SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Agency Point of Contact

Agency Point of Contact: BHA.MSIFellowship.FY22RFA@usaid.gov

If there are future amendments for additional rounds of applications, USAID/BHA may provide specific contact information for questions and applications in the amendment.

2. Questions and Answers

Questions regarding this NOFO should be submitted via email to the Agency Point of Contact listed above no later than the date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment to this NOFO, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant.

3. General Content and Form of Application

Preparation of Applications:
Each applicant must furnish the information required by this NOFO. Applications must be submitted in two separate parts: the Technical Application and the Business (Cost) Application. This subsection addresses general content requirements applying to the full application. Please see subsections 5 and 6, below, for information on the content specific to the Technical and Business (Cost) applications. The Technical application must address technical aspects only while the Business (Cost) Application must present the costs, and address risk and other related issues.

Both the Technical and Business (Cost) Applications must include a cover page containing the following information:

- Lead applicant
  - Name of the lead organization submitting the application;
  - Identification and signature of the primary contact person (by name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number and email address) and the identification of the alternate contact person (by name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number and email address);
  - Program name
  - Notice of Funding Opportunity number
  - Name of any proposed consortium members
- Consortium members
  - Name of consortium member
  - Identification and signature of the primary contact person at the consortium (by name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number and email address) and the identification of the alternate contact person (by name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number and email address);

Any erasures or other changes to the application must be initialed by the person signing the application. Applications signed by an agent on behalf of the applicant must be accompanied by evidence of that agent's authority, unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.

Applicants may choose to submit a cover letter in addition to the cover pages, but it will serve only as a transmittal letter to the Agreement Officer. The cover letter will not be reviewed as part of the merit review criteria.

Applications must comply with the following:

- USAID will not review any pages in excess of the page limits noted in the subsequent sections. Please ensure that applications comply with the page limitations.
- Written in English
- Use standard 8 ½" x 11", single sided, single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1" margins, left justification and headers and/or footers on each page including consecutive page numbers, date of submission, and applicant's name.
- 10 point font can be used for graphs and charts. Tables however, must comply with the 12 point Times New Roman requirement.
- Submitted via Microsoft Word or PDF formats, except budget files which must be submitted in Microsoft Excel.
- The estimated start date identified in Section B of this NOFO must be used in the cost application.
- The technical application must be a searchable and editable Word or PDF format as appropriate.
- The Cost Schedule must include an Excel spreadsheet with all cells unlocked and no hidden formulas or sheets. A PDF version of the Excel spreadsheet may be submitted in addition to the Excel version at the applicant's discretion, however, the official cost application submission is the unlocked Excel version.

Applicants must review, understand, and comply with all aspects of this NOFO. Failure to do so may be considered as being non-responsive and may be evaluated accordingly. Applicants should retain a copy of the application and all enclosures for their records.

4. Application Submission Procedures

Applications in response to this NOFO must be submitted no later than the closing date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended. Applicants must retain proof of timely delivery in the form of system generated documentation of delivery receipt date and time.

USAID/BHA will only accept applications submitted through www.grants.gov. Organizations must register their organization and registration information is located at the "Application Registration" option at www.grants.gov. The one-time registration process usually takes no more than five days and applicants should start the registration as early as possible. The Apparently Successful Applicant(s) will be invited to upload their final application documents to the USAID/BHA Application and Award Management Portal (AAMP).

5. Technical Application Format

The technical application should be specific, complete, and presented concisely. The application must demonstrate the applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this program. The application should take into account the requirements of the program and merit review criteria found in this NOFO.

a) Cover Page (1 page maximum)

b) Table of Contents (2 pages maximum)

Include major sections and page numbering to easily cross-reference and identify merit review criteria.

c) Executive Summary (2 pages maximum)

The Executive Summary must include an application summary of two pages or less, providing a high-level overview of key elements of the Technical Application.

d) Technical Application (15 pages maximum)

The technical application will be the critical item of consideration in the selection of an applicant(s) for an award(s). The information provided in the technical application must be specific, complete, and presented concisely. The technical application must demonstrate how it contributes to achieving the objectives, including specific results anticipated. The weightings in the merit review criteria set forth in Section E of this NOFO indicate the relative order of importance of the merit review criteria, so that applicants will know which areas require emphasis in the preparation of the technical application. Applicants are advised that lack of completeness or superficiality of the application may constitute grounds for excluding it from consideration.

