



USAID | UKRAINE

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Subject: NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)
NUMBER: 72012119RFA00003

Program Title: Ukraine Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity

Issuance Date: May 29, 2019
Deadline for Questions: June 12, 2019, by 16:00 Kyiv Local Time
Full Application Closing: July 8, 2019 by 16:00 Kyiv Local Time

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), through the Regional Contracting Office in Kyiv, Ukraine is seeking applications from eligible, qualified organizations for funding of an activity entitled "Ukraine Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity."

Eligibility for this award is restricted to Ukrainian entities. USAID strongly encourages applicants to develop consortia with other responsible and eligible organizations with complementary capabilities and experiences to develop applications in response to this NOFO and toward the achievement of results under the activity objectives. Eligible organizations interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this NOFO thoroughly to understand the type of project sought (Section I), the application submission requirements (Sections III and IV), and the evaluation process and review criteria (Section V). To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information required in this NOFO, and meet eligibility standards in Section III.

Applications must be received by the date and time indicated at the top of this cover letter. This funding opportunity is posted on www.grants.gov and may be amended. Any future amendments to this NOFO can be downloaded from www.grants.gov. Potential applicants should regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this NOFO. Applicants will need to have available or download Adobe program to their computers in order to view and save the Adobe forms properly. If you have difficulty registering on www.grants.gov or accessing the NOFO, please contact the Grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via mail at support@grants.gov for technical assistance.

Any questions concerning this NOFO should be submitted in writing to Ms. Marina Orlova, Administrative Agreement Officer/Senior Acquisition & Assistance Specialist, via email at morlova@usaid.gov with a copy to me at dharter@usaid.gov by the deadline stated above. Responses to the questions will be made available to all applicants through an amendment to this NOFO.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute any 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 an application. Further, USAID reserves the right to reject any or all applications received. Final award cannot be made until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated, and committed through internal USAID procedures. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense. Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

Daniel Harter
Regional Agreement Officer

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SECTION I – PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Activity Title: Ukraine Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity

I. Introduction

The purpose of a new Ukraine Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity (or “Activity” hereafter) is to improve the operating environment for civil society and strengthen the institutional capacities of civil society organizations (CSOs)¹ in order to advance the self-reliance of the civic sector in Ukraine. USAID/Ukraine will provide up to \$10,000,000, subject to the availability of funds, for the five-year Activity. The competition for this award will be limited to local Ukrainian organizations. The Activity is expected to be implemented through a consortium of two or more organizations.

II. Background and Problem Statement

Ukrainian civil society has served as a critical driver for democratic reform in the country for the past twenty-five years. Civil society has functioned as a short-term mobilizing force, capable of rallying millions of citizens to the street in protest of corrupt government practices, thereby bolstering Government of Ukraine (GOU) commitment to advancing more inclusive, accountable, equitable policies. At the same time, civil society has also functioned as a long-term institutional counterweight to the government, with the capacity to move reform processes forward, deliver effective services, and provide professional input into policy solutions. This ability to serve as a force for advancing both country commitment and country capacity makes civil society in Ukraine unique when compared to other post-Soviet countries. Despite these strengths, key weaknesses remain in the following areas:

Organizational Capacity: The capacities of CSOs in Ukraine have been gradually improving over time. Following the 2014 Revolution of Dignity, many international donors began increasing the amount of funding available for organizational capacity development. CSOs increasingly understand the importance of developing and adhering to well-defined missions, engaging in strategic planning, and developing internal policies and procedures.² A recent Ukraine Civil Society Sectoral Assessment found that 73 percent of surveyed civil society representatives could “partially” meet their organizational development (OD) needs.³ Donors such as UNDP, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the International Renaissance Foundation (IRF) and USAID provide significant support to national and regional CSOs to improve their organizational development. Additionally, CSOs themselves are using their own resources to improve their capacities by paying for employee trainings and hiring consultants to assist with development of internal strategies, policies and procedures.⁴

Despite the increasing emphasis of donors and organizations themselves on institutional development and the resulting improvement in overall capacities, challenges remain. Significant discrepancies exist between Kyiv-based and regional/locally based civic groups in terms of organizational procedures, governance, and quality of services. Newly established CSOs and

¹ “CSOs” under this Activity will include both formal organizations and civic groups

² CSO Sustainability Index Report (CSOSI), Ukraine, September 2018. <https://projects.keshif.me/CSO-SI/>

³ Ukraine Civil Society Sectoral Assessment, August 2018.

⁴ Ibid, CSOSI

unregistered groups are particularly disadvantaged and lack access to resources to help improve their development. In general terms, Kyiv-based CSOs have prioritized developing advocacy skills and maintaining relationships with external donors while regional and local civic groups have prioritized local fundraising and relationships with citizens. Reporting from the Capacity Building Marketplace, implemented by ISAR-Ednannia, indicates that demand for their organizational development grants is growing and that the number of applications for grant support received per month increased by 30 percent in 2018 compared to 2012. For the majority of well-established CSOs, ISAR Marketplace grants represent the only funding source for organizational development.

Legal Enabling Environment: The legal enabling environment for civil society in Ukraine is in flux. In recent years, progress has been made in terms of improved registration processes for CSOs, increased engagement between citizens and local governments, and increased transparency of state funding processes. At the same time, Ukrainian CSOs are still subject to excessive administrative burdens and new e-declaration reporting requirements for anti-corruption groups. Additionally, draft legislative amendments which would increase reporting requirements and restrict open access to foreign funding have routinely surfaced on the parliamentary agenda.

National level civil society organizations and coalitions have played a significant role in pushing the reform agenda in key priority areas as well as monitoring and safeguarding the enabling environment in which Ukrainian civil society operates. A National Strategy to Promote Civil Society Development in Ukraine has been adopted, which includes addressing issues related to the legal enabling environment for civil society. Implementation of the Strategy, however, remains limited.

Dependence on foreign funding is a significant challenge for Ukrainian civil society and the existing legal and regulatory framework does little to promote transparent and sustainable local funding. The current tax code provides little incentive for corporate or individual giving, the procedure for accessing state funding is complex and the distribution of funding is non-transparent, and the process for legally engaging in social entrepreneurship activities is not well-defined or consistently made permissible for CSOs.

Harassment and attacks against civic actors, as well as impunity of perpetrators is becoming increasingly common in Ukraine. The number and severity of attacks is only likely to increase in lead up to the 2019 elections. Legal aid for individual activists and emergency assistance for CSOs, particularly in the regions, is insufficient to address this likely increase in attacks.

Emerging Integrity Challenges: Several new and disturbing trends are impacting the ability of civil society in Ukraine to operate. Deteriorating civic space, which is common in several neighboring countries in the region, is relatively new for Ukraine. As described above, this deterioration includes both the increasing numbers of attacks on civic activists as well as the introduction of restrictive legislation and regulations. The sector is likely to experience an uptick in these occurrences in the period between Presidential and Parliamentary elections.

A second new trend is the increase in ‘fake’⁵ or illegitimate CSOs. This designation includes inactive CSOs which are technically registered as operational and which artificially inflate the

⁵ Ibid, Ukraine CS Sectoral Assessment

size of the sector. More concerning, this designation includes groups that have been established as CSOs as a cover for engaging in political, business, criminal or paramilitary activities. The fact that these organizations are legally operating is highly problematic, as is their impact on the public image of the CSO sector.

A third new trend is the radicalization of civic activists in Ukraine. The past few years has seen the emergence of various far right actors that use hate speech, promote intolerance, and threaten to use or do use violence. These actions promote extremist views, obstruct citizens' fundamental rights and freedoms, and undermine legitimate civil society and principles of non-violent citizen action. In numerous instances, Ukrainian law enforcement has provided these groups and individuals with impunity or even tacit support. The impact of these trends on the civil society sector is not fully understood. The most effective ways for civil society to address these challenges is equally unclear.

Connectivity of Civic Actors: The majority of CSOs in Ukraine struggle to connect with citizens. This lack of constituency is most common among national level, advocacy-based CSOs, with recent research showing that only seven percent of Ukrainian citizens are engaging in civic activism.⁶ A majority of CSOs recognize the necessity of engaging citizens as a means of promoting long term sustainability of the sector; however they fail to effectively prioritize engagement in their activities.

At the same time, Ukrainian CSOs are not connecting or engaging with one another through coalition or networking initiatives. Despite having one of the most well-known national level civic coalitions in the region, the Reanimation Package of Reforms (RPR), a recent online survey indicates that 50 percent of CSOs are not taking part in any coalition activities.⁷ This lack of cooperation and networking is most notable between Kyiv-based versus regional/local organizations as well as formally registered and institutionally established groups versus newly emerging or unregistered groups.

In sum, despite the impressive capacity of Ukrainian civil society to serve as both a mobilizing force and an institutional check on government, key challenges to sustainability remain and new challenges to integrity are emerging. Maintaining comprehensive sectoral support to civil society in Ukraine is critical to ensure continued democratic progress in the country.

III. Relationship to Mission Strategy

This Activity contributes to Development Objective 3: Democratic Governance Strengthened, under USAID/Ukraine's five-year Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) for the 2019-2024 time period. Specifically, the Activity will help advance the following lower-level results:

IR 3.1: Citizens Engaged in Good Governance

Sub-IR 3.1.2: Strengthened civil society organizational capacity

IR 3.2: Government More Responsive and Accountable to Citizens

⁶ Democratic Initiatives Foundation (DIF) and Razumkov Center for Sociological Services Polling, May 2018. <https://dif.org.ua/article/gromadyanske-suspilstvo-v-ukraini-vikliki-i-zavdannya>

⁷ Ibid, Ukraine CS Sectoral Assessment.

Sub-IR 3.2.4: Strengthened legal enabling environment for civil society and independent media

IV. Program Approach

The primary development challenge the Activity will address is the ability of Ukraine's civil society sector to sustainably advance country commitment and capacity for self-reliance over the long-term. Sectoral sustainability includes the organizational capacities of civil society, the legal operating environment, and newly emerging threats related to illiberal effects on the sector. Building on the accomplishments and lessons learned of USAID's ongoing civil society programs (including the Ukraine Civil Society Enabling Environment Activity implemented by the Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Research, and the Ukraine Civil Society Capacity-Building Activity implemented by ISAR-Ednannia), the Activity will use a coalition-based approach to further strengthen the sustainability of Ukrainian civil society. The Activity will provide technical and financial support to a wide range of civil society organizations and groups, including registered CSOs; Kyiv-based, regionally based, and locally based CSOs; newly registered CSOs; informal and unregistered groups, voluntary initiatives, civic movements and others. The Activity will work with existing national and regional level coalitions to advance legislative reforms impacting the sector and will establish new, issues-based coalitions and networking opportunities for CSOs. The Activity will prioritize connecting local, community-based initiatives with national and regional level CSOs. The Activity is expected to work throughout Ukraine, with an emphasis on local and regional engagement and support.

