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**Subject: NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)
NUMBER: 72012121RFA00002**

Program Title: RADA the Next Generation (RANG) Activity

Issuance Date: April 2, 2021
Deadline for Questions: April 12, 2021 by 16:00 Kyiv Local Time
Full Application Closing: April 30, 2021 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 qualified U.S. or Non-U.S. non-profit or for-profit Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and other qualified non-USG organizations for funding of an activity entitled “RADA the Next Generation (RANG) Activity.”

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,

/s/

Daniel E. Harter
Regional Agreement Officer

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SECTION I – PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Program Title: RADA Next Generation (RANG) Activity

I. Introduction

The purpose of the RADA the Next Generation (RANG) activity is to address the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine’s (VRU) most critical challenges and enable the VRU to become a modern, effective institution that promotes accountability and democratic development in Ukraine. This will be achieved by addressing weaknesses in the VRU’s legislative processes, while concurrently identifying and taking advantage of opportunities where the VRU can improve as an effective, democratic institution. USAID/Ukraine will provide up to \$10,000,000, subject to the availability of funds, for the five-year activity.

II. Background and Problem Statement

The VRU is the sole legislative body within the Ukrainian central government structure. Since Ukraine declared independence, the VRU has succeeded in adopting a number of critical pieces of framework legislation, including the Constitution, constitutional amendments, and a variety of tax, budget, land, election, civil and criminal codes. However, the VRU as a deliberative body is concurrently seen as compromised as members ignore institutional and procedural norms when convenient. Oversight is very weak, especially when a political party has both the presidency and a ruling majority in the VRU (like now).

Moreover, citizens generally feel very little ownership of the VRU and the legislation it produces. There is little meaningful engagement between MPs and their constituents. Most concerning, citizens do not consider decisions made by the VRU as essential or even really playing a role in changing or bettering their lives.

The VRU has typically lacked the institutional capacity to conduct legislative analyses and develop critical legislation in a timely and efficient manner. Parliamentary reform launched in the period of 2015-2018 did not result in many visible changes in institutional policies and procedures within the institution. No political party had a majority and no coalition was strong enough to pass legislation related to parliamentary reform. In May 2019, President Zelensky dissolved the 8th Convocation of the VRU because of its inability to form such a coalition.

The current 9th convocation VRU, which began in August 2019, is even less experienced than previous convocations. More than 80% of the MPs are new. This inexperience has both disadvantages and advantages. While they are less likely to know how to navigate the Ukrainian political arena, they are more open to innovation and willing to move beyond business as usual.

This convocation may represent a generational change in Ukraine’s politics with a record number of women serving as MPs (20%, compared to 13% in the previous Parliament). These MPs came into power at a complex, critical time for Ukraine with an ambitious, accelerated reform agenda under what has been dubbed the “turbo regime” that has included speedy drafting and in some cases passage of new laws. Timely and effective efforts to foster a culture of democratic norms and rule of law among these new MPs is needed to ensure a core group of reform champions strengthen the VRU’s role in Ukraine’s democracy.

USAID assistance to the VRU

USAID/Ukraine began providing support to the VRU in 1994 through the Parliamentary Development Program. This was followed by the Parliamentary Development Program II, and then the current legislative strengthening activity, the Responsible Accountable Democratic Assembly (RADA), which began in 2013 and is scheduled to end in June 2021. Each activity built on the achievements of its predecessor. The Parliamentary Development Program focused on (1) providing the VRU with comparative information from other countries to inform the VRU's structures and processes and (2) establishing the VRU's legislative and democratic procedures. The Parliamentary Development Program II focused on making VRU processes more transparent and effective.

RADA's design and initial scope was based on the pre-Euromaidan context. However, it has had to adapt to the ever changing political and geopolitical environment in Ukraine, which has included the Revolution of Dignity, snap elections in 2014 and 2019, Russia's military aggression, and a new era of EU-Ukraine cooperation and reform.

RADA has three key objectives:

- 1) Improved public representation in the legislative process;
- 2) Expanded role of citizens in monitoring the work of Parliament; and
- 3) Strengthened role of legislature in providing independent oversight of the executive branch.

RADA has had numerous achievements since its inception. It has strengthened the VRU as an effective democratic institution and empowers constituents by providing them with the knowledge and opportunities to meaningfully connect with their VRU representatives. RADA has also provided guidance, training, and assistance to lessen the effects of the political shocks within the VRU over the last few years, like providing New Member Orientation training (NMO) to the large class of first time MPs elected immediately after the dissolution of VRU in 2019.