It is anticipated that the Technical Application(s) (as may be revised) will become the Program Descriptions for the award(s) resulting from this NOFO. Thus, applications submitted in response to this NOFO should should be written clearly and in results-oriented terms in order to address what is proposed to be done, why it is proposed to be done, how it is proposed to be done, who will do it, where it will be done, when it will be done, and the anticipated results and impact.

The technical application must have a definitive strategy and plan, and must set forth in detail the applicant's approach, methodology, procedures, and techniques for the design, management, implementation, and monitoring of the proposed program. The application must also demonstrate the applicant’s capabilities and expertise to successfully implement, manage, and monitor the proposed program. It is important that the technical application furnish verifiable, objective supporting evidence of successful program management, implementation, and monitoring. The technical application should be specific, detailed, and include appropriate benchmarks or milestones.

The technical application must provide the following information:

- The technical application must use the **Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessment secto**r, and applicable sub-sectors, keywords, and indicators identified in the USAID/BHA Application Guidelines, as applicable. Unless otherwise indicated, a page in the technical application which contains a table, chart, graph, etc. will be counted as a page within the page limitation. Information which exceeds the page limitation will not be furnished to the USAID/BHA Selection Committee (SC).

- **Justification for Proposed Intervention(s):** The technical application must include a Justification for Intervention section that addresses the Overarching Goal and Objective 1 and 2 in Section A.

- **Technical Approach, Timeline, and Feasibility**: Describe how proposed activities address needs outlined in the justification for proposed intervention(s) section above and Objective 1 and 2 in Section A of this NOFO. Required parameters and program design elements are described in Section A(3), and co-creation elements are described in Section A(4). Your detailed technical approach should identify how you plan to implement those design elements, and any additional program elements you may wish to add.

  This section should include methodologies, processes, or steps you will undertake to implement each proposed activity within the timeframes outlined in this NOFO. You may include timelines, charts, or other graphics for illustrative purposes. Proposed activities must fall under one or more of the sectors listed in the Sectors, Sub-sectors, and Indicators Table in the USAID/BHA Application Guidelines. Applicants must review the relevant sector guidance in its entirety and address all questions and information requirements in the sector guidance.

- **Institutional Experience and Capability:** The technical application must include an Institutional Experience and Capability section that addresses the following information.

  - **Capability and Competence:** Applicants must describe their capability and competence to undertake the proposed activities in the Program Description and their capabilities and competencies to meet Objectives 1 and 2. **Applicants should describe capability and competence of all consortium members in a separate annex to the main application.** The information presenting the capabilities of the implementing organization(s) should spell-out clearly the pertinent previous work experience and accomplishments in developing and conducting activities of the type being proposed.

- Demonstrated relevant experience, technical expertise and record in managing awards (U.S. and/or other donors) successfully to achieve results on similar programs through history of performance record, including objective-related expertise that demonstrate your organization's success in implementing similar programs.
- Demonstrated commitment to advancing DEIA, especially any efforts to mainstream DEIA approaches across the organization through policies, programs, and training.
- Demonstrated history of delivering humanitarian assistance and current operational presence in geographic areas beset by humanitarian crises, or prone to humanitarian shocks and stresses.

- **Coordination:** Technical applications must include a Coordination section that describes the following:

    - The roles and responsibilities of all consortium members, including division of labor between consortium members;
    - A description and any information on existing relationships between consortium members and MSIs, and plans for engaging with MSIs to recruit applicants for the fellowship;
    - Information on existing DEIA programs and initiatives led by consortium members;
    - A description of how you will coordinate, share information, and address problems across the consortium, with USAID/BHA, and with the MSIs.