Development Hypothesis underlying the Activity:

The overarching hypothesis is that ***IF*** the operating environment for civil society is improved and the institutional capacities of the civil society organizations (CSOs) are strengthened, ***THEN*** the self-reliance of the civic sector in Ukraine will be advanced.

Thematic Partners

To promote greater coalition building across all project activities, additional informal 'thematic' partners will be identified under each Objective area. Each Objective's lead organization will involve thematic partners for their respective activities. To involve more or less thematic partners will depend on the nature of the intervention. For example, an advocacy campaign on improving tax incentives for charitable giving would benefit from involvement of a greater number of thematic partners/CSOs; the provision of legal defense for civic activists may involve working with only a few thematic partner(s) per city/region.

Demand-Based Assistance Prioritization

In order to effectively respond to the needs of civil society, the provided technical and financial assistance will be demand based. Coalition partners will engage in routine sectoral consultations to determine priority areas and tailor assistance accordingly. For example, if a majority of CSOs express a need for receiving support in diversifying their financial resources, securing services for delivering this type of assistance will be prioritized. If a large number of CSOs express an interest/concern on a particular draft amendment or regulation, advocacy efforts around that amendment or regulation will be prioritized. Coalition partners will be empowered to determine priority needs and tailor assistance options accordingly.

V. Activity Purpose, Objectives and Expected Results

The purpose of the Activity is to improve the operating environment for civil society and strengthen the institutional capacities of the civil society organizations (CSOs) in order to advance the self-reliance of the civic sector in Ukraine. USAID anticipates the following Activity breakdown: (1) Strengthen institutional capacities of civil society organizations (approximately 50%)⁸; (2) Improve legal enabling environment for civil society (approximately 35%); (3) Enhance research and learning of civil society sectoral challenges, opportunities, and best practices (approximately 15%).

Overall Expected Results (Objectives)

- Institutional capacities of civil society organizations (CSOs) strengthened
- Legal enabling environment for civil society improved
- Research and learning of civil society sectoral challenges, opportunities, and best practices enhanced

Objective 1: Strengthen institutional capacities of civil society organizations (CSOs) (approximately 50%)

The Activity will strengthen the organizational capacities of civic organizations and groups on a demand-driven/needs-based approach. Recent survey results found that the greatest needs for capacity building support are fundraising, effective public communications, effective coalition building and networking. In addition to these being the self-identified capacity building needs of civil society, there are other areas that are key to long term self-sustainability, including strategic planning, business development, financial management and other areas. The program will prioritize capacity building activities in these areas and will continuously reassess the organizational development (OD) needs of civil society and adjust their support areas accordingly.

The Activity will provide organizational development support to a diverse range of civic groups: well-established, formal, registered CSOs, informal and unregistered groups, voluntary initiatives, civic movements, intermediary support organizations (ISOs) and other groups. In particular, the Activity will improve the accessibility of resources and support to newly established civic groups and unregistered groups. These organizations and initiatives may benefit from receiving assistance in constituency management practices, fundraising, advocacy and coalition building, registration, and more. Similar to OD assistance to more well-established CSOs, OD support to these groups should be demand-driven and prioritized in order to support their long-term sustainability. New areas of OD support that are more relevant to newly established or unregistered groups should be explored and offered, such as basic leadership and team building skills, resources mobilization tools and others.

In order to enhance capacity building support to the civil society sector throughout the entire country, the Activity will work with regionally oriented ISOs to act as resource centers for

⁸ Notional distribution of Activity resources among objectives

community based civic groups. ISOs' capacities to provide technical, organizational and re-granting support will be strengthened. The Activity will also link well-established CSOs with nascent civic groups and will connect local, regional, and national level civic organizations.

The Activity will improve the quality of OD support services being offered to civil society by developing a comprehensive quality control standards and screening process. Standards may include trainer certifications, comprehensive screening of all new service providers, minimum quality requirements and other requirements. Standards and screenings should draw on the expertise of Ukrainian and international training and consulting groups.

Sublevel Results for Objective 1:

- Strengthened organizational capacities of CSOs in high need/demand-driven areas (particularly those pertaining to CSOs' sustainability), including financial management, financial diversification, fundraising, strategic planning, business development, outreach and communications and other areas
- Enhanced organizational development support to a diverse range of civic groups (well-established, formal, registered CSOs, informal and unregistered groups, voluntary initiatives, civic movements, ISOs and other groups)
- Mentorship program linking well-established CSOs with nascent civic groups developed
- Improved quality of services by providers of organizational development support
- Quality assurance standards developed for service providers

Objective 2: Improve legal enabling environment for civil society (approximately 35%)

The Activity will increase the number and effectiveness of demand driven, consensus-based advocacy campaigns to further improve the legal enabling environment (LEE) for civil society in Ukraine. Advocacy campaigns should be carried out at the local, regional and national level. To promote ownership and improve effectiveness, advocacy campaigns should be as inclusive as possible and involve a broad range of civil society stakeholders.

The Activity will prioritize advocacy initiatives which would contribute to the long-term sustainability of the civil society sector, including legislative and regulatory changes which promote various forms of giving. This may include changes to the tax code to promote individual and corporate donations and simplification of existing or new State Funding mechanisms. Additionally, the Activity will increase and improve formal and informal platforms between various stakeholders, including civil society, government and the private sector, to promote a culture of giving in Ukraine.

To protect and safeguard the CSO enabling environment, the Activity will conduct ongoing monitoring of all draft legislation which could directly or indirectly impact CSO operations. The Activity will ensure a broad range of civil society is aware of draft and recently enacted legislation as well as means for compliance (as applicable). The Activity should draw on international expertise and involve members of the international community in advocacy initiatives as needed.

The Activity will ensure sufficient legal support is available for civic activists and organizations experiencing harassment and attacks as a result of their work. This may include the establishment

of regional and local Legal Aid Centers, technical assistance to CSOs, and ad hoc and/or pro bono legal assistance. Assistance in this area should be demand based and rapidly scalable.

Sublevel Results for Objective 2:

- Increased advocacy efforts at national and local levels to improve the legal enabling environment (LEE) for civil society in Ukraine
- Increased coalition building around thematic advocacy initiatives
- Improved dialogue, partnerships and platforms between civil society, government, and private sector on issues related to advancing the ecosystem for giving in Ukraine
- Increased monitoring of the legal enabling environment
- Improved legal and regulatory policies related to operating environment for civil society
- Improved legal framework to promote various forms of giving (i.e., tax incentives, simplification of State funding, corporate social responsibility, etc.)
- Increased awareness of new legislation and regulations
- Improved local legal capacities
- Expanded legal assistance for civic activists and CSOs

Objective 3: Enhance research and learning of civil society sectoral challenges, opportunities, and best practices (approximately 15%)

Activities carried out within Objective 3 will complement and support activities within Objectives 1 and 2. The primary purpose of this Objective will be to design and implement a rigorous learning agenda which will inform all other project activities and partners as well as larger civil society. Activities will include ongoing assessments of the civil society sector as well as target CSOs'/groups'/coalitions' developments and needs. The Activity will conduct in-depth research on new trends such as those related to the operating environment, new capacity building demands, illegitimate or 'fake' NGOs potential increase in radicalized civic activism and other issues. Activities will identify and research various challenges which impact civil society and provide action-oriented recommendations on how to effectively address or account for them. Lastly, this Objective will include routine monitoring and evaluation of activities carried out within Objectives 1 and 2.

Sublevel Results for Objective 3:

- Increased in-depth research on new challenges and opportunities impacting civil society operation, development and sustainability (i.e., the increase in 'fake' or illegitimate CSOs or radicalized civic activities, opportunities for financial diversification, etc.)
- Improved ability of civil society to continuously assess sectoral and target CSOs'/groups'/coalitions' developments and needs using various knowledge platforms
- Knowledge Clearing House established and accessible to all civil society
- Ongoing monitoring and learning of consortium partners activities conducted
- Improved implementation of consortium partner activities as a result of continuous monitoring, learning and adaptation

VI. Mandatory Cross-Cutting Considerations

The following cross-cutting considerations will be incorporated throughout this program.

Gender: USAID requires that all activities address gender considerations, ensuring that both men and women benefit from USAID support and that gender awareness is a built-in component of project activities. USAID/Ukraine's Gender Analysis Report summarizes the major observations and recommendations for technical support in Ukraine.⁹

The 2018 World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index puts Ukraine in 65th place ranking it 105 in terms of political empowerment of women out of 149 countries. The 2017 UNDP Human Development Report Gender Inequality Index ranked the country in the 61st out of 189 countries included. These numbers have remained relatively static over the past several years.

While gender has been stated to be a GOU priority and multiple actions have been taken to show this commitment (robust legal framework to support gender equality, creation of national gender equality machinery, creation of National Program on Gender Equality, etc.) several challenges and obstacles remain, including non-prioritization of gender equality in national policy and administrative reforms; the non-integration of gender in national statistics, planning, budgeting, and monitoring and evaluation of government programs; overt sexism in the mass media and advertising; and, lack of donor coordination and commitment to mainstreaming gender into development programs.

A characteristic of the E&E region is, while overall women's participation in the civil society sector tends to be high, this does not necessarily reflect the role of women in society at large. Furthermore, despite women's high participation in civil society activities, they are often underrepresented in the leadership of CSOs.

The Activity will ensure that (1) women and men benefit equally and are treated without discrimination; (2) resources are fairly distributed, taking into account the different needs of women and men; (3) the wide ranging societal, political and economic effects of differences in gender roles are taken into account. Specifically, the Activity will:

- Promote and improve the application of gender analysis when working with CSOs to draft, review, and promote government legislation and regulations.
- Incorporate gender equality issues in all activities, including analysis of policies and legislation and advocacy activities.
- Include gender equality considerations in all activity-related organizational development trainings to increase awareness of gender gaps.
- Support the development of partnerships among organizations that have a constituency base predominately male or female to build information exchange on key social issues in a community or area.
- Work with CSO management to provide training on how to appropriately address gender discrimination and sexual harassment.
- Build the capacities of women's CSOs to advocate for their inclusion in policy decisions.
- Build the capacity of Ukrainian CSOs to respond to gender-specific interests of citizens.