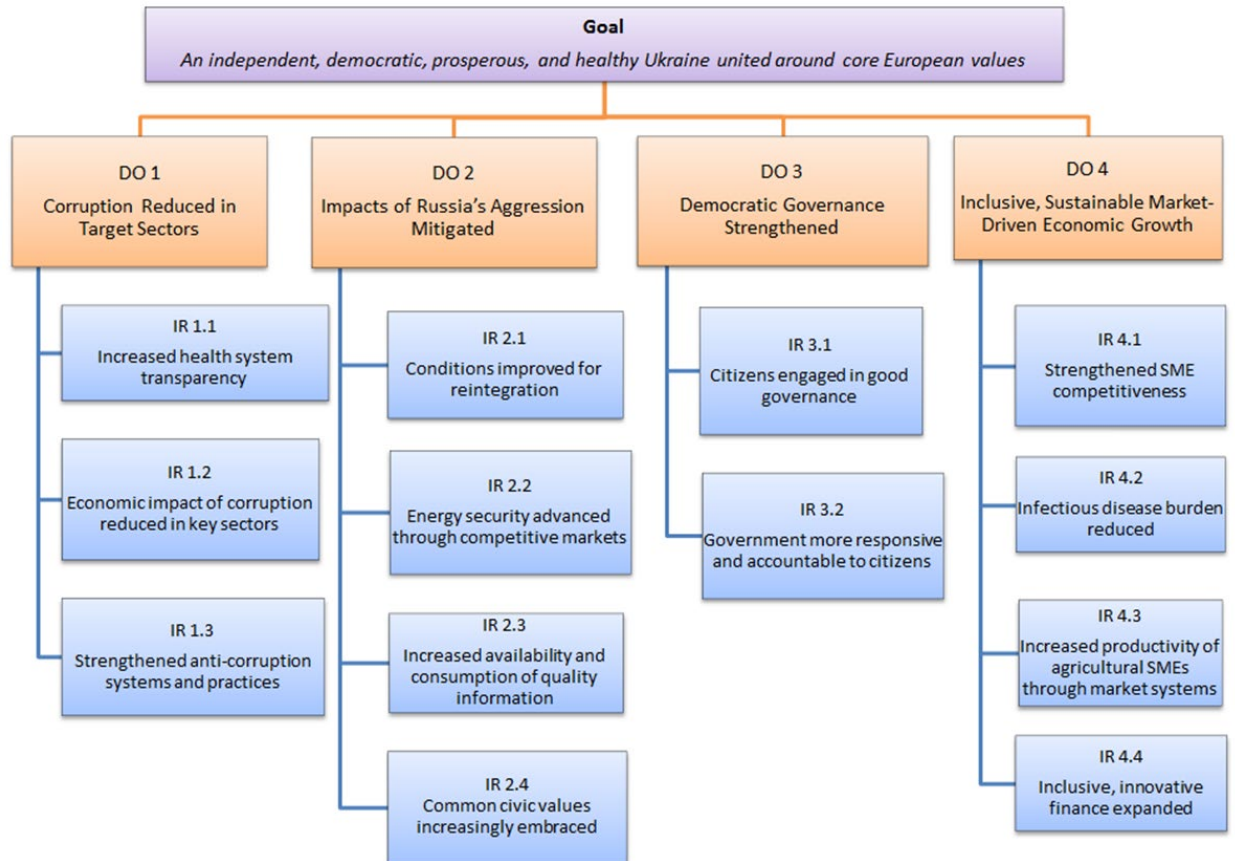
RADA also experienced key challenges inherent in providing development assistance to highly political, legislative bodies, like the VRU. Progress on many initiatives took much longer than expected, especially when the VRU's political will on critical subjects is insufficient or fractured. The influence of pro-Russian elements and corrupt oligarchs have hampered progress on improving legislative oversight and combating corruption. Finally, the VRU has been susceptible to shocks, the threat of shocks, and general instability, like the dissolution of the VRU's 8th Convocation, the threat of future dissolutions, and the on-going war with Russia.

III. Relationship to Mission Strategy

USAID/Ukraine's programs are guided by its five-year Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) for the 2019-2024 period. RANG will specifically contribute to CDCS Development Objective 3: Democratic Governance Strengthened, more specifically:

- DO3: Democratic Governance Strengthened
 - IR 3.1: Citizens engaged in good governance

- Sub-IR 3.1.1: Increased citizen awareness, advocacy, and oversight of reform processes
 - IR 3.2: Government more responsive and accountable to citizens
 - Sub-IR 3.2.1: Strengthened capacity of state institutions to represent citizens, uphold the rule of law, and protect human rights



RANG will help advance DO3 results by (1) enhancing and encouraging public participation in the VRU legislative and law making processes in support of IR 3.1 and (2) improving the ability of the GOU to be more responsive and accountable to the needs of citizens in support of IR 3.2. Increasing the quality and quantity of Ukrainian citizens' participation in legislative processes will strengthen Ukraine's democratic governance system from the demand side. Enhancing the parliamentary system's capacity to effectively respond to Ukrainian citizen needs will strengthen the democratic system from the supply side.

Approach to RANG Implementation

RANG will focus on an integrated two factor approach that simultaneously (1) facilitates continuity and stability within the VRU and (2) builds on past RADA successes and achievements through innovation to strengthen the institution within the Ukrainian democratic framework. Ensuring sustainability of current and previous parliamentary strengthening activity initiatives and VRU buy-in and support will also be primary considerations and central objectives throughout the implementation of RANG.

Facilitating Continuity and Stability

The VRU is the most critical government institution within Ukraine's democracy. Any durable democratic progress in Ukraine requires the VRU to enact legislation that creates the legal framework for such initiatives. The VRU, however, exists in an extremely unpredictable and, at times, tumultuous political and social environment.

RADA has been instrumental in assisting VRU to continue functioning during shocks or to return to being functional following them. For example, after the dissolution of the 8th Convocation of the VRU in 2019, the 9th Convocation was installed and comprises 80% first-time MPs. RADA quickly organized New Member Orientation training to prepare these new MPs for their duties so they could begin working as expediently as possible. During the COVID-19 crisis of 2020, RADA set up the IT and communication systems that made it possible for VRU Committee sittings to take place virtually through video conferencing. If not for interventions like these, VRU would have been crippled in its effectiveness.

RANG will replace RADA in this role of facilitating the VRU's continuity and stability. This strategy is also critical to the success of the USAID Mission in Ukraine as a whole. The vast majority of USAID programming relies on the VRU to create legislation supportive of its programming, especially in regards to ensuring sustainability. Continued support not only improves the likelihood of the VRU being effective, but also has positive effects on broader USAID Mission in Ukraine priorities.