  In addition, this section should provide evidence of demonstrated understanding and ability to engage in intensive co-creation, and ability to work with multiple stakeholders.

- **Sustainability:** Technical applications must include a Sustainability Plan and Transition or Exit Strategy section that describes how program activities will be sustained beyond the life of the program. This includes how resources might be obtained to continue the activity or program, if appropriate.

- **Supporting Documentation:** The following documents are to be submitted in an annex and will not count towards the page limits listed for the technical application. No additional documents outside of the items listed below should be submitted nor will be reviewed by USAID/BHA.

    (A) Monitoring and Evaluation Plan – Not to Exceed Five Pages
    Applicants must include a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan as an Annex to the application as outlined below. The M&E Plan shall describe the technical resources and expertise that the applicant will utilize in implementing the proposed approach and how these resources will be organized to deliver the

desired outcomes. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to adequately monitor and evaluate the activities throughout the duration of the award. Applications shall include appropriate output, outcome and impact indicators for proposed activities where feasible and describe the methods, and how any data generated will be shared. Applicants should propose methods to verify monitoring data on relevant USAID/BHA indicators.

(C) Draft Work Plan – Not to Exceed Five Pages

The Applicant must include a draft work plan for the program, including key tasks and deliverables required in the Program Description and clearly detail timing for deliverables. This plan will be finalized upon implementation of the Award.

(D) Organizational Structure – Not to Exceed Three Pages

The technical application must also explain how the lead applicant's headquarters and field office(s) are organized. The applicant does not need to include these details for each member of the consortium.

(E) Code of Conduct

The mandatory standard provisions "Regulations Governing Employees" in **ADS 303maa, Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations** and "Recipient and Employee Conduct" in **ADS 303mab, Standard Provisions for Non- U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations**, require that recipients meet internal control requirements and have a code of conduct for their employees. USAID implementing partners must ensure that their employees conduct themselves in a professional manner when carrying out awards, consistent with the standards for United Nations (U.N.) employees in Section 3 of the **U.N. Secretary General's Bulletin - Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse.**

You must submit a copy of your organization's Code of Conduct, ideally with a dedicated section on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (PSEA) or PSEA Policy, as an annex. Additionally, sub-awardees receiving USAID/BHA funds must adopt a Code of Conduct. Awardees will be responsible for ensuring that sub-awardees have a Code of Conduct.

In the event that an implementing partner employee's conduct is not consistent with these standards, our partners must consult/coordinate with the relevant Mission Director and the Agreement or Contracting Officer. The U.S. Ambassador may direct the removal of any U.S. citizen from the country and require termination of any employee from an award.

USAID further encourages implementing partners to report credible allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse to the USAID Office of Inspector General. Please see USAID's Policy on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse for more information about USAID's approach to this issue.

Implementing partners are required to report credible allegations of trafficking, the procurement of commercial sex acts, or the use of forced labor to the relevant Agreement or Contracting Officer and the USAID Office of Inspector General.

USAID policy requires its employees to report suspected cases of sexual exploitation, whether by Agency personnel or implementing partners, to the USAID Office of Inspector General.

Complaints can be submitted anonymously with an online form through the **Office of Inspector General Hotline website**, by telephone at 1-800-230-6539 or 202-712-1023, by email at **ig.hotline@usaid.gov**, by fax at (202) 216-3801, or by mail to the following address: U.S. Agency for International Development, Office of Inspector General, P.O. Box 657, Washington, DC 20044-0657

USAID has zero tolerance for sexual misconduct, including harassment, exploitation or abuse of any kind among staff or implementing partners. Additional information can be found at USAID's Fact Sheet: Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

(d) Risk Assessment and Management Plan

The Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) recognizes the importance of assessing risk and integrating risk management into all awards, beginning at the application phase with your activity design and budget. Every application request under this NOFO must include a Risk Assessment and Management Plan.