⁹ http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pa00mq3k.pdf

- Support Ukrainian coalitions or networks dealing with gender equality in the application of government policies and practices.
- Strive for at least 30/70% female/male or male/female participation in all program activities, including trainings, meetings, workshops, etc. (not less 30% and not more 70% of each sex).
- Provide trainings to interested CSOs on how to build and maintain a gender balance in CSO staff as a key organizational development practice, how to incorporate gender issues in CSO activities and how to monitor and report gender-related work.
- Ensure activity staff accountability for developing gender-sensitive performance indicators for measuring activity success;
- Include performance indicators in the Management, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan that would acknowledge the impact of gender relations on activity results as well as its impact on gender relations;
- Disaggregate MEL Plan performance indicators data by sex as appropriate and feasible; and
- Clearly indicate the areas or aspects of the activity in which gender is relevant and specifically show in the Implementation Plan and MEL Plan how gender issues will be addressed, how results will be determined taking gender into account; and what resources will be provided to do this.

USAID will monitor the implementation of the gender requirements. For more information about USAID requirements to address gender equality and women's empowerment in all projects, see ADS Chapter 205, Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle.¹⁰

Inclusive Development: The inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PWD), Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), veterans, youth, the elderly, minorities, gender and sexual minorities (such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex persons [LGBTI]), and other vulnerable groups remains a challenge for Ukraine's democratic development and governance reforms. Where legal protections do exist, implementation remains ad hoc or ineffective at protecting the rights of the most vulnerable. The Activity will develop and implement interventions and approaches that apply USAID policies and visions on Persons with Disabilities, LGBTI, and Youth, as well as international best practices on inclusive development, towards achieving the stated objectives.

Sustainability and Self-Reliance: Financial viability continues to be the weakest dimension of CSO sustainability in Ukraine, both for newly emerged organizations and well-established organizations. Grants from foreign donors represent the primary source of funding for national level CSOs. CSOs based in the regions suffer acutely from this challenge with many groups located outside of oblast centers that are unable to secure sustainable funding for projects. Despite this long-standing challenge, public and private philanthropy is slowly developing and CSOs are seeking alternative fundraising methods to support their activities. Recent polling numbers indicate that 37 percent of Ukrainians donated to charitable causes in 2016 versus only 21 percent in 2012.¹¹ Additionally, many newly established CSOs are testing out alternative funding sources such as social service provision, voluntary contributions, crowdfunding, engaging local businesses, etc. This Activity will undertake efforts that will directly contribute to the

¹⁰ <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/205.pdf>

¹¹ Ibid. DIF Polling

growth of domestic funding sources. Activities under Objective 1 will strengthen CSOs' organizational capacities to secure diverse funding sources and Objective 2 will improve the legislative and regulatory frameworks for various forms of giving, including amendments to the tax code to incentivize public and private donations.

Many CSOs fail to effectively communicate and involve Ukrainian citizens in their activities. This lack of constituency engagement undermines the legitimacy of CSOs, which impacts their long-term sustainability. The Activity will work with CSOs to build their organizational capacities to effectively communicate with citizens. Many of the newly emerging civil society groups have strong citizen support because they derive from volunteer initiatives. The Activity will provide capacity building support to these newly emerging groups, helping them to further expand their citizen support base and connect them with more well established CSOs.

In 2017, USAID reaffirmed its commitment to working with a diverse array of partners, including civil society, to advance the principles of self-reliance and locally sustained development.¹² This project will advance these efforts in a number of ways. First, as stated above, the project will improve several fundamental sub-sectors of civil society development which are fundamental for long term sustainability: the legal enabling environment and organizational capacity. Second, by prioritizing a demand-driven approach, the project will empower civil society to determine their own organizational weaknesses/needs and seek support that is in line with these needs. Lastly, the project will be implemented by Ukrainian organizations, which will help strengthen the internal project management capacities of the implementing partners and empower them to self-identify their own development solutions as they relate to improving their organizational capacities and the legal enabling environment.

VII. Coordination with Other USAID Projects

The Activity will provide organizational development support to civic groups engaged in a broad spectrum of development sectors (economic, health, agriculture, energy, education, and others). Additionally, supported advocacy campaigns will require participation of CSOs engaged in a variety of sectors and will have far reaching impact. The program will therefore be implemented in close collaboration with all Mission activities, including those outside of the democracy and governance sector portfolio.¹³ This will ensure that a broad range of CSOs will have access to organizational development assistance and are involved in/aware of advocacy initiatives which could impact their work. The Activity will provide numerous opportunities to link to USAID's ongoing civic activism project, ENGAGE (Enhance Non-Governmental Actors and Grassroots Engagement). ENGAGE aims to increase citizens' awareness of and engagement in civic activities at the national, regional and local level. Specifically, ENGAGE seeks to increase civic education, promote democratic reforms through local coalitions, improve the capacity of civil society organizations and ensure sustainability of civic engagement in Ukraine. Efforts to increase civic engagement will require close coordination and joint action with activities to be carried out under this program. The Activity will also provide numerous opportunities to link to USAID's new media program in Ukraine (MPU), implemented by Internews. Close collaboration is necessary and expected with existing activities taking place under the Anti-Corruption and Local Governance/Decentralization Projects. Award documents will include mandatory coordination

¹² <https://www.usaid.gov/selfreliance>

¹³ <https://www.usaid.gov/ukraine/our-work>

and communication of implementing partners who are carrying out related activities. Furthermore, once the award is made, it is recommended that related activities share Implementation Plans and Reports to ensure proper coordination.

Specifically, the Activity should coordinate with:

- ENGAGE activity implemented by Pact Inc.
- Human Rights Program implemented by the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union
- Local Governance and Decentralization Programs, including Policy for Ukraine Local Self Governance (PULSE) and Decentralization Offering Better Results and Efficiency (DOBRE)
- Democratic Governance East (DG East) activity implemented by Chemonics International
- The Ukraine Confidence Building Initiative in Ukraine (UCBI) implemented by Chemonics International
- All USAID Anti-Corruption activities, including Transparency and Accountability in Public Administration and Services (TAPAS) and Support to Anti-Corruption Champion Institutions (SACCI).

LIST OF ANALYTICAL RESOURCES

Links to the following documents are provided to 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 NOFO.

Charity Report, Zagoriy Foundation, 2017

http://zagoriy.foundation/Charity_report_2017_Zagoriy_Foundation.pdf

Civic Literacy in Ukraine, Public Opinion Poll, Kyiv International Institute of Sociology for the UNDP, 2016

http://www.ua.undp.org/content/ukraine/en/home/library/democratic_governance/civilliteracy.html

Civil Society in Ukraine Poll: Challenges, Democratic Initiatives Foundation, August 2018

<https://dif.org.ua/article/gromadyanske-suspilstvo-v-ukraini-vikliki-i-zavdannya>

Civil Society in 2018: New Challenges and New Tasks, Democratic Initiatives Foundation, 2018.

<https://dif.org.ua/uploads/pdf/13963398165a9eef1b022177.77359526.pdf>

Council of Europe, Acting plan for Ukraine 2018-2021 <https://rm.coe.int/168078b606>

CSO Sustainability Index Report-Ukraine, 2017

<https://www.fhi360.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/resource-csosi-2017-report-europe-eurasia.pdf>

Democratic Initiatives Foundation and the Ukrainian Sociology Service for UNDP, Public Opinion about Human Rights in Ukraine, 2017

<http://www.ua.undp.org/content/ukraine/en/home/library/recovery-and-peacebuilding/humanrightsresearch.html>

EdEra, Crowdfunding in Ukraine <https://bigggidea.com/projects/>

European Union Country Roadmap for Engagement with Civil Society- Ukraine, 2014-2017.

https://cdn5-eeas.fpfis.tech.ec.europa.eu/cdn/farfuture/IbJGbpUOGt-dLk33oDmDAtQ2E4Fyo9B1Ph-6CZXGjnI/mtime:1474795256/sites/eeas/files/ukraine_civil_society_roadmap_2014.pdf

Freedom House Nations in Transit Report- Ukraine, 2018

<https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2018/ukraine>

Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, U.S. Agency for International Development, 2012 https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/GenderEqualityPolicy_0.pdf

Government of Ukraine, Decentralization Reform, 2018 <https://decentralization.gov.ua/en/about>

- ICNL, Explaining Percentage Philanthropy: Legal Nature, Rationales, Impact.
<http://www.icnl.org/research/library/files/Transnational/eurregexplainingpercentagephilanthropy.pdf>
- Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS), Sociological Research
<https://www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=eng>
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SECTION II – FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. Estimated Total Funding Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

Subject to funding availability, USAID anticipates awarding one (1) Cooperative Agreement with a total estimated amount up to \$10,000,000 over a 5-year period. The actual funding amount is subject to availability of funds.

2. Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Awards

The estimated start date will be on or about October 1, 2019. The anticipated period of performance will be five (5) years from the effective date of the award.

3. Substantial Involvement

Through a Cooperative Agreement, USAID reserves the right of substantial involvement in assistance awards (including monitoring performance, reviewing reports, and/or providing approvals, in order to effectively support the achievement of the expected results, in addition to the standard prior approvals). USAID considers collaboration with the awardee crucial for the successful implementation of this program. Substantial involvement is deemed necessary and therefore is anticipated between USAID and the recipient during the performance of this activity.

Substantial involvement under the proposed award shall include the following:

- Review and approval of the Recipient's Initial Implementation Plan, Annual Implementation Plans (Work Plans), including the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (MELP). Any significant changes to the approved Implementation Plan and the MELP will require additional approval of the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR).
- Review and approval of key personnel and any changes by the AOR;
- Subawards (sub-contracts and sub-grants): Approval of all subawards including extensions. The AOR will be substantially involved in approval of subawards and contracts.

The above substantial involvement will be delegated to the AOR. The AOR will be responsible for oversight and technical guidance of the Recipient, both in writing and verbally. The recipient will be expected to meet regularly (via phone, email or in person) with the AOR or his/her designee to review the status of activities, and should be prepared to make periodic briefings to USAID as appropriate.

4. Title to Property

Property Title will be vested with the Recipient in accordance with 2 CFR 200.311.

5. Authorized Geographic Code

The authorized Geographic Code for procurement of goods and services under this award is 110 and 937 as described in 22 CFR 228.

6. Purpose of the Award

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient and under the subject Activity is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support to the Ukraine Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity described in the Program Description, in Section I of this NOFO.

The Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the activity objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices. The Recipient will assume responsibility for administering Federal funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, activity objectives, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award. The Recipient using its own unique combination of staff, facilities, and experience, has the primary responsibility for employing whatever form of sound organization and management techniques may be necessary in order to assure proper and efficient administration of the resulting award.

[END OF SECTION II]

SECTION III - ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligibility for this award is restricted to Ukrainian local organizations.

A. Consortium Approach

USAID strongly encourages applicants to develop consortia with other responsible and eligible organizations with complementary capabilities and experiences that can help achieve the results of this Activity's objectives.