Building on Success through Innovation

RANG will build on the successes of past USAID parliamentary strengthening programming with innovative approaches and implement new strategies based on lessons learned. Strengthening political institutions, such as the VRU, in a meaningful way is generally a multi-step process over a longer time horizon. Some illustrative examples of this progression could include: Building on RADA's successful Model District MP Offices sub-activity, which provides models of how MPs can effectively communicate with voters. RANG could expand the sub-activity and work to have its processes institutionalized so other districts can incorporate its best practices. Under RADA, VRU developed the e-Parliament Strategy - Development for Transparent and Accountable Parliamentary Processes in support of the digitalization of the VRU. RANG could assist the VRU to execute this strategy and bring the institution more inline with European standards. RANG would facilitate the creation of a modern parliamentary research service based on RADA's Information Research Center, which served as a prototype.

RANG will examine other legislative systems and identify and incorporate best practices that could be adapted to the Ukrainian context. This was done under RADA to help develop many of its activities, including a variety of e-Parliamentary tools and the Information Research Center.

RANG will also address new priorities that have been identified through USAID facilitated VRU self-analysis. Examples of this include the critical needs for (1) improved oversight of executed legislation by both the VRU itself and CSOs, (2) citizens' greater knowledge of civics and the functions of the VRU, and (3) the enhanced ability for MPs and their constituents to directly engage each other.

Ensuring Sustainability and Durable Effectiveness

Sustainability is key to the long-term effectiveness of any government institution. Sustainability has been fundamental to USAID's work over the 50 years of its existence and is now core to its development policy and reform agenda. The Presidential Policy Directive on Global Development, the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, and the USAID Policy Framework recognize the critical importance of emphasizing sustainability in development cooperation.

RANG will develop a comprehensive sustainability plan which will identify and implement key steps to ensure legislative strengthening progress achieved under this Activity continues after the Activity's conclusion. For the purpose of legislative strengthening, sustainability will be achieved when the VRU, its members, and its stakeholders are able to effectively advance accountability and democratic development in Ukraine through legislative systems without substantial funding assistance from external donors.

RANG will strive to incorporate sustainability considerations into its sub-activities whenever possible to support this endstate. The primary focus for this will be (1) e-Parliamentary tools, enhancements, and training and (2) institutionalizing sub-activities that RANG will advance from the planning and piloting stages into formal institutions, tools, and standard operating procedures (SOPs). Anticipated specific examples of sustainable activities include the establishment of the Parliamentary Research Service, institutionalization of new MP training, and the development and transfer of e-Parliamentary tools, including systems that enhance communication within the VRU and with their constituents, other government bodies, and stakeholders, and the digitalization of VRU record and document systems.

Grant Mechanisms

RANG is expected to provide approximately 20% of the total budget as sub-grants. Grant mechanisms will vary depending on the program needs, nature of activities, and other factors, and may include: competitive and non-competitive grants; innovative "open door" grants to provide funding on a rolling basis for unsolicited applications that support and ensure the sustainability of strategic program objectives; and institutional support for core partners advancing reforms.

To promote sustainable development and self-reliance, RANG must fully utilize local organizations when possible during the implementation of this activity through sub-grants. These sub-awards must be designed to encourage innovation and creativity in advancing parliamentary reforms. They must target local non-governmental organizations capable of advocating for and contributing to stronger and more independent legislative institutions, monitoring institutional performance, and providing legislative oversight, increasing public awareness of and engagement in legislative processes, and facilitating the creation of modern parliamentary analytical, research, and training services.

Grants may be issued to national or local organizations, including partnerships and coalitions. RANG will determine grant priorities in close consultation with USAID. USAID will have substantial involvement in approving all sub-grant awards under this award. Grant activities and achievements will be closely monitored and information on successful initiatives will be shared regionally and nationally. The grant-making mechanism will be structured in such a way to allow

for swift approval of grants and simplified administrative and financial reporting requirements for nascent organizations.

Government Ownership and Buy-in

RANG will establish VRU ownership and pursue VRU input and buy-in to achieve its objectives. This will include VRU, VRU Secretariat, and GOU in-kind and financial support on sub-activities when possible. The majority of this institutional leveraging will involve in-kind donations of workspace, facilities, buildings, restructuring VRU Secretariat Departments/Units and volunteer hours by VRU Secretariat staff and MPs. Efforts will be made to secure support (i.e. identification of GOU funding) to ensure the sustainability of key reforms and operational improvements, regardless of possible opposition from select elements. VRU should also be directly involved in the implementation of RANG activities, whenever possible, to improve their sustainability and increase their opportunities for success.

IV. Activity Goal, Objectives, Expected Results and Sub-activities

Activity Goal

Goal: To advance the “next generation” of reforms that will enable the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (VRU) to become a modern, effective institution that promotes accountability and democratic development in Ukraine.

Hypothesis: IF MPs work effectively with their constituents, including individuals, civil society, and businesses, to pass legislation and budgets that respond to citizen needs and meaningfully contribute to Ukraine’s development, THEN the VR will contribute to Ukraine’s progress towards becoming an independent, democratic, prosperous country united around common European values.

RANG will address the VRU’s most critical challenges, specifically poor parliamentary accountability to constituents, a fragmented and inefficient legislative process, insufficient engagement with and representation of citizens, low analytical capacity of members of parliament (MPs), and the virtually non-existent formal oversight of the executive branch. The Activity will focus on addressing weaknesses in VRU’s legislative processes, while concurrently identifying and taking advantage of opportunities where the VRU can improve as an effective, democratic institution.

High level results of RANG are as follows:

Objective 1: Greater participation by constituents in legislative processes, including better and more frequent engagement between MPs and their constituents, specifically individuals, civil society, and business associations

Objective 2: VRU analytical and oversight capacity strengthened and enhanced to ensure an end-to-end legislative process

Objective 3: VRU performs its constitutionally designated functions more effectively and efficiently through the utilization of technological and innovative solutions.