VI. Business (Cost) Application

The business (cost) application must be submitted separately from the technical application. While no page limit exists for the full cost application, applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible while still providing the necessary details. The cost application must illustrate the entire period of performance, using the budget format shown in the SF-424A.

Prior to award, applicants may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to assess the applicant's risk in accordance with 2 CFR 200.205. Applicants should not submit any additional information with their initial application.

The Cost Application must contain the following sections (which are further elaborated below this listing with the letters for each requirement):

a) **Cover Page** (one page maximum)

b) **SF 424 Form(s)**

The applicant must sign and submit the cost application using the SF-424 series. Standard Forms can be accessed electronically at www.grants.gov.

Failure to accurately complete these forms could result in the rejection of the application.

c) **Required Certifications and AssurancesRecipient**

The applicant must complete the following documents and submit a signed copy upon request by the AO:

(1) "Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient" ADS 303mav document found at http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf
(2) Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
(3) 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 (M/OAA).

d) Budget and Budget Narrative

The Budget must be submitted as one unprotected Excel file (MS Office 2000 or later versions) with visible formulas and references and must be broken out by project year, including itemization of the federal and non-federal (cost share) amount. Files must not contain any hidden or otherwise inaccessible cells. Budgets with hidden cells lengthen the cost analysis time required to make award, and may result in a rejection of the cost application. The Budget Narrative must contain sufficient detail to allow USAID/BHA to understand the proposed costs. The applicant must ensure the budgeted costs address any additional requirements identified in Section F, such as Branding and Marking. The Budget Narrative must be thorough, including sources for costs to support USAID/BHA's determination that the proposed costs are fair and reasonable.

The Budget must include the following worksheets or tabs, and contents, at a minimum:

- Summary Budget, inclusive of all program costs (federal and non-federal), broken out **by major budget category, USAID/BHA Sector, and by year** for activities implemented by the applicant and any potential sub-applicants for the entire period of the program. See link above to form SF-424A
- Detailed Budget, including a breakdown by USAID/BHA Sector and by year, sufficient to allow the Agency to determine that the costs represent a realistic and efficient use of funding to implement the applicant's program and are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.
- Detailed Budgets for each sub-recipient, for all federal funding and cost share, broken out by budget category and by year, for the entire implementation period of the project.

The Detailed Budget must contain the following budget categories and information, at a minimum:

1) Salaries and Allowances – Must be proposed consistent with 2 CFR 200.430 Compensation - Personal Services. The applicant's budget must include position title, salary rate, level of effort, and salary escalation factors for each position. Allowances, when proposed, must be broken down by specific type and by position. Applicants must explain all assumptions in the Budget Narrative. The Budget Narrative must demonstrate that the proposed compensation is reasonable for the services rendered and consistent with what is paid for similar work in other activities of the applicant. Applicants must provide their established written policies on personnel compensation. If the applicant's written policies do not address a specific element of compensation that is being proposed, the Budget Narrative must describe the rationale used and supporting market research.

2) Fringe Benefits – (if applicable) If the applicant has a fringe benefit rate approved by an agency of the U.S. Government, the applicant must use such rate and provide evidence of its approval. If an applicant does not have a fringe benefit rate approved, the applicant must propose a rate and explain how the applicant determined the rate. In this case, the Budget Narrative must include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits (e.g., superannuation, gratuity, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in U.S. dollars and as a percentage of salaries.

3) Travel and Transportation – Provide details to explain the purpose of the trips, the number of trips, the origin and destination, the number of individuals traveling, and the duration of the trips. Per Diem and associated travel costs must be based on the applicant's normal travel policies. When appropriate please provide supporting documentation as an attachment, such as company travel policy, and explain assumptions in the Budget Narrative.

4) Procurement or Rental of Goods (Equipment & Supplies), Services, and Real Property – Must include information on estimated types of equipment, models, supplies and the cost per unit and quantity. The Budget Narrative must include the purpose of the equipment and supplies and the basis for the estimates. The Budget Narrative must support the necessity of any rental costs and reasonableness in light of such factors as: rental costs of comparable property, if any; market conditions in the area; alternatives available; and the type, life expectancy, condition, and value of the property leased.