All applications are expected to demonstrate capacity to address the full scope of the program objectives and programmatic elements listed in Section I of this NOFO. It is possible that one organization alone may have all the skills necessary to pursue the program objectives. However, interested organizations may partner with other organizations and form a consortium or other type of formal partnership as a means of demonstrating capacity to meet all Activity objectives. If applying as a consortium, the application should clearly identify the lead organization, as well as include an explanation of how the consortium will be managed and how work assignments will be coordinated.

Please note, when the Applicant works with a consortium or subrecipients, a Cooperative Agreement must be issued to the Prime "Apparently Successful Applicant," and not to any of the consortium or subrecipient members. The Prime Recipient of the Cooperative Agreement may make subawards to the consortium members as necessary for Activity implementation.

B. Types of Entities Eligible to Apply

USAID encourages applications from potential new partners. USAID will not accept applications from individuals.

The eligibility requirements below apply to the Prime Applicant:

Any local (Ukrainian) non-governmental or commercial organizations in Ukraine, who are able to respond to the NOFO and be able to mobilize in a short period of time, are eligible to apply under this NOFO.

USAID defines a local organization as one that:

- Is organized under the laws of the recipient country;
- Has its principal place of business or operations in Ukraine;
- Is majority-owned by individuals who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of the recipient country or is managed by the governing body, the majority of whose members are citizens or lawful permanent residents of Ukraine; and
- Is not controlled by a foreign entity or by an individual or individuals who are not citizens or permanent residents of Ukraine.

The term "control" or "controlled by" in the above definition means having a majority ownership or beneficially interest, or the power, either directly or indirectly, whether exercised or exercisable, to control the election, appointment, or tenure of the organization's managers or a

majority of the organization's governing body by any means, e.g., ownership, contract, or operation of law. The term "foreign entity" means an organization that fail to meet any part of the "local organization" definition.

Local organizations must meet the definition for local organization, as defined above, in Ukraine.

Applicants must have established financial management, monitoring and evaluation processes, internal control systems, and policies and procedures that comply with established U.S. Government standards, laws, and regulations. The Recipient must be a responsible entity. The AO may determine a pre-award survey is required to conduct an examination that will determine whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award. Pre-award surveys are time-consuming and award decisions are based on the survey findings.

To be eligible for award of a Cooperative Agreement, in addition to other conditions of this NOFO, organizations must have 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, 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 sub-awards issued under this Cooperative Agreement.

C. New Partners

USAID encourages applications from new partners that have not previously received USG funding. However, resultant awards to these organizations may be delayed because USAID generally must conduct pre-award surveys of these organizations in order to make a risk assessment decision, in accordance with ADS 303.3.9. Please refer to Section V of this NOFO, for additional information on pre-award surveys.

D. Number of Applications that May be Submitted

Any one entity including consortium members may submit one application for funding in response to this NOFO.

E. Cost Sharing

Cost sharing is not required under this Activity.

F. 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.

[END OF SECTION III]

SECTION IV – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. POINT OF CONTACT INFORMATION:

The point of contact for this NOFO is Ms. Marina Orlova at morlova@usaid.gov, with a copy to Mr. Daniel Harter at dharter@usaid.gov. The point of contact will receive all questions related to this NOFO by the deadline specified in the cover letter. Responses to the questions will be made available to all potential applicants through an amendment to this NOFO and posted on www.grants.gov. The point of contact will also receive all applications related to this NOFO by the closing date specified on the cover letter.

To be considered for this funding opportunity, all applicants must follow the procedures set out in this NOFO. USAID may exclude applicants from further consideration if any submission is not within these parameters. Applications and all supporting material must be submitted in English.

B. APPLICATION MATERIALS AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

Applications must be submitted electronically via e-mail to the point of contact for this NOFO, Ms. Orlova at morlova@usaid.gov, with a copy to Mr. Harter at dharter@usaid.gov. Note: Hard copy or faxed applications are not acceptable.

All applications received by the closing date and time indicated on the cover letter will be reviewed for responsiveness and programmatic merit in accordance with the specifications outlined in these guidelines and the application format. Section V. addresses the merit review criteria and evaluation procedures for the applications.

Complete application packages must be received by USAID no later than the closing date and time indicated at the top of the NOFO cover letter at the place designated for receipt of applications. Failure to include all information or to organize the application in the manner prescribed may result in rejection of the application as being unacceptable. Applications which are received late or incomplete will not be considered unless the Agreement Officer determines it to be in the U.S. Government's interest.

Applicants who 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."

Applications shall be submitted in two separate parts: (a) Technical Application, 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, DUNS number, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail address. Applications should be submitted in **TWO** e-mails inclusive of attachments. The TWO e-mails inclusive of attachments should be labeled as follows:

- 1) ORGANIZATION NAME – CIVIL SOCIETY SECTORAL SUPPORT RFA – TECHNICAL APPLICATION
- 2) ORGANIZATION NAME – CIVIL SOCIETY SECTORAL SUPPORT RFA – COST APPLICATION

USAID will send confirmation e-mails when the electronic files are successfully received. If no email confirmation has been provided, then the electronic materials were not received. Applicants should retain for their records one copy of all enclosures which accompany their application.

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 merit review criteria found in Section V. of the NOFO.

C. FORMAT AND CONTENT OF APPLICATION

1. GENERAL APPLICATION FORMAT

Technical Applications (electronic copy only) **must be in MS Word or PDF** format, single spaced, utilizing **Times New Roman 12-font size**, typed on standard A4 sized paper with 2cm margins on top, bottom, left and right, numbered consecutively, and **not exceed 30 pages**. The cover page, table of contents, acronyms list, executive summary, and annexes will not count toward the page limitation of the Technical Application. Any pages that exceed the page limitation will not be considered by the review committee. All materials and supporting documentation must be submitted in English.

Applications will be evaluated on programmatic merit and subsequently on cost. As such, the Technical Application will have more significance than the Cost Application in the selection of a successful applicant. The Technical Application should demonstrate the applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this program. Therefore, it should be specific, concise, and complete. It should take into account and be arranged in the order of the merit review criteria specified in Section V.

Each applicant shall furnish the information required by this NOFO. The applicant shall sign the application and certifications and print or type its name on the cover page of the technical and

cost applications. 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.

2. TECHNICAL APPLICATION FORMAT AND CONTENT:

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 will consist of the sections presented below. For ease of review, please place a header at the beginning of each new section.

The following outlines the page limits for the application. Pages exceeding these page limits will not be evaluated. In addition, if the annexes contain information that relates to the technical application, they will not be scored (e.g. placing elements of technical understanding and proposed approaches in an annex is unacceptable). Elaborate art work and/or visual and other presentation aids are neither necessary nor wanted.

The substance of the Technical Application should be used to address those considerations in Section V, APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION. The cover page, table of contents, acronyms list, executive summary, and annexes are not included in the page limit of 30 pages, however, the executive summary should not exceed 3 pages. The number of pages used for annexes should be reasonable and include only the minimum information necessary.

There is a 20-page limit for the combination of the Technical Approach, the Implementation Plan, and the Staffing Plan. These 20 pages, after any negotiated revisions, will be included in the resultant Cooperative Agreement. Additionally, there is a 5-page limit for the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (MELP). There is a 3-page limit for the Institutional Capability and a 2-page limit for Past Performance. The aggregate length of technical application should not exceed 30 pages.

The following are the details of the Technical Application content. The Technical Application should be submitted in the following format:

a) Cover Page (not included in page limitations) -

The cover page must include at a minimum the following information:

- NOFO Number
- Activity Title
- Name of the organization(s) submitting the proposal (the lead or primary applicant and consortium members clearly identified)
- Contact person for the prime applicant, including this individual's name (both typed and his/her signature), title or position with the organization/institution, address, telephone and fax numbers and e-mail address.

Applicants should also state clearly whether the identified contact person has the authority to negotiate on behalf of the prime applicant, or, if not, the contact information for the appropriate person with the authority to negotiate.

b) Table of Contents (not included in page limitations) -

This page shall list all sections of the Technical Application with page numbers and attachments.

c) Acronyms List (not included in page limitations) -

This page shall include the list of acronyms used in the Technical Application.

d) Executive Summary (not included in page limitations; should not exceed 3 pages) -

This section shall briefly describe:

- Concise summary of the approach and core activities that will lead to anticipated results and stated objectives; and
- Concise summary of how the overall project will be managed and implemented.

e) Technical Approach (included in the 20 page limitation) -

In this section, the applicant is not to merely repeat what is already described in this NOFO. The applicant should present a program description that focuses on describing the program that the applicant will implement. In this description, the applicant should discuss how they propose to achieve the objectives and make a significant contribution toward achieving the strategic purpose and priorities identified in USAID's activity description. Applicants will present a convincing and compelling articulation of their program and technical approach and demonstrate why it is the most effective way to realize the objectives of this activity, including a reasonable course of action and tasks relevant to the current needs of Ukraine.

The technical approach must clearly describe, and with enough details, the conceptual approach, methodology and proposed activities for the implementation, accomplishment and evaluation of the objectives. The rationale for the appropriateness of the suggested approach in Ukraine should be provided. The applicant's program description must clearly demonstrate the application of state-of-the-art approaches, models, tools and lessons learned from other projects.

At a minimum, the applicant's program description should address the following:

- Discussion of all proposed activities, and how each will ultimately lead to achievement of expected results;
- Results and interventions applicants believe should be prioritized and why;
- Discussion of relevant and meaningful indicators at each level - intervention, outcome, Expected Results (ER) - which should each be linked or flow from each level unto the next. For example, each intervention must correspond to an outcome and each outcome must correspond to an ER. The relationship should be clear and/or explained in the narrative;
- Discussion on coordination with other USAID activities, stakeholders and other donor activities. Applicants should provide specific examples on how they will capitalize on possible synergies with other implementing partners and other USAID activities in this area;

- Strategy for the phase-out and sustainability of activities and results;
- Implementation timelines schedule; and
- Proposed plan for effective rapid launch of activities.

Mandatory cross-cutting considerations: The following cross-cutting considerations need to be incorporated throughout applicants' program (details are in Section I, Program Description):

- Gender;
- Inclusive Development;
- Sustainability and Self-Reliance

f) Implementation Plan (included in the 20 page limitation) -

Applicants shall include a draft implementation plan that describes how and when specific core activities will be developed over the life of the Activity. Applicants must present a detailed explanation for the first year, with illustrative *key* activities, benchmarks, and results for the remaining years. The implementation plan 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;
- Milestones (or benchmarks) toward achieving those results over the duration of the program;
- Partner involvement and contributions to achieving the results;
- Timeline.

g) Staffing and Management Plan (should be included in the 20 page limitation) -

This section shall include the composition and organizational structure of the proposed team and a description of each team member's role, technical expertise, and estimated amount of time to be devoted to each relevant activity. The applicant should specify the structure of the entire program team, including consortium members, and the applicant's overall approach to managing the program. The applicant should demonstrate how it will ensure effectiveness and efficiency, in order to achieve maximum benefits and results.