The following are the objectives, sub-objectives and expected results for RANG:

Objective 1: Greater participation by constituents in legislative processes, including better and more frequent engagement between MPs and their constituents, specifically individuals, civil society, and business associations

RANG will focus on sub-activities that enhance and encourage public participation in the VRU legislative and law making processes. Constituent participation, engagement, and accountability have been largely absent from VRU processes. Instruments and tools that facilitate public engagement need to be developed and institutionalized. Smart technologies and solutions will need to be adapted to improve opportunities for MPs' communication with voters and normalized to ensure their sustainability. RANG will develop civic education programs that inform citizens of the mandates of the VRU, especially concerning their role vis-a-vis MPs and their constituents. Programs such as these will be designed to be replicable in training-of-trainer format to improve their sustainability.

Objective 1.1: Increased MP-constituent engagement and public participation in the legislative process

Expected Results:

- 1) Institutionalization of procedures and resources that encourage better communication between MPs and constituents, such as "model districts" where RANG supports MPs communications with citizens in target geographic constituencies and electoral regions in order to provide model examples for other MPs and constituencies;
- 2) More frequent communicative engagement between MPs and their constituents and normalization of such engagement to enhance its sustainability;
- 3) Information technology systems utilized and institutionalized that allow MPs and citizens to track complaints and concerns with the government and allows VRU Secretariat to support and follow up on such communications.

Objective 1.2: Improved MP representation of their constituents, especially concerning issue-based and regional interests

Expected Results:

- 1) MPs and VRU staff understand how citizen relations and communications are both closely connected but also distinct and different from work on policy issues and budget;
- 2) MPs and VRU staff understand how to incorporate concerns of regional constituencies, interest groups, civil society organizations, etc. into legislative processes, including policymaking, budget, oversight, committee work, etc., and integrate such processes into their standard operating procedures to improve their sustainability;
- 3) MPs and VRU staff know how to get research and information about key issues from VRU secretariat, legitimate outside sources, civil society, etc. and such processes are adopted as standard operating procedures to enhance their sustainability;
- 4) Local and regional civil society organizations and other legitimate representatives of constituency policy interests know how to use the full range of legislative processes to advocate for their issues and are able to share this knowledge to ensure sustainability;

- 5) Local officials and MPs have more constructive and substantive relationships, which are normalized and sustainable, and are able to promote local and regional issues; and
- 6) Code of Conduct for VRU MPs and Secretariat staff established.

Objective 1.3: Improved citizens' knowledge of civics, the VRU, and its processes

Expected Results:

- 1) The Parliamentary Education Center has a new strategic plan adopted, is resourced for promoting civic education, and is institutionalized to ensure sustainability;
- 2) MPs and the VRU Secretariat work together to continue and institutionalize those VRU institutions devoted to civic education at the regional and national levels; and
- 3) Citizens, including youth, have a better understanding of civics, the VRU, and its processes and have greater enthusiasm for engaging their MPs about concerns and exercising their democratic rights.

Objective 2: VRU analytical and oversight capacity and processes strengthened and enhanced to ensure an end-to-end legislative process.

RANG will focus on sub-activities that address the day-to-day functions of MPs, VRU staffers, and other government officials who frequently engage the VRU. To date, the VRU has been inefficient at developing effective legislation and oversight of the executive's implementation of legislation is very weak. This is largely because the VRU has insufficient analytical resources and support and lacks the capacity and knowledge of systems necessary to effectively perform their constitutionally mandated legislative functions. New MPs and staff entering the VRU are generally unprepared for the complexities and nuances of the VRU because Ukraine's higher education system lacks curricula that prepares future leaders of Ukraine with knowledge of legislative processes, procedures, and affairs. RANG will establish training programs and develop training curricula that could culminate into an institutionalized training program for new MPs and VRU staff. Such a program can ensure that future MPs and VRU staff are well-prepared to fulfill their mandates.

CSOs involved in GOU oversight, especially think tanks, also need to be strengthened. Both the capacity and number of monitoring organizations in many regions that provide independent sectoral expertise are insufficient to provide adequate oversight over the activities of the VRU and GOU institutions. RANG will work within the VRU, with CSOs, and with those who can affect higher education curricula to address these capacity deficiencies. RANG will solicit support and insights from the VRU and VRU stakeholders to develop educational programs that are replicable and sustainable. VRU buy-in and involvement is critical for both the planning and execution of such programs.

Objective 2.1: MPs, VRU staff, target government officials, and CSOs who frequently engage the VRU have greater capacity and understanding of the legislative process, including budgeting and oversight.

Expected Results:

- 1) The quality and effectiveness of legislation is improved;
- 2) Training programs for new MPs and VRU staff are developed and institutionalized; and
- 3) Legislation implementation is improved because of more effective oversight and post-legislative scrutiny processes that become standard operating procedures.

Objective 2.2: The VRU has access to higher quality research and analytical resources.

Expected Results:

- 1) VRU MPs and staff more effectively conduct research and analysis to address challenges in Ukraine;
- 2) The Parliamentary Research Service developed and institutionalized;
- 3) New entrants into the VRU have greater capacity to provide expertise and assistance on legislative processes;
- 4) Legislation developed and supported with better analysis; and
- 5) VRU MPs and committees adopt best practices from “model committees” regarding utilization of procedures, resources, and modern tools.

Objective 2.3 Communication and coordination between the VRU and other GOU branches are enhanced and more normalized.