5) Subawards – Specify the budget for the portion of the program to be passed through to any subrecipients. See 2 CFR 200 for assistance in determining whether the sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor. The subrecipient budgets must align with the same requirements as the applicant's budget, including those related to fringe and indirect costs.

6) Other Direct Costs – This may include other costs not elsewhere specified, such as report

preparation costs, passports and visas fees, medical exams and inoculations, as well as any other miscellaneous costs which directly benefit the program proposed by the applicant. The applicant should indicate the subject, venue and duration of any proposed conferences and seminars, and their relationship to the objectives of the program, along with estimates of costs. Otherwise, the narrative should be minimal.

7) Indirect Costs – Applicants must indicate whether they are proposing indirect costs or will charge all costs directly. In order to better understand indirect costs please see Subpart E of 2 CFR 200. The application must identify which approach they are requesting and provide the applicable supporting information. Below are the most commonly used Indirect Cost Rate methods:

Method 1 - Direct Charge Only
Eligibility: Any applicant

Initial Application Requirements: See above on direct costs

Method 2 - Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)
Eligibility: Any applicant with a NICRA issued by a USG Agency must use that NICRA

Initial Application Requirements: If the applicant has a current NICRA, submit your approved NICRA and the associated disclosed practices. If your NICRA was issued by an Agency other than USAID, provide the contact information for the approving Agency. Additionally, at the Agency's discretion, a provisional rate may be set forth in the award subject to audit and finalization. See USAID's Indirect Cost Rate Guide for Non Profit Organizations for further guidance.

Method 3 - De minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC)
Eligibility: In accordance with 2 CFR 200.414, eligible applicants may choose to apply a 10 percent de minimis indirect cost rate.

Initial Application Requirements: Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate an indirect rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time. The applicant must describe which cost elements it charges indirectly vs. directly. See 2 CFR 200 for further information.

Method 4 - Indirect Costs Charged As A Fixed Amount
Eligibility: Non U.S. non-profit organizations without a NICRA may request, but approval is at the discretion of the AO

Initial Application Requirements: Provide the proposed fixed amount and a worksheet that includes the following:

- Total costs incurred by the organization for the previous fiscal year and estimates for the current year.
- Indirect costs (common costs that benefit the day-to-day operations of the organization, including categories such as salaries and expenses of executive officers, personnel administration, and accounting, or that benefit and are identifiable to more than one program or activity, such as depreciation, rental costs, operations and maintenance of facilities, and telephone expenses) for the previous fiscal year and estimates for the current year
- Proposed method for prorating the indirect costs equitably and consistently across all programs and activities of using a base that measures the benefits of that particular cost to each program or activity to which the cost applies.

If the applicant does not have an approved NICRA and does not elect to utilize the 10% de minimis rate, the Agreement Officer will provide further instructions and may request additional supporting information, including financial statements and audits, should the application still be under consideration after the merit review. USAID is under no obligation to approve the applicant's requested method.

If no approved federally recognized indirect cost rate negotiated between the subrecipient and the Federal Government exists, the pass-through entity must determine the appropriate rate in collaboration with the subrecipient in accordance with 2 CFR 200.332.

8) Cost Sharing – The applicant should estimate the amount of cost-sharing resources to be provided over the life of the agreement and specify the sources of such resources, and the basis of calculation in the budget narrative. Applicants should also provide a breakdown of the cost share (financial and in-kind contributions) of all organizations involved in implementing the resulting award.

e) Prior Approvals in accordance with 2 CFR 200.407

Inclusion of an item of cost in the detailed application budget does not satisfy any requirements for prior approval by the Agency. If the applicant would like the award to reflect approval of any cost elements for which prior written approval is specifically required for allowability, the applicant must specify and justify that cost. See 2 CFR 200.407 for information regarding which cost elements require prior written approval.