Identification of key personnel and long-term staff positions, including their technical and managerial roles and responsibilities and qualifications, experience in international technical assistance projects, and abilities of proposed key personnel relevant to successful implementation of the proposed technical approach.

A one-page organizational chart may be included as an Annex that does not count against the 20-page limit.

Applicants should propose **four key leadership positions** which will be designated as Key Personnel under the resulting award (maximum number of Key Personnel positions can be five).

Key personnel are those considered to be essential to the work being performed under this cooperative agreement. The key personnel are required to work in a full-time basis under this cooperative agreement. Applicants should propose the following key positions:

- ***Chief of Party (COP)***
- ***Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP)/MEL Officer***
- ***Objective 2 Lead/Policy Advisor***
- ***Grants Manager***

Applicants should include in the staffing plan other personnel, including position titles, qualifications, and how their inclusion would best achieve the results of this activity. Other information required includes:

- If the applicant has established a consortium or another type of legal relationship among its partners, the Applicant should describe the relationship between the Prime Applicant and consortium members. Description of lines of communication between the prime recipient and its consortium members which ensures a cohesive working relationship and achievement of results;
- Organizational chart for the program team, including consortium members;
- A plan which allows for early identification and proposed resolution of problems by the prime awardee and provision of related information to USAID;
- List of proposed staff with attention to gender balance;
- The Activity should have at minimum one staff member with gender programming and integration skills and expertise.

Key Personnel Responsibilities:

Chief of Party (COP): COP will provide leadership, vision and direction for the implementation of all program objectives and mandatory factors - and will ensure that all proposed program objectives and targets are achieved. Will manage and develop staff, including all long and short-term personnel, consortium members' personnel, consultants and sub-awardees, as appropriate. Will provide briefings and analysis to USAID on programmatic and organizational issues. Will maintain effective relations and coordination with other donors, local and international partners. Will collaborate with other implementing partners to coordinate efforts and share results. Will serve as primary liaison with USAID, Ukrainian and international partners.

Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP)/MEL Officer will assist the COP in managing all program objectives with the special focus on monitoring and evaluation, gender, inclusiveness and other mandatory factors as well as on the development of all project documentation, including the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (MELP). Will provide management oversight of all staff and assist in managing office operations. Will support the COP in overseeing the quality, cost effectiveness, and timeliness of performance of all work to ensure that the program is meeting proposed objectives and targets. S/he may conduct/oversee various analyses and surveys to measure the progress of the project implementation on as needed basis. Will collaborate with other implementing partners to coordinate efforts and share results. Will represent the program to

USAID and other constituents, as needed. In addition, the DCOP/MEL Officer will be familiar with USAID requirements to the MELP structure. S/he should be able to develop such indicators that credibly reflect the actual performance of the activity. Gender integration expertise is preferred as well.

Objective 2 Lead/Policy Advisor will provide leadership, vision and direction for the implementation of program Objective 2 "Improve legal enabling environment for civil society." Will manage all activities related to Objective 2 and will be responsible for the delivery of the final policy products, will ensure that all Objective 2 targets are achieved. Will oversee Objective 2 project staff, including all long and short-term trainers, consultants and subawards, as appropriate. Will provide input with regard to Objective 2 to program implementation plans, performance monitoring, evaluation and learning plans and all required reports. Will provide briefings and analysis to USAID and all other partners on issues related to civil society enabling environment. Will maintain effective relations and coordination with other relevant donors, local and international partners. Will collaborate with implementing partners to coordinate efforts related civil society enabling environment and share results.

Grants Manager will be responsible for administering subawards (sub-grants) to CSOs to be awarded under this activity primarily under Objective 1 and ensuring that they comply with the organizational policies and USAID requirements. In close coordination with the Activity leadership, the Grants Manager will manage the grant selection, implementation, monitoring and close-out. S/he will work with grantees to ensure that the Activity goals are achieved, while the grants program results are reported in accordance with the agreement, implementation plan, and monitoring, evaluation and learning plan.

USAID may consider alternative option(s) for these duties should Applicant decide to assign them differently among its staff.

In general, Applicants must demonstrate that the Key Personnel proposed have:

- Experience managing civil society or related programs;
- Track record of successfully building and effectively managing diverse teams of employees;
- Expertise in political analysis, civil society and democracy programming at large;
- Effective interpersonal skills, creative problem-solving and ethical management; and
- Prior experience in working in a similar development sector and/or with other international donors.

Proposed personnel must be well organized, able to work independently, skilled at handling multiple tasks, diplomatic, and able to adhere to deadlines. Specific qualifications include: Ukrainian-language fluency and excellent English skills.

In an Annex to the Technical Application, applicants should provide résumés for the candidates proposed **for all Key Personnel positions**. The résumés should demonstrate that the proposed Key Personnel possess the skills and knowledge to effectively carry out their proposed responsibilities. Résumés may not exceed three pages in length and shall be in chronological order starting with most recent experience. Each résumé 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 corresponding to the Cost Application. References may be checked for all proposed key personnel; **a minimum of three references for each proposed key personnel is required.** There is no special format for the references. Applicants should provide current phone, e-mail address information for each reference contact.

h) Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan (not to exceed 5 pages) -

The Application shall contain an illustrative (draft) Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (MELP). MELP should explain how the applicant proposes to monitor the program and assess performance and progress toward achieving program results.

The applicant shall draft an illustrative MELP using the guidelines set forth in SECTION VI – AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION, REPORTING, *B. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (MELP)*, of this NOFO.

In designing the overall MELP, applicants should consider the human and financial resources necessary for its implementation. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that all costs related to the implementation of the MELP are included in the Cost Application.

i) Institutional Capability (not to exceed 3 pages) -

Applicants must provide evidence of their technical and managerial resources and expertise (or their ability to obtain such) in program management, grants management, budget/financial management, technical assistance and capacity building provision, and training, as well as their experience in managing similar activities in the past.

The applicant should provide similar information for consortium members that will be directly involved in program implementation. 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 activities, including:
 - Provision of technical assistance and organizational development and institutional capacity building in the area of civil society;
 - Collaborations with donors, host country governments, and other stakeholders including civil society, media and private sector;
- Relevant experience with proposed approaches;
- Institutional strength as represented by breadth and depth of corporate experience in project relevant disciplines/areas.

j) Past Performance (not to exceed 2 pages) -

Past Performance information will only be reviewed as part of the Apparently Successful Applicant risk assessment and is not evaluated at the merit review stage.

Applicants must list all contracts, grants and cooperative agreements which the organization, both the primary applicant as well as consortium members, have implemented involving similar or related programs over the past five years.

Please include the following information under past performance information:

- Name, address, current telephone number and email address of responsible representative(s) from the organization for which the work was performed;
- Contract/grant name and number (if any), annual amount received for each of the last five years and beginning and end dates;
- Brief description of the project/assistance activity.

Past performance of the applicant and consortium members will be reviewed based on the implementation of programs or program elements of similar size and scope, and ability to achieve results. References may be asked to comment on both quality and timeliness of service, business relations, customer satisfaction with performance, effectiveness of key personnel, and effectiveness in quickly staffing a project and launching program activities.

k) Annexes (are not included in 30 pages) -

In the annexes the applicant shall include resumes for all key personnel candidates (per the details above, prescribed in section Staffing Plan).

Applicants shall also include signed letters of commitment for consortium members that will have significant role in the implementation of the Activity.

3. COST/BUSINESS APPLICATION FORMAT AND CONTENT:

There is no page limit on the Cost Application.

Cost is a required evaluation criterion and will be evaluated separately. Although the Cost Application will not be assigned points, it is an important evaluation criteria, although less significant than technical merit criteria.

The Cost/Business Application is to be submitted under separate cover from the technical application. Budget spreadsheets **must be in U.S. Dollars, in unlocked Microsoft Excel** format, pages with signatures in Word or PDF format.

The budget should be for 5 years and for \$10,000,000 and should reflect the Technical Application.

The following should be taken into consideration by the Applicants at the stage of the budget preparation:

- Approximately \$1,150,000 of the proposed \$10M shall be incorporated into sub-grants to Ukrainian NGOs; and
- Approximately \$2,250,000 of the proposed \$10M shall be incorporated to consortium member(s).

The following sections describe the documentation that applicants for an Assistance award must submit to USAID prior to award. While there is no page limit for the cost application, applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible, but still provide the necessary detail to address the following:

- **Detailed Budget (no page limit)**, which provides a breakdown by elements of cost (e.g. personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual, construction, other direct costs, indirect costs, cost sharing (if any)) for the total estimated amount of implementation of the project according to your organization's approach. The budget shall include costs associated with all programmatic activities during the project implementation. Budget must be in U.S. Dollars.
- **Budget Narrative**, which provides detailed budget explanations and supporting justification of each proposed budget line item. It must briefly describe programmatic relevance and clearly identify the basis of estimate (i.e. how the budget number was determined fair and reasonable) for each cost element, such as market surveys, price quotations, current salaries, historical experience, etc. The budget narrative should demonstrate how the budget supports and allocates sufficient and appropriate funding for all elements of the program activities described in Section I. Funding Opportunity Description (Program Description) of this NOFO.

The applicant must sign and submit the following MANDATORY standard forms as a part of the cost application:

- **(MANDATORY) SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance)**: This form is provided in Annex 3 of the NOFO, or applicants may also download the form from the Grants.gov website. Applicants need only complete the fields in the form that are marked with an asterisk(*), as applicable. The form must be signed and dated by an authorized representative of the applicant organization. Instructions on how to complete the form are available on the Grants.gov website at:
<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424-instructions.html>.
- **(MANDATORY) SF-424A (Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs)**: This form is provided in Annex 4 of the NOFO, or applicants may also download the form from the Grants.gov website. Instructions for completing this form are available on the Grants.gov website at:
<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424a-instructions.html>.
- **(MANDATORY) SF-424B (Assurances – Non-Construction Programs)**: This form is provided in Annex 5 of the NOFO, or applicants may also download the form from the Grants.gov website. Instructions for completing this form are available on the Grants.gov website at:
<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424b-instructions.html>

The cost application should contain the budget categories as shown on the SF-424A:

- **Personnel/Labor**: Direct salaries and wages should be proposed in accordance with the organization's personnel policies. Details on the basis of estimate for each proposed salary

should be sufficiently addressed in the budget narratives for all positions [key, consultants, short term technical assistance and non-Key Personnel]. Any proposed salary increase must be sufficiently justified and supported with the organization's personnel policies (to be provided as annex to the cost application).