Expected Results

- 1) The concept of an ‘end-to-end’ legislative process is adopted and institutionalized, based on greatly enhanced coordination between originators of legislative proposals in the Cabinet of Ministers, the Presidential Administration, and the VRU;
- 2) The VRU has improved engagement with key GOU branches and institutions for the purpose of determining challenges that should be addressed through legislative actions; and
- 3) The VRU is better able to conduct oversight and post-legislative scrutiny through institutionalized standard operating procedures that involve VRU stakeholders, especially CSOs.

Objective 3: VRU performs its constitutionally designated functions more effectively and efficiently through the utilization of technological and innovative solutions.

Following the development of a number of potentially effective electronic instruments, the VRU adopted a strategy in 2018 to incorporate “e-Parliament” tools into its standard operating procedures. These tools focus on such things as facilitating electronic engagements in committee meetings, inclusion of citizens into legislative processes through e-Petitions, and public consultations on draft laws. However, implementation and utilization of e-instruments have been limited and largely ineffective because the public holds the VRU in low-regard with little desire to engage in legislative processes. Regardless, implementation of an effective e-Parliament strategy is more critical than ever. Ukraine’s on-going war and the threat of Russian influence necessitates the development of a comprehensive informational and cybersecurity strategy that can communicate reliable information amongst the VRU, citizens, and other stakeholders.

COVID-19 has exacerbated the need for e-Parliament solutions with the VRU frequently unable to conduct engagements physically. While RADA was able to implement significant e-Parliamentary tools and systems, the transformation is incomplete. The VRU is still limited in the types of legislative sessions and activities that it can engage in. For example, the VRU is unable to hold plenary sessions virtually or access many documents that have yet to be digitalized. While many of Europe’s legislative bodies have been able to fully adapt to the pandemic and continue to consistently function in a relatively effective manner, the VRU has lagged. The international parliamentary conference “Key Lessons and Challenges for Parliaments in Context of Coronavirus

Pandemic” demonstrated that effective parliaments have significantly changed their approaches to functioning in response to COVID-19 often through virtual and hybrid engagements.

The VRU Secretariat is enthusiastic about the further adoption and integration of e-Parliamentary tools. RANG will work with the VRU to develop appropriate IT and communication systems, establish training programs for their utilization, which will be institutionalized, and transfer their full control to the VRU. This will ensure both VRU ownership of the e-Parliamentary tools and their sustainability.

Objective 3.1: Upgrade of e-Parliamentary tools, including digitization of VRU documents and processes and implementation of cybersecurity strategy

Expected Results:

- 1) Hybrid parliamentary procedures and systems in place to mitigate the risks of functioning in a remote work environment; and
- 2) The VRU has adequately robust e-Parliamentary systems and cybersecurity structure commensurate with foreseeable threats and the full capability to maintain them.

Objective 3.2: Internet communication systems are sufficiently robust and appropriately designed to encourage engagement between the VRU and stakeholders

Expected Results:

- 1) Greater and more productive engagement between VRU and stakeholders;
- 2) The VRU has full capability to maintain communication systems; and
- 3) The VRU legislative processes are more transparent and trusted by citizens.

V. Coordination with Other USAID and Donor Programs

Cooperation with other USAID Programs

RANG will be implemented in close collaboration with existing Mission activities from all technical areas, such as democracy and governance, health, and economic growth, on their legislative agendas. This collaboration will help identify areas of complementarity, cooperation, and inter-programmatic support that will further their respective objectives. Some of the specific USAID activities that RANG will coordinate with on legislative agendas include Ukraine Responsive and Accountable Politics (URAP); Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS) programming in Ukraine; Developing Initiative for Advocating Local Governance in Ukraine (DIALOGUE); the USAID Civil Society Program, the USAID Media program, Competitive Economy Program (CEP); Agriculture Growing Rural Opportunities (AGRO); the USAID Health Reform Support Project; Safe, Affordable, and Effective Medicines for Ukrainians Project (SAFEMED); and others.

Additionally, the Activity will closely coordinate with activities supporting civic education and youth engagement in democratic culture and political processes across Ukraine. The Enhance Non-Governmental Actors and Grassroots Engagement (ENGAGE) activity works to increase citizen awareness and engagement in civic actions at the national, regional, and local levels. As part of this, ENGAGE aims to improve the civic engagement skills of teachers through off-line and on-line tools and conducts civic education on the rights and responsibilities of citizens living in a

democracy. The Decentralization Offering Better Results and Efficiency (DOBRE) activity provides comprehensive support to local communities to further decentralization reform and territorial reorganization of Ukraine's oblasts, aiming to build effective and responsible local governance processes that deliver tangible benefits to citizens. DOBRE works to mobilize young people to engage in community development. The Support to Anti-Corruption Champion Institutions (SACCI) activity empowers government institutions to reduce and control corruption, and is lowering tolerance of corruption and reaching youth by building skills of citizens, including youth, to engage in anti-corruption activities, including through participation in political processes. The Ukraine Responsive and Accountable Politics (URAP) program works with youth through civic education in universities, building the capacity of young political activists, as well as youth-focused get-out-the vote campaigns during election cycles. The Activity is also expected to work with Washington-managed regional USAID activities with youth components, in particular the European Democracy Youth Network (EDYN).

RANG will also support and utilize linkages with other USAID and US Government programs that support democratic and legislative processes including, but not limited to:

- Partnerships with other USAID supported political party programs to improve MPs, political parties and their members' linkages to constituents;
- Political party programs focusing on citizen education initiatives concerning legislative processes that incentivize MP relations with constituencies;
- USAID programs supporting decentralization reform;
- USAID media projects that increase public access to the legislative process;
- Programs of US Department of State sections, including International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) and Public Affairs Section (PAS); and
- The USAID Justice for All program.