f) Approval of Subawards

The applicant must submit information for all subawards that it wishes to have approved at the time of award. Subawards not included in the original application may only be added later with the prior approval of the Agreement Officer. For each proposed subaward the applicant must provide the following:

- Name of organization
- UEI Number

- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not appear on the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) list
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not appear on the United Security Council Consolidated Sanctions List
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not have active exclusions in the System for Award Management (SAM)
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not listed in the United Nations Security designation list
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not suspended or debarred
- Confirmation that the applicant has completed a risk assessment of the subrecipient, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.331(b)
- Any negative findings as a result of the risk assessment and the applicant's plan for mitigation.

g) Unique Identifier and SAM Requirements

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements. Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is exempted from requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

1. A**pplicants must include a UEI in applications (SF-424, field 8c) due on or after January 25, 2022**. The UEI is generated as part of sam.gov registration. Current sam.gov registrants have already been assigned their UEI and can view it in sam.gov and grants.gov. Additional information is available at: https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/organization/federal-acquisition-service/office-of-systems-management/integrated-award-environment-iae/iae-systems-information-kit/unique-entity-identifier-update and https://grantsgovprod.wordpress.com/2021/09/14/how-to-find-an-applicants-uei-within-grants-gov/
2. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. SAM is streamlining processes, eliminating the need to enter the same data multiple times, and consolidating hosting to make the process of doing business with the government more efficient (sam.gov).
3. Continue to 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 a Federal awarding agency.

The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin the process early. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements above by the time USAID is ready to make an award, USAID may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

SAM registration: sam.gov

Non-U.S. applicants can find additional resources for registering in SAM, including a Quick Start Guide and a video on how to obtain an NCAGE code, on sam.gov, navigate to Help, then to International Registrants.

h) History of Performance

Apparently Successful Applicants (lead applicant only) will submit past performance documentation. Only Apparently Successful Applicants will upload the completed Section A of this questionnaire to the AAMP website. A successful applicant's history of performance is part of the pre-award risk assessment. The remaining sections will be completed by USAID.

The applicant must provide information regarding its recent history of performance for all its cost-reimbursement contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs, not to exceed ten years or three relevant awards, as follows:

- Name of the Awarding Organization;
- Award Number;
- Activity Title;
- A brief description of the activity;
- Period of Performance;
- Award Amount;
- Reports and findings from any audits performed in the last three years ; and
- Name of at least two (2) updated professional contacts who most directly observed the work at the organization for which the service was performed with complete current contact information including telephone number, and e-mail address for each proposed individual.

If the applicant encountered problems on any of the referenced Awards, it may provide a short explanation and the corrective action taken. The applicant should not provide general information on its performance. USAID reserves the right to obtain relevant information concerning an applicant's history of performance from any sources and may consider such information in its review of the applicant's risk. The Agency may request additional information and conduct a pre-award survey if it determines that it is necessary to inform the risk assessment.

i) Branding Strategy & Marking Plan

The apparently successful applicant will be asked to provide a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan to be evaluated and approved by the Agreement Officer and incorporated into any resulting award.

Branding Strategy – Assistance

a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and negotiate a "Branding Strategy," describing how the program, project, or activity is named and positioned, and how it is promoted and communicated to beneficiaries and host country citizens.

b. The request for a Branding Strategy, by the Agreement Officer from the applicant, confers no rights to the applicant and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.

c. Failure to submit and negotiate a Branding Strategy within the time frame specified by the Agreement Officer will make the applicant ineligible for an award.

d. The applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth, in the budget portion of the application. These costs are subject to the revision and negotiation with the Agreement Officer and will be incorporated into the Total Estimated Amount of the grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance instrument.

e. The Branding Strategy must include, at a minimum, all of the following:

(1) All estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth.

(2) The intended name of the program, project, or activity.

(i) USAID requires the applicant to use the “USAID Identity,” comprised of the USAID logo and brandmark, with the tagline “from the American people” as found on the USAID Web site at http://www.usaid.gov/branding, unless Section VI of the RFA or APS states that the USAID Administrator has approved the use of an additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.