Note: **Annual salary increase** and/or promotional increase may be granted in accordance with the applicant's established policies.

- ***Fringe Benefits:*** If accounted for as a separate item of cost, fringe benefits should be accounted in accordance with local labor law.
- ***Travel and Per Diem:*** The application budget and narrative should indicate the purpose of trip(s), number of trips, domestic and international, and the estimated unit cost of each. Specify the origin and destination for each proposed trip, duration of travel and number of individuals traveling. Proposed per diem rates must be in accordance with the applicant's established policies and practices that are uniformly applied to federally financed and other activities of the applicant.
- ***Equipment:*** The application should specify the procurement of any tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or \$5,000. The application should indicate the quantity of the equipment to be purchased, the unit cost and the total price.
- ***Supplies:*** The application should specify the procurement of all tangible personal property other than those described in Equipment. A computing device is a supply if the acquisition cost is less than the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes or \$5,000, regardless of the length of its useful life. The application should indicate the quantity of the equipment to be purchased, the unit cost and the total price.
- ***Contractual:*** The application should include, subaward(s). Applicants who intend to utilize consortium should indicate the extent intended and a complete cost breakdown, as well as all the information required herein for the applicant. **Consortium member(s) financial plans should follow the same cost format as submitted by the Prime Applicant.**
- ***Construction:*** Construction will not be funded by USAID under this program.
- ***Other Direct Costs (ODC):*** could include costs related to program activities described in the PD; communications, office rental, utilities, report preparation costs, other office operation costs, branding/marketing costs, supplies, etc. The narrative should provide a complete breakdown and support for each item of other direct costs.

The following information should be taken into consideration when developing the budget:

- (1) Salaries and wages must be reflective of the “market value” for each position. Salaries and wages may not exceed the applicant’s established written personnel policy and practice, including the applicant’s established pay scale for equivalent classifications of employees, which shall be certified by the applicant. Salaries for locally employed staff should not exceed the Local Compensation Plan for USAID/Ukraine, *otherwise should be strongly justified*.
- (2) This USAID-funded project implemented under the anticipated cooperative agreement will be for an estimated period of performance of five (5) years; also referred to as the award period. Unless the applicant/Recipient demonstrates otherwise to the USAID Agreement Officer’s satisfaction, local personnel employed by the applicant/Recipient solely to work under the USAID-funded project under this agreement are considered by USAID as employed by the applicant/Recipient for a specified period not to exceed the agreement period.
- (3) The name (if identified), annual salary, and expected level of effort of each candidate named or TBD and charged to the activity. Provide annual salary history for at least the three most recent years for all proposed key personnel.
- (4) If applying fringe benefit rates, the **Prime Applicant and Consortium Members** must provide information regarding how this rate is being applied for each category of employees and an explanation of the benefits included in the rate.
- (5) Travel, per diem and other transportation expenses detailed to include number of trips, expected itineraries, number of per diem days and per diem rates.
- (6) All equipment proposed to be purchased.
- (7) Applicants should include any estimated USAID branding and marking costs in their budget. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that all costs related to the implementation of the MELP and Activity Location Data are included in the cost application. Applicants need to account for resources required for implementing and monitoring the environmental compliance activities in the technical application and in the budget and describe associated costs in detail to the degree possible in the budget narrative.
- (8) Indirect Charges: The Prime Applicant and/or Consortium Member(s) must provide information regarding Indirect Charges, *if it has one*, and explain how this rate is being applied and how these rates were determined.
- (9) Recipient Contracted Audit (RCA): The Recipient Contracted Audit (RCA) is mandatory for a non-U.S. organization who spends \$750,000 of US Government funding in your fiscal year. Applicants are encouraged to include costs related to the Annual Audit in its Cost Application.

D. RISK ASSESSMENT PRIOR TO ANY AWARD

The AO will make a risk determination as required by ADS 303.3.9 and 2 CFR 200.205 prior to making an award.

Specifically, applicants must submit the following information:

1. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement

The applicant must submit a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement NICRA if the organization has such an agreement with an agency or department of the U.S. Government. If no NICRA the applicant should submit the following:

Reviewed Financial Statements Report: a report issued by a Certified Public Account (CPA) documenting the review of the financial statements was performed in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services; that management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework and for designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation. The account must also state the he or she is not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the financial statements; or

Audited Financial Statements Report: An auditor issues a report documenting the audit was conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS), the financial statements are the responsibility of management, provides an opinion that the financial statements present fairly in all material respects the financial position of the company and the results of operations are in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework (or issues a qualified opinion if the financial statements are not in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework.

2. Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and other Statements of the Applicant

Required assurance, certifications and representations: Applicants are required to complete Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and other Statements of the Recipient. Please note that these certifications are required for both **the Prime Applicant and consortium members**. Applicants may view the current Certifications, Assurances and Other Statements of the Recipient in ADS 303: <http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mav>.

The Prime Applicant and consortium member(s) shall complete these certifications, sign and date in the signature space provided. The signed and dated certifications must be submitted with the application as an attachment to the cost application.

3. Additional Information

The Prime Applicant and consortium members shall submit any additional evidence of financial responsibility deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to make a positive

risk assessment to manage USG funds. The information submitted should substantiate that the applicant:

- Has adequate financial, management and personnel resources and systems, or the ability to obtain such resources as required during the performance of the award;
- Has the ability to comply with the award terms and conditions, taking into account all existing and currently prospective commitments of the applicant, both nongovernmental and governmental;
- Has a satisfactory record of performance. Generally, relevant unsatisfactory performance in the past is enough to justify a finding of non-responsibility, unless there is clear evidence of subsequent satisfactory performance or the applicant has taken adequate corrective measures to assure that it will be able to perform its functions satisfactory;
- Has a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics;
- Is otherwise qualified to receive an award under applicable laws and regulations.

4. 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).

E. DUN AND BRADSTREET UNIVERSAL NUMBERING SYSTEM (DUNS) NUMBER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (SAM)

USAID may not make an award to an applicant until the Prime Applicant and Consortium Members have complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements and, if the Prime Applicant and consortium members have not fully complied with the requirements 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.

Each applicant and consortium members (unless the applicant has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

- (i) Be registered in SAM (www.sam.gov) **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;
- (ii) Provide a valid unique entity identifier DUNS number in its application; and
- (iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active U.S. Government award or an application or plan under consideration by a U.S. Government awarding agency.

It is the Prime Applicant's responsibility to ensure that all necessary documentation is complete and received on time.

Prospective applicants who are not currently registered in SAM are advised to begin the registration process IMMEDIATELY. For assistance with registering in SAM, please contact the supporting Federal Service Desk (FSD) at <https://www.fsd.gov/>. To obtain a DUNS number, please visit <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>.

Quick reference guides for new grantee registration in SAM are provided in Annexes of this NOFO.

F. FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

Any award will not allow for the reimbursement of pre-award costs.

USAID policy is not to award profit under assistance instruments to the Prime recipient. However, all reasonable, allocable, and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the agreement program and are in accordance with applicable cost principles under 2 CFR 200 Subpart E. of the Uniform Administrative Requirements may be paid under the anticipated award.

G. POTENTIAL REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

Upon consideration of award or during the negotiations leading to an award, applicants may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to make an affirmative determination of responsibility. **Applicants should not submit the information below with their applications.** The information in this section is provided so that applicants may become familiar with additional documentation that may be requested by the Agreement Officer.

The information submitted should substantiate:

- Bylaws, constitution, and articles of incorporation, if applicable.
- Whether the organizational travel, procurement, financial management, accounting manual and personnel policies and procedures, especially regarding salary, promotion, leave, differentials, etc., submitted under this section have been reviewed and approved by any agency of the Federal Government, and if so, provide the name, address, and phone number of the cognizant reviewing official. The applicant should provide copies of the same.

[END OF SECTION IV]

SECTION V – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA

USAID will conduct merit reviews of all applications received that comply with the instructions in this NOFO. Technical Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the merit review criteria set forth below. The cost application of the “Apparent Successful Applicant” will be reviewed for general reasonableness, allowability, and allocability.

Applications will be evaluated using an adjectival evaluation scale (exceptional, very good, satisfactory, marginal and unsatisfactory).

The criteria set forth below will be used by the technical review committee to evaluate all applications submitted in response to this RFA. The criteria are listed in descending order of importance.

1. **Technical Approach:** Evaluation under this factor will focus on the soundness, clarity, realism, feasibility and sustainability in achieving all the program objectives and results identified in this RFA. While not sub-criteria, USAID will consider the following in the evaluation of this factor:

- Extent to which the proposed program is well-conceived, clear, technically sound, innovative and ambitious, yet feasible in achieving all the objectives identified in this RFA, with specific descriptions and illustrative examples of proposed interventions.
- Extent to which the proposed approach demonstrates understanding of Ukrainian civil society sector development and challenges related to the accomplishment of activity objectives.
- Extent to which the proposed approach demonstrates an understanding of, complements, and leverages related USAID- and other donor-funded programs, as well as Ukrainian governmental mechanisms and initiatives.
- Clarity, appropriateness, consistency and soundness of an *illustrative (draft) Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (MELP)* for measuring progress in achieving expected results of the activity, including suggested performance indicators and a plan for collecting baseline and actual data.
- Appropriateness and clarity of an implementation plan for efficient start-up and meeting objectives during the project period.

2. **Staffing and Management Plan:**

- **Key Personnel:** The extent to which the proposed Key Personnel have the experience and capability in the following areas: managing civil society or related programs; track record of successfully building and effectively managing diverse teams of employees; expertise in political analysis, civil society and democracy programming at large; demonstrated effective interpersonal skills, creative problem-solving and ethical management; prior experience in working in a similar development sector and/or with other international donors.
- **Management Plan:** Appropriateness of the management, composition, and organizational structure of the activity team, including consortium members, to achieving the expected

results. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates an ability to operate independently and effectively to deliver the results of the program. Relevant and demonstrated experience of proposed staff with successful similar programs. A clear and effective staffing plan with roles and responsibilities among different positions adequately delineated to demonstrate an efficient and effective use of human resources in meeting the objectives identified in this NOFO.

- 3. Cross-Cutting Considerations:** The extent to which the applicant addresses the cross-cutting considerations identified in Section I, Program Description, including: gender; inclusive development; sustainability and self-reliance. USAID will review the appropriateness of the proposed approach to these cross-cutting considerations, including the activities and staff proposed to integrate these considerations, as well as the applicant's innovative approaches to address these issues throughout Activity implementation.
- 4. Institutional Capability:** The extent to which the applicant's and consortium member(s)' organizational capability and experience demonstrates its ability to manage technical and administrative aspects of similar civil society programs, achieve measurable results, and work effectively and efficiently with key stakeholders leveraging expertise to enhance impact.