Other Donor Assistance

The Mission coordinates closely with donors working to support democratic legislative processes. While USAID has been active since 1994 through a comprehensive legislative program effort, several other donors and governments have also provided limited and ad hoc assistance efforts regarding parliamentary support.

The Westminster Foundation has addressed issues related to rules and procedures, budget, and staff development. The German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) has supported on average a quarter of the annual parliamentary and executive branch interns through the Ukrainian NGO, the Interns' League. The EU-UNDP Parliamentary Reform Project aims to strengthen the functioning of the VRU by improving legislative processes, modernizing the VRU Secretariat, and improving public trust in the VRU (scheduled to end February 2021). Parliamentary Centre (Canada) supports the two committees of Ukraine's Parliament that are key in the review and passing of legislation required for security sector reform (SSR), namely the Committee on National Security, Defense and Intelligence and the Committee on Law Enforcement. USAID has also cooperated closely with other donors (including some OSCE programs) on planning policy development, election law, administrative-territorial reform, and anti-corruption.

Once awarded, the implementing partner must provide supporting documents regarding mandatory coordination and communication with other stakeholders carrying out related activities. In

consultation with USAID, partners should share implementation plans and reports, as appropriate, to ensure effective coordination.

V. Implementation Principles and Cross-Cutting Considerations

Geographic Targeting: RANG will implement interventions at both the national and sub-national levels. While a large percentage of RANG's activities will target the VRU itself and government stakeholders at the national level, the Activity will also conduct civic education and public participation activities at the sub-national level, including interventions that enhance the relationships between legislators and their constituents. The Activity is expected to work collaboratively with USAID to refine the geographic and demographic targeting throughout the life of the Activity.

Conflict Sensitivity: The Activity will take into account conflict dynamics throughout implementation. Conflict sensitivity refers to the discipline and capacity of an organization to:

- Understand the conflict context in which programs are being implemented;
- Understand how the conflict context might affect programs and how programs might affect the conflict context;
- Act on this understanding to minimize risk of negative impacts on programs (i.e., staff, beneficiaries, communities, results) and the conflict dynamics; and
- Identify options for positively impacting the conflict context.

Flexibility and Adaptive Management: The Activity will operate in a highly dynamic, unpredictable environment that will require flexibility in both planning and implementation. Challenges and uncertainties include adapting to Russia-linked aggression, political will of key stakeholders, the unresolved conflict in the Donbas and occupation of Crimea, new political dynamics, as well as the overall pace of reform. While targeting and tailoring interventions to achieve the objectives stated above, the Activity should nevertheless be flexible enough to adapt to changing circumstances. Comprehensive contingency planning will also include operational and programmatic plans for expanding activities into the Non-Government Controlled Areas of Ukraine should peace occur.

RANG must be agile and structured to adapt to changes in needs and opportunities in a timely and intentional way. To better understand and respond to contextual dynamics, the Activity must incorporate constant learning, measuring, innovating, and iterating. Adaptive management is a structured, iterative process of robust decision making in the face of uncertainty, with the aim of reducing uncertainty. This can be achieved over time via systems monitoring. RANG will emphasize an approach that is flexible, employs systems analysis, relies on M&E data for informed decision-making, and integrates continuous learning and adaptation into its interventions.

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. A mandatory gender and inclusive development analysis was also specifically completed as part of the RADA the Next Generation design process.

Despite the fact that Ukraine has ratified all UN human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination, and the Beijing Platform for Action there is a gap in achievement of gender equality. Over the last several years, the Parliament of Ukraine has embarked upon an extensive agenda of parliamentary reform, increasing the number of gender sub-committees to two: the Sub-committee on Gender Equality and Non-discrimination (under the Committee on Human Rights, Reoccupation and Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories, National Minorities and Interethnic Relations) and the Sub-committee on Implementation of International Commitments in Human Rights and Gender Equality (Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Liaison).

Members of the 9th convocation of the VRU, as with their colleagues in the 6 – 8th convocations, formed a Gender Caucus to advocate for equal opportunities for women and men in politics and society. The so-called Equal Opportunities Group comprises both female and male MPs (96 persons, 53 women and 43 men MPs). Its purpose is to promote gender equality between men and women in all spheres of life, improve the status of women in Ukraine, and ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. The Caucus cooperates actively with women's CSOs in the framework of a public council. The group also targets underlying sexism in Ukrainian society and Parliament, in particular.

In 2019 the Verkhovna Rada Secretariat adopted a Strategy on Development of Human Resources through 2022, which contains several gender equality commitments such as yearly gender audits of the Secretariat staff, development of recommendations for ensuring gender equality in the activities of the VRU Secretariat, conducting gender equality trainings, and ensuring the exercise of rights related to combining employment with parental responsibilities. In 2016 the Parliament established a baby room serving the VRU Committees, serving as an example of early progress towards human development protections.

The Activity does not envision a stand-alone gender component. However, the Activity must place considerable focus on the integration of gender considerations, utilizing USAID's five domains of gender analysis, ensuring that men and women both benefit from USAID's support and are treated without discrimination; gender awareness is a built-in component of all Activity interventions; and resources are fairly distributed, taking into account the different needs of women and men, girls and boys.

The Activity is required to address the recommendations of USAID's Gender Analysis report. Specifically, successful applicants must:

- 1) Strengthen the oversight function of the Parliament in implementation of gender equality international commitments, national legislation, and gender policies;
- 2) Support the Parliament in strengthening internal gender mechanisms;
- 3) Support the Parliament to increase application of gender legal expertise to draft laws, gender budgeting and relevant education on gender legal expertise and analysis;
- 4) Build the capacity of MPs to include gender equality tasks in their work with constituencies, including oversight of the implementation of national gender equality legislation and policies at the local level; and
- 5) Include performance indicators in the Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (AMELP) that would acknowledge the impact of gender relations on project results as well as the impact of project activities on gender relations.