(ii) USAID prefers local language translations of the phrase “made possible by (or with) the generous support of the American People” next to the USAID Identity when acknowledging contributions.

(iii) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity and the applicant's identity.

(iv) If branding in the above manner is inappropriate or not possible, the applicant must explain how USAID's involvement will be showcased during publicity for the program or project.

(v) USAID prefers to fund projects that do not have a separate logo or identity that competes with the USAID Identity. If there is a plan to develop a separate logo to consistently identify this program, the applicant must attach a copy of the proposed logos. Section VI of the RFA or APS will state if an Administrator approved the use of an additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.

(3) The intended primary and secondary audiences for this project or program, including direct beneficiaries and any special target segments.

(4) Planned communication or program materials used to explain or market the program to beneficiaries.

(i) Describe the main program message.

(ii) Provide plans for training materials, posters, pamphlets, public service announcement, billboards, Web sites, and so forth, as appropriate.

(iii) Provide any plans to announce and promote publicly this program or project to host country citizens, such as media releases, press conferences, public events, and so forth. Applicant must incorporate the USAID Identity and the message, “USAID is from the American People.”

(iv) Provide any additional ideas to increase awareness that the American people support this project or program.

(5) Information on any direct involvement from host-country government or ministry, including any planned acknowledgement of the host-country government.

(6) Any other groups whose logo or identity the applicant will use on program materials and related materials. Indicate if they are a donor or why they will be visibly acknowledged, and if they will receive the same prominence as USAID.

e. The Agreement Officer will review the Branding Strategy to ensure the above information is adequately included and consistent with the stated objectives of the award, the applicant's cost data submissions, and the performance plan.

f. If the applicant receives an assistance award, the Branding Strategy will be included in and made part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement.

Marking Plan – Assistance

a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and negotiate a “Marking Plan,” detailing the public communications, commodities, and program materials, and other items that will visibly bear the “USAID Identity,” which comprises of the USAID logo and brandmark, with the tagline “from the American people.” The USAID Identity is the official marking for the Agency, and is found on the USAID Web site at http://www.usaid.gov/branding. Section VI of the RFA or APS will state if an Administrator approved the use of an additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.

b. The request for a Marking Plan, by the Agreement Officer from the applicant, confers no rights to the applicant and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.

c. Failure to submit and negotiate a Marking Plan within the time frame specified by the Agreement Officer will make the applicant ineligible for an award.

d. The applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth, in the budget portion of the application. These costs are subject to the revision and negotiation with the Agreement Officer and will be incorporated into the Total Estimated Amount of the grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance instrument.

e. The Marking Plan must include all of the following:

(1) A description of the public communications, commodities, and program materials that the applicant plans to produce and which will bear the USAID Identity as part of the award, including:

(i) Program, project, or activity sites funded by USAID, including visible infrastructure projects or other sites physical in nature;

(ii) Technical assistance, studies, reports, papers, publications, audiovisual productions, public service announcements, Web sites/Internet activities, promotional, informational, media, or communications products funded by USAID;

(iii) Commodities, equipment, supplies, and other materials funded by USAID, including commodities or equipment provided under humanitarian assistance or disaster relief programs; and

(iv) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity and the applicant's identity.

(v) Events financed by USAID, such as training courses, conferences, seminars, exhibitions, fairs, workshops, press conferences and other public activities. If the USAID Identity cannot be displayed, the recipient is encouraged to otherwise acknowledge USAID and the support of the American people.

(2) A table on the program deliverables with the following details:

(i) The program deliverables that the applicant plans to mark with the USAID Identity;

(ii) The type of marking and what materials the applicant will use to mark the program deliverables;

(iii) When in the performance period the applicant will mark the program deliverables, and where the applicant will place the marking;

(iv) What program deliverables the applicant does not plan to mark with the USAID Identity , and

(v) The rationale for not marking program deliverables.