II. COST REVIEW

Review of Proposed Award Budget

Cost is less important than programmatic merit and is not weighted. USAID will review the cost application of only the apparently successful applicant. Other considerations are the completeness of the application adequacy of budget detail and consistency with elements of the technical application. In addition, the organization must demonstrate adequate financial management capability, to be measured under a risk assessment.

If USAID does not successfully negotiate an award with the Apparently Successful Applicant, based on programmatic merit, then USAID will consider the next highest ranked applicant and review its cost application.

Estimated costs should be in compliance with 2 CFR 200, USAID's and applicants' policies. Estimated costs will be evaluated for realism, reasonableness, allowability, allocability, and cost effectiveness. The applicant must justify in advance the proposed costs for each element of the program. The pre-award evaluation of cost effectiveness will include an examination of the application's budget detail to ensure it is a realistic financial expression of the proposed program and does not contain estimated costs which may be unallocable, unreasonable, or unallowable.

Proposed costs may be adjusted, for purposes of evaluation, based on results of the cost analysis and its assessment of reasonableness, completeness, and credibility.

To facilitate review of Cost Applications, please present your budget per SF-424A structure provided in the Annex of this NOFO.

III. PRE-AWARD SURVEYS

Prior to making an award under this competition, the USAID Agreement Officer may perform a pre-award survey of a prospective NGO recipient if he/she determines that any of the following criteria apply, in accordance with USAID ADS Chapter 303.3.9.1:

- USAID is uncertain about the prospective recipient's capacity to perform financially or programmatically.
- The prospective recipient has never had a USAID grant, cooperative agreement, or contract. This requirement does not apply to Fixed Amount Awards.
- The prospective recipient has not received an award from any Federal agency within the last five years. This requirement does not apply to Fixed Amount Awards.
- USAID has knowledge of deficiencies in the applicant's annual audit (Single Audit or equivalent).
- The USAID Agreement Officer determines it to be in the best interest of the U.S. Government.

Accounting systems, audit issues, and management capability questions may be reviewed as part of this process in order to determine whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls, and technical skills in order to achieve the objectives of the program, or whether specific conditions will be needed. If notified by USAID that a pre-award survey is necessary, applicants must prepare in advance the required information and documents. A pre-award survey does not commit USAID to make an award to any organization.

[END OF SECTION V]

SECTION VI – AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Federal Award Notices

Award of the agreement contemplated by this NOFO cannot be made until funds have been appropriated, allocated and committed through internal USAID procedures. While USAID anticipates that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for the award. 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.

1. A written award mailed or otherwise furnished to the successful applicant within the application's validity time as specified either in the application or in this NOFO (whichever is later) shall result in a binding Cooperative Agreement without further action by either party. Before the application's specified validity expiration time, the Government may accept an application, whether or not there are negotiations after its receipt, unless a written notice of withdrawal is received by the applicant before award. Negotiations or discussions conducted after receipt of an application do not constitute a rejection or counteroffer by the Government.
2. Applicants must set forth full, accurate and complete information as required by this NOFO. The penalty for making false statements to the Government is prescribed in 18 U.S.C. 1001.
3. 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.
4. USAID reserves the right to perform a pre-award survey which may include, but is not limited to: (1) interviews with individuals to establish their ability to perform agreement duties under the project conditions; (2) a review of the prime recipient's financial condition, business and personnel procedures, etc.; and (3) site visits to the prime recipient's institution.

B. Award Administration

USAID/Ukraine Mission will be responsible for the negotiation and obligation, and subsequent management and administration, of award which develop from successful application. The Mission Agreement Officer will be responsible for conducting negotiations, making the awards, and obligating costs to recommended partner(s). He/she will only do so after making a positive risk assessment or responsibility determination that the applicant possesses, or has the ability to obtain, the necessary management competence in planning and carrying out assistance programs and that it will practice mutually agreed upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided by USAID. The Agreement Officer will also designate an Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) to assist in the technical management and oversight of the award.

Resulting award to **local (Ukrainian) non-governmental organizations** will be administered in accordance with Chapter 303 of USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS), including ADS 303mab, Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations. The Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental organizations are available at <http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mab>. ADS Chapter 303 is available at <http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303>.

Additional policies and federal regulations are available at the following websites:

- 2 CFR 700:

<http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=c51d0ac519854fd1da7a3c31f3b3f301&node=pt2.1.700&rgn=div5>

- 2 CFR 200:

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/xml/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-subtitleA-chapII.xml>

Authority to Obligate the Government: The Agreement Officer is the **only** individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditures of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Cooperative Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed Cooperative Agreement or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

REPORTING:

1. Financial Reporting

Financial reporting will depend on the payment provisions of the award, which cannot be determined until after the successful applicant(s) is/are selected. Financial reporting requirements will be specified in awards. In accordance with 2 CFR 200.327, financial reporting will be required no less frequently than annually nor more frequently than quarterly except in unusual circumstances, for example where more frequent reporting is necessary for the effective monitoring of the award or could significantly affect program outcomes.

2. Program Reporting

The Recipient will provide the following documents to the USAID Agreement Officer (AO) and the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR), as specified below and in the Substantial Involvement Provisions.

A. Initial Implementation Plan:

Within 60 days of the signing of Cooperative Agreement, the Recipient will present an Initial Implementation Plan to the USAID AOR for review and approval (electronic copy). The AOR must provide written comments on the draft Plan and when the Plan is finalized, the AOR will provide written approval.

The Initial Implementation Plan should include a list of tasks to be completed during the year, grouped under the Objective that they seek to support. For each task, the Awardee should 1)

explain in brief its connection to the Objective; 2) define the necessary steps to complete the tasks; 3) assign responsibilities for completing those steps; 4) provide any quantitative or qualitative targets; and 5) a timeline for the implementation of the task.

The AOR 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 AOR's comments and recommendations into the final version of the Initial Implementation Plan and submit it for AOR's written approval. All substantial changes in the Initial Implementation Plan require prior written approval of the AOR.

B. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (MELP):

Within 60 days of the signing the Cooperative Agreement and before major activity implementation actions begin, the Recipient shall submit MELP for Ukraine Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity together with the Initial Implementation Plan to the USAID/AOR for review and approval.

Based on the draft MELP submitted as part of its Application, the Recipient will develop a detailed Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan to monitor performance data, ensure progress is made towards expected results, understand the impact of new interventions on outcomes, and to use data to adapt activity implementation as necessary to achieve activity results.

This plan will include Standard Program Structure & Definitions (SPSD) indicators ***to improve the operating environment for civil society and strengthen the institutional capacities of the civil society organizations (CSOs) in order to advance the self-reliance of the civic sector in Ukraine.*** The performance indicators should comply with the following criteria: be direct, objective, practical, adequate, and useful in managing results. MELP data collection will be based on the US fiscal year (October 1 – September 30). As appropriate, indicator data will be disaggregated by sex, age and other categories as required. Only those indicators that Mission needs for activity management rather than the entire set of all indicators an implementer uses for its management purposes will be included in this MELP. Final list of indicators will be confirmed in collaboration with USAID.

The AOR 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 AOR comments and recommendations into the final version of the MELP and submit it for AOR written approval within 15 days. After the plan is finalized, the AOR will provide written approval. All substantial changes in the MELP require prior written approval of the AOR.

The program budget must include costs of data collection, analysis, and reporting as a separate line item to ensure that adequate resources are available.

The MELP should include a comprehensive strategy for monitoring and reporting progress made towards activity purpose and results.

The MELP will include the following elements:

- activity purpose and results as well as brief description of the linkages between the activity outputs and its expected results;

- performance indicators and their descriptions;
- unit of data measurement;
- data sources;
- description of data collection methods;
- baseline information (year and value) or a timeline for collecting baseline information;
- annual targets for indicators or a timeline for developing targets;
- disaggregation by sex, age, geographic locality, type of assistance, etc. as needed;
- rationale for indicator and target;
- reporting level;
- data limitations;
- schedule for data collection;
- names of individuals responsible for data collection;
- availability of data at USAID;
- detailed plans for data analysis, review and reporting to USAID;
- Learning Section.

The Recipient will prepare the Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS) for each indicator in its MELP.

The MELP for this Activity will also be consistent with and meet the data collection needs of the Project MEL Plan, the USAID's Performance Management Plan (PMP), and the Mission's annual Performance Plan and Report (PPR).

According to USAID regulations, performance indicator data reported externally, including annual Performance Reports sent to USAID/Washington, must have a data quality assessment (DQA). The purpose of the DQA is to ensure that managers are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the data and the extent to which the data can be trusted to influence management decisions. DQA must be conducted within twelve months prior to reporting data to USAID for new indicators, and every three years thereafter. Conducting DQA on a rolling basis will reduce the burden of handling indicators all at once.

To be useful in managing for results and credible for reporting, the Recipient should ensure that the performance data meet the following five data quality standards: validity, reliability, timeliness, precision and integrity. If performance data do not fully meet all five standards, the known data limitations should be documented. The AOR can combine a random check of Recipient's data during a regularly scheduled site visit and include data quality items into site visit reports. This minimizes the costs associated with the DQA. When conducting a DQA, AOR will examine the data in light of the five quality standards noted above, reviewing the systems and approaches for collecting data and whether they are likely to produce data of an acceptable quality over time.

A Recipient, as part of the award, can conduct the DQA, provided that USAID staff review and verify DQAs. This may entail site visits to physically inspect records maintained by the activity implementing partner. The activity implementer will document DQA findings, including decisions concerning data quality problems and steps identified to address them. The activity

implementer will share DQA findings and action plan to address data quality issues with the AOR. The AOR will follow up with the activity implementer to check progress on implementation of the action plan within the timeline outlined in the action plan against each action.

In addition, Ukraine Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity MELP will contribute to higher level performance monitoring and information needs aligned with USAID/Ukraine priorities, including measuring progress towards CDCS objectives.

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

USAID reserves the right to propose an activity implementer to integrate into the MELP a number of indicators to help USAID measure the immediate activity and relevant project results.

NOTE: The MELP must be developed strictly in accordance with the criteria stipulated in [ADS 201](#).

Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA)

USAID/Ukraine is committed to obtaining stakeholder input into all activities, coordinating implementing partners' efforts for greater efficiency and effectiveness, and measuring high-level indicators in an effort to apply the following Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning objectives: evaluate the level of collaboration with other USG and other donor-supported programs and improve synergies; use lessons learned to strengthen management systems and activity implementation; and provide recommendations and improvement to adapt current activities and follow-on programs.

Ukraine Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity is expected to contribute to USAID/Ukraine's commitment to a multi-faceted Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA) approach to development. The CLA approach is based on the understanding that development efforts yield more effective results if they are coordinated and collaborative, test promising new approaches in a continuous yet also rapid, targeted search for generating improvements and efficiencies, and build on what works and eliminate what doesn't.