Illustrative activities could include:

- 1) Advising and training on gender sensitivity and mainstreaming when drafting legislation;
- 2) Establishing oversight conditions that incorporate gender-equality and sensitivity SOPs to ensure execution of legislation does not discriminate (and ideally empowers) based on gender;
- 3) Providing events and training that promote women's leadership in the traditionally male dominated VRU;
- 4) Developing gender needs assessment questionnaires for female VRU staffers; and
- 5) Strengthening civic and political participation by women in VRU processes.

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.

Sustainable and Inclusive Development: USAID's journey to self-reliance (J2SR) prioritizes supporting host country partners to become self-reliant and empowered to lead their own development journeys. This approach is focused on improving the ability of the host country to plan, finance, and implement solutions to its own development challenges. These principles have been fundamental to USAID's work over the 50 years of its existence and are now a core part of USAID's development policy and reform agenda through J2SR. For Ukraine, J2SR support is centered on helping develop an independent, democratic, prosperous, and healthy Ukraine united around core European values. For the purpose of this Activity, JS2R will be achieved when the VRU, its members, and its stakeholders are able to effectively progress accountability and democratic development in Ukraine through legislative systems without substantial funding assistance from external donors.

The inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups remains largely unmet in Ukraine's democratic and governance processes and reforms. Where legal protections do exist, implementation remains ad hoc or ineffective at protecting the rights of the most vulnerable. The Activity must apply USAID policies and vision on inclusive development, including how they will reach out to, work with, and support some of Ukraine's most marginalized persons. For more information about USAID guidelines to incorporate an inclusive development lens, see Additional Help for ADS 201 Suggested Approaches for Integrating Inclusive Development Across the Program Cycle and in Mission Operations.

Diverse Partnerships, Leveraging Local Expertise, and Private Sector Engagement (PSE): USAID recognizes the value of engaging the private sector to help shape solutions that achieve sustained impact and can carry forward long after USAID's support has ended. The Activity should work with or target diverse partnerships that leverage local expertise such as youth-led efforts, CSOs working on civic empowerment and legislative accountability and oversight, local and national-reaching efforts related to civic engagement, champion universities and schools, opinion leaders, government representatives/champions, and educators, among others.

Through its new PSE Policy, USAID has issued an Agency-wide call to action and mandate to work hand-in-hand with the private sector to design and deliver our development and humanitarian programs in all sectors. This policy signals an intentional shift towards enterprise-driven

development as a more sustainable way to empower people, communities and countries on their journey to self-reliance. More on the PSE Policy: <https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/private-sector-engagement>.

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.

Legal and Regulatory Framework for the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine:

1. Constitution of Ukraine, 1996, 2016,
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2. Law on Rules of Procedure (Reglament of the VRU),
<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1861-17#Text>.
3. About the Status of the People's Deputy of Ukraine,
<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2790-12#Text>.
4. Law "On Committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine",
<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/116/95-%E2%F0#Text>.
5. Regulations on the Staff of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine,
<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/769/11-%D1%80%D0%B3#Text>.

National Democratic Institute:

6. NDI Ukraine Election Watch Report: Final Bulletin, 2020,
https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/NDI%20Ukraine%20Local%20Elections%20Statement%20-%20October%202020%20-%20ENG%20final_v3_0.pdf.
7. Public Perceptions of the 2012 Elections & Women's Role in Politics and Government, 2013,
<https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/NDI-Women-Survey-ENG.pdf>.
8. Toward the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures, 2007,
https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/2113_gov_standards_010107_5.pdf.
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10. https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/22_gov_legisprghbk00.pdf.

EU/UNDP:

11. The Role of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in Implementing International Treaties on Human Rights, 2020,
https://www.ua.undp.org/content/ukraine/en/home/library/democratic_governance/role-of-the-verkhovna-rada-of-ukraine-in-implementation-of-inter.html.
12. Strengthening Parliamentary Oversight and Facilitating Coordination between the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine to Enforce International Human Rights Treaties Recommendations, 2019,
https://www.ua.undp.org/content/ukraine/en/home/library/democratic_governance/coordination-of-VRU-and-CMU-for-implementation-of-international-human-rights-instruments.html.
13. Parliamentary Transformation: Challenges and Achievements, 2018,
https://www.ua.undp.org/content/ukraine/en/home/library/democratic_governance/parliamentary-transformation-challenges-and-achievements.html.
14. European Parliament, Report and Roadmap on Internal Reform and Capacity-Building for the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Sept. 2015-Feb. 2016,
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/resources/library/media/20160229RES16408/20160229RES16408.pdf>.
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2018, http://www.ua.undp.org/content/ukraine/en/home/library/democratic_governance/parliamentary-transformation-challenges-and-achievements.html.

Inter-Parliamentary Union:

16. Green Approaches to COVID-19 Recovery: Policy Note for Parliamentarians, 2020, <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/other/2020-12/green-approaches-covid-19-recovery-policy-note-parliamentarians>.
17. Comparative Research Paper on Parliamentary Administration, 2020, <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/reference/2020-09/comparative-research-paper-parliamentary-administration>.
18. Guidelines for Enhancing the Engagement and Contribution of Parliaments to Effective Development Cooperation, 2020, <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/reference/2020-09/guidelines-enhancing-engagement-and-contribution-parliaments-effective-development-cooperation>.
19. Putting Parliamentary Self-development into Practice, 2020, <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/reference/2020-01/putting-parliamentary-self-development-practice>.
20. Guidelines for the Elimination of Sexism, Harassment and Violence against Women in Parliament, 2019, <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/reference/2019-11/guidelines-elimination-sexism-harassment-and-violence-against-women-in-parliament>.
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27. Handbook on Information and Communication Technologies in Parliamentary Libraries, 2012, <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/handbooks/2016-07/handbook-information-and-communication-technologies-in-parliamentary-libraries>.
28. A Handbook on Child Participation in Parliament, 2011, <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/handbooks/2016-07/handbook-child-participation-in-parliament>.

