriated funds are allocated to the United States Embassy in Kabul by Department of State central budget authorities.