(3) Any requests for an exemption from USAID marking requirements, and an explanation of why the exemption would apply. The applicant may request an exemption if USAID marking requirements would:

(i) Compromise the intrinsic independence or neutrality of a program or materials where independence or neutrality is an inherent aspect of the program and materials. The applicant must identify the USAID Development Objective, Interim Result, or program goal furthered by an appearance of neutrality, or state why an aspect of the award is presumptively neutral. Identify by category or deliverable item, examples of material for which an exemption is sought.

(ii) Diminish the credibility of audits, reports, analyses, studies, or policy recommendations whose data or findings must be seen as independent. The applicant must explain why each particular deliverable must be seen as credible.

(iii) Undercut host-country government “ownership” of constitutions, laws, regulations, policies, studies, assessments, reports, publications, surveys or audits, public service announcements, or other communications. The applicant must explain why each particular item or product is better positioned as host-country government item or product.

(iv) Impair the functionality of an item. The applicant must explain how marking the item or commodity would impair its functionality.

(v) Incur substantial costs or be impractical. The applicant must explain why marking would not be cost beneficial or practical.

vi) Offend local cultural or social norms, or be considered inappropriate. The applicant must identify the relevant norm, and explain why marking would violate that norm or otherwise be inappropriate.

(vii) Conflict with international law. The applicant must identify the applicable international law violated by the marking.

f. The Agreement Officer will consider the Marking Plan's adequacy and reasonableness and will approve or disapprove any exemption requests. The Marking Plan will be reviewed to ensure the above information is adequately included and consistent with the stated objectives of the award, the applicant's cost data submissions, and the performance plan.

g. If the applicant receives an assistance award, the Marking Plan, including any approved exemptions, will be included in and made part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement, and will apply for the term of the award unless provided otherwise.

j) Funding Restrictions

For special considerations and information pertaining to ineligible and restricted goods, services, and countries, please see the USAID Automated Directives System (ADS) *Major Functional Series 300: Acquisition and Assistance, Chapter 312 - Eligibility of Commodities.* It is the legal responsibility of USAID awardees to ensure compliance with all U.S. laws and regulations, including those that prohibit transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, sanctioned individuals, groups, and organizations.

Profit is not allowable for recipients or subrecipients under this award. See 2 CFR 200.330 for assistance in determining whether a sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor.

Construction will not be authorized under this award.

USAID will not allow the reimbursement of pre-award costs under this award without the explicit written approval of the Agreement Officer.

Except as may be specifically approved in advance by the AO, all commodities and services that will be reimbursed by USAID under this award must be from the authorized geographic code specified in Section B.4 of this NOFO and must meet the source and nationality requirements set forth in 22 CFR 228.

k) Audits

The applicant must specify any costs associated with the required “Single audit,” as defined at 2 CFR 200.501(b), for a non-federal entity that expends $750,000 or more during the non-federal entity’s fiscal year in federal awards.

l) Construction

Construction is not allowed under this NOFO.

m) Conflict of Interest Pre-Award Term

a. Personal Conflict of Interest

1. An actual or appearance of a conflict of interest exists when an applicant organization or an employee of the organization has a relationship with an Agency official involved in the competitive award decision-making process that could affect that Agency official’s impartiality. The term “conflict of interest” includes situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, the obligations and duties of a USAID employee or recipient employee.
2. The applicant must provide conflict of interest disclosures when it submits an SF-424. Should the applicant discover a previously undisclosed conflict of interest after submitting the application, the applicant must disclose the conflict of interest to the AO no later than ten (10) calendar days following discovery.

b. Organizational Conflict of Interest

The applicant must notify USAID of any actual or potential conflict of interest that they are aware of that may provide the applicant with an unfair competitive advantage in competing for this financial assistance award. Examples of an unfair competitive advantage include but are not limited to situations in which an applicant or the applicant's employee gained access to non-public information regarding a federal assistance funding opportunity, or an applicant or applicant's employee was substantially involved in the preparation of a federal assistance funding opportunity. USAID will promptly take appropriate action upon receiving any such notification from the applicant.