29. Evaluating Parliament: A Self-Assessment Toolkit for Parliaments, 2008, <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/handbooks/2016-07/evaluating-parliament-self-assessment-toolkit-parliaments>.
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31. A Guide to Parliamentary Practice: A Handbook, 2004, <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/handbooks/2016-07/handbook-guide-parliamentary-practice>.

Westminster Foundation for Democracy:

32. Independent Oversight Institutions: a Guide for Parliaments, 2020, <https://www.wfd.org/2020/03/02/independent-oversight-institutions-a-guide-for-parliaments/>.
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34. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning for Women's Political Participation Programmes, 2020, <https://www.wfd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/MEL-for-Womens-Political-Participation-Programmes.pdf>.
35. Strengthening the Role of Parliament in the Budget Process: the Role of Parliamentary Budget Offices, 2020, <https://www.wfd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Budget-policy-brief-5.pdf>.
36. Women MPs of the World: Strengthening Visibility, Driving Change, 2018, https://www.wfd.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/WFD_Women-MPs-Report_for_web.pdf.
37. Strengthening Parliamentary Capacity for the Protection and Realisation of Human Rights, 2017, <https://www.wfd.org/2017/08/26/strengthening-parliamentary-capacity-protection-realisation-human-rights/>.
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Commonwealth Parliamentary Association:

39. Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures, 2016, http://www.cpahq.org/cpahq/Main/CPA_Benchmarks/Main/Programmes/Benchmarks_for_democratic_Legislatures.aspx?hkey=31ea0d53-cc00-4f78-b77b-9cbd212c6080.

OSCE:

40. Compendium of Good Practices for Advancing Women's Political Participation in the OSCE Region, 2016, <https://www.osce.org/odihr/224206>.

Overseas Development Institute:

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43. USAID Ukraine Country Development Cooperation Strategy for 2019-2024, 2019, https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1863/Ukraine_USAID_CDSCS_2019-2024_Public_EN_12.pdf.
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46. Green Paper on How to Ensure Legislative Quality? 2018, <https://radaprogram.org/en/publications/green-paper-how-ensure-legislative-quality>.
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49. USAID Handbook on Legislative Strengthening, 2020, <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2496/200sbb.pdf>.
50. Parliamentary Strengthening Assessment in Ukraine, 2019, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZCcWFvanqAFJAHxmtlo8gbpga_cRhaU/view?usp=sharing.

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51. Top 3 Legislative Initiatives That Have Changed the Work of Parliament, 2020, <https://parlament.org.ua/en/2020/12/24/top-3-legislative-initiatives-that-have-changed-the-work-of-parliament/>.
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53. Reform of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Way Forward, 2019, <http://rada2019.parliament.org.ua/en>.
54. Trends in the New Parliament: What did the first quarter show? 2019, <https://parlament.org.ua/en/2019/11/28/trends-in-the-new-parliament-what-did-the-first-quarter-show/>.
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56. <https://parlament.org.ua/en/2019/03/13/assessment-of-internal-reform-implementation-and-institutional-capacity-building-of-the-verkhovna-rada-of-ukraine/>.
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58. Public Opinion of the Population, July 15, 2019, https://dif.org.ua/article/reformi-v-ukraini-gromadska-dumka-naseleennya_pyaty.
59. Constructing a Political Nation: Changes in the Attitudes of Ukrainians during the War in the Donbas. The Party System after the Maidan: Regional Dimensions of an Unfinished Transformation, 2017, <http://dif.org.ua/uploads/pdf/18212736635aaf8ae4bfc014.12076744.pdf>.

Razumkov Centre:

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OPORA:

61. Voting for the State Budget, One Sitting in October and 88 MPs-absentees. How the Parliament Worked This Fall, 2020, <https://www.oporaua.org/en/report/parliament/22678-golosuvannia-za-derzhbiudzheth-1-zasidannia-u-zhovtni-ta-88-nardepiv-progulnikiv-iak-pratsiuvav-parlament-voseni>.

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63. The Verkhovna Rada of IX convocation. Yearly summary, 2020, https://www.oporaua.org/en/report/parliament/rada_9/20193-verkhovna-rada-ix-sklikannia-pidsumki-roku-roboti.

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Reanimation Package of Reforms:

65. Sectoral Brief "Parliamentary Reform" Ukraine Reform Conference - Vilnius, 2020, <https://rpr.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/PARLIAMENTARY-REFORM.pdf>.

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67. Index of Consent and Factional Unity of Ukrainian Parliament, 2019, <https://rpr.org.ua/en/news/index-of-consent-and-factional-unity-of-ukrainian-parliament/>.

[END OF SECTION I]

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 June 30, 2021. 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 (MEL) Plan. Any significant changes to the approved Implementation Plan and the MEL Plan 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, in accordance with 2CFR200.308 (c)(6).

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.

USAID reserves the right to expand Substantial Involvement at the stage of the resultant award.

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 of the RADA the Next Generation (RANG) 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

A. Types of Entities Eligible to Apply

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

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.

The following types of entities are **eligible** to apply for funding under this NOFO:

1. U.S. and Non-U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

a) U.S. and Non-U.S. Non