- **Collaborating:** Active outreach, knowledge sharing, and dissemination efforts are crucial for achievements of the Activity's objectives and purpose. The Implementing Partner will participate in stakeholder meetings as convened by USAID/Ukraine which may include sharing of summary annual implementation plans, bi-annual progress reports, best practices, and challenges.

The Activity will coordinate with other USG partners, other donors, civil society, private sector, and the Government of Ukraine *to improve the operating environment for civil society and strengthen the institutional capacities of the civil society organizations (CSOs) in order to advance the self-reliance of the civic sector in Ukraine*. For Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity to succeed, Implementing Partner will employ a collaborative approach with other relevant USAID projects and donors, other

stakeholders, exchanging knowledge and ensuring complementarity rather than duplication of activities.

- **Learning:** Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity will systematically and continuously review evidence from Activity implementation and external sources to inform program strategy, design and management. Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity will generate evidence through program performance data, formative research to guide design of new interventions, periodic evaluations, and operational research - documenting and sharing results with stakeholders.
- **Adapting:** Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity will translate learning from the implementation experience and external sources, while also considering changing conditions that impact achievement of expected results into strategic and programmatic adjustments throughout the course of the activity. A key feature of Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity will be its flexibility to rapidly adapt to effectively *improve the operating environment for civil society and strengthen the institutional capacities of the civil society organizations (CSOs) in order to advance the self-reliance of the civic sector in Ukraine.*

C. Program Evaluation:

Evaluation enables the Mission to account for success and failure, and to assist management decision making. Evaluation also offers opportunity to learn from prior experience, identify the results of innovative approaches to problems, and inform future project design by recognizing prior successes or failures and drawing conclusions on the cause.

USAID/Ukraine intends to conduct at least one evaluation of the Ukraine Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity. A mid-term program performance evaluation in FY 2022 will inform the Mission on overall activity progress towards higher-level outcomes as well as any necessary course-correction in the second half of activity implementation. The Mission may elect to conduct a final performance evaluation of Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity, or to include this Activity or components thereof in evaluating progress towards higher level project and/or strategy-level outcomes. Deviations in meeting performance indicator targets set up for intermediate results, as well as significant changes in the operating environment, could trigger unplanned performance evaluations of Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity. The activity implementer shall fully cooperate with USAID and the evaluation team to ensure that the evaluation accurately reflects activity results, outcomes, and/or impacts.

Sample evaluation questions for Civil Society Sectoral Support Activity may include:

- To what extent does/did increased civil society organizational capacity and an improved enabling environment result in a more self-reliant civil society sector?
- To what extent did the implementing partners(s) effectively collaborate to achieve the activity objectives?
- To what extent did the program successfully achieve activity objectives at the local level and increase the connectivity of civic actors across regions?
- To what extent did the Activity build Ukraine's commitment and capacity to improve the operating environment for civil society and strengthen the institutional capacities of the

civil society organizations?

D. Annual Implementation Plans:

Annual implementation plans for subsequent years are due to the AOR 60 days before the end of the preceding award year (electronic copy). Annual Implementation Plans should include all the sections as the initial implementation plan discussed above. In addition, the subsequent annual Implementation 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 Implementation Plans shall propose program adjustments to reflect any lessons learned.

The AOR 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 AOR comments and recommendations into the final version of the Annual Implementation Plan and submit it for AOR written approval within 15 days. After the Plan is finalized, the AOR will provide written approval. In addition, all substantial changes in Implementation Plan require prior written approval of the AOR.

E. Semi-annual Performance Reports:

The Recipient shall submit semi-annual performance reports (an electronic copy) to the USAID AOR. These reports shall 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 Plans and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (MELP), 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 primarily under Objective 1 during the reporting period, information on study tours and their participants taken place during the reporting period and other relevant information. 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. At least one success story which provides information that demonstrates the impact that the activity/program has had during the reporting period through materials such as narratives, quotes, photos and captions. These success stories shall also be submitted separately via the Agency's Telling Our Story website (<http://www.usaid.gov/stories/>). Note: the USAID/Ukraine Mission's Communications Officer can assist in editing stories prior to their posting on the website.

Semi-annual reports are to be submitted to the AOR within 30 calendar days of the end of the reporting period.

F. Annual Performance Reports:

The Recipient shall submit annual performance reports (an electronic copy) to the USAID AOR in lieu of the second semi-annual report for each project year. The Annual Report shall be due by September 30 of each year.

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 project's objectives during that particular reporting period.

Additionally, the Recipient will be expected to gather and provide data for USAID's Annual Report, Operational Plan, and periodic portfolio reviews.

G. Geospatial Reporting Requirements:

Activity Location Data

The Recipient must submit Activity Location Data to indicate the geographic location or locations where the activity is implemented according to the following requirements:

I. Level of Geographic Detail

The activity location(s) must be recorded at the National: whole Ukraine; Sub-national: oblast, rayon; Local: municipal/ city or town. When collected, latitude and longitude coordinates must be submitted in Decimal Degrees (hddd.ddddd) with at least five decimal places using the Geographic Coordinate System World Geodetic System 1984 (GCS WGS 1984) spatial reference.

II. Data Submission Frequency

Activity Location Data must be submitted twice annually as part of the Semi-Annual Performance Report and the Annual Report. If the Activity Location Data has not changed since the previous data submission, it must be indicated when the data is submitted.

III. Data Submission Method

Activity Location Data shall be compiled in the "General Info & Locations" worksheet in the Geographic Location Report Template (GLR) and submitted electronically. If Activity Location Data exists in a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) format: 1) it must also be submitted in a Shapefile (.shp) or GeoJSON (.geojson) file format; 2) use the Geographic Coordinate System World Geodetic System 1984 (GCS WGS 1984) spatial reference; and 3) include metadata ISO 19115 using the ISO 19139 XML implementation schema.

H. Final Report:

A final performance report (two hard copies and one electronic) will be required under this award. The Final Report is due 90 days after the award's completion date. USAID will review and comment within 30 days of receipt. The Final Performance Report shall contain the following information:

- Overall description of the activities under the program during the period of this Cooperative Agreement, and the significance of these activities;
- Description of the methods of assistance used and the pros and cons of these methods;
- Life-of-project results towards achieving the project objectives and the performance indicators;
- Analysis of how the indicators illustrate the project's impact (impact data will be supplied as approved in the MELP and will be measured against projections);

- Summary the program's accomplishments, as well as any unmet targets and the reasons for them;
- Summary of challenges, issues and problems that emerged during program implementation and the lessons learned in dealing with them;
- Comments and recommendations regarding unfinished work and/or future needs and directions for assistance in Ukraine;
- Recommendations for what issues no longer require donor assistance;
- Possible lessons learned.

The Recipient shall submit the original and one copy of the USAID approved Final Report to the AOR and Agreement Officer and one additional copy shall be submitted to the Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination, Development Experience Clearinghouse PPC/DEC.

E-Mail all documents via the web at: <http://dec.usaid.gov>. Paper copies or non-electronic materials should be sent to:

Development Experience Clearinghouse
M/CIO/KM
RRB M.01
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington DC 20523

The title page of all reports forwarded to USAID must include a descriptive title, the author's name, grant number, the project number and title, the grantee's name, the name of the USAID office, and the publication or issuance date of the report.

BRANDING STRATEGY AND MARKING PLAN:

It is a federal statutory and regulatory requirement (see Section 641, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended and 2 CFR 700.16) that all USAID programs, projects, activities, public communications, and commodities that USAID partially or fully funds under a USAID grant or cooperative agreement or other assistance award or sub-award must be marked appropriately overseas with the USAID identity. In accordance with ADS 320.3.3 Branding and Marking Requirements for Assistance Awards USAID's policy is that programs, projects, activities, public communications, or commodities implemented or delivered under co-funded instruments – such as grants, cooperative agreements, or other assistance awards that usually require a cost share – generally are “co-branded and co-marked.”

The Apparently Successful Applicant will be required to submit a branding strategy and marking plan for the Agreement Officer approval prior to award. The applicant may request a presumptive exemption to marking requirements established in 2 CFR 700.16. More information on Branding strategy and Marking plan are available at <https://www.usaid.gov/branding/assistance-awards>.

The branding strategy and marking plan will become a material element of the cooperative agreement. Information on USAID's branding “assistance” applies to this NOFO. ADS Chapter

320 sections concerning “acquisition” do not apply to this NOFO. ADS Chapter 320 can be found on USAID website: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/320.pdf>.

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.

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> .

Applicants need to include anticipated costs for branding strategy and marking plan in the budget and describe these costs in detail to the degree possible in the budget narrative. 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.

The Solicitation Standard Provisions for the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan are provided in Annex 2 of this NOFO.

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) [ADS 201](#) and [ADS 204](#), 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 NOFO.

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) A Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE) number 2019-UKR-036 (Annex 1 of this NOFO) has been approved for the Program funding this NOFO. It will cover program activities

through September 2024. USAID has determined that a Categorical Exclusion applies to all activities discussed in the Section I, Program Description, of this NOFO.

5) As part of its initial Implementation Plan, and all Annual Implementation Plans thereafter, the Recipient, in collaboration with the USAID Agreement's Officer's Representative (AOR) 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.

Applicants need to account for resources required for implementing and monitoring the environmental compliance activities in the technical application and in the budget and describe associated costs in detail to the degree possible in the budget narrative.

[END OF SECTION VI]

SECTION VII – AGENCY CONTACTS

Any prospective applicant desiring an explanation or interpretation of this NOFO must request it in writing by the deadline for questions specified in the cover letter to allow a reply to reach all prospective applicants before the submission of their applications. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment of this NOFO, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicants.

Any questions or comments concerning this NOFO must be submitted in writing by emails to morlova@usaid.gov and dharter@usaid.gov by the deadline for questions indicated at the top of this NOFO's cover letter.

[END OF SECTION VII]

SECTION VIII – OTHER INFORMATION

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

ANNEXES:

ANNEX 1 - REQUEST FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION 2019-UKR-036 (ATTACHED)

ANNEX 2 – Solicitation Standard Provisions Pre-Award Terms (ATTACHED)

ANNEX 3 – SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance) (ATTACHED)

ANNEX 4 – SF-424A (Budget Information – Non-construction Programs) (ATTACHED)

ANNEX 5 – SF-424B (Assurances – Non-Construction Programs) (ATTACHED)

ANNEX 6 - Quick Start Guide for New Grantee Registration in SAM (in English) (ATTACHED)

ANNEX 7 - Quick Start Guide for New Foreign Registrations in SAM (in Ukrainian)
(ATTACHED)

[END OF NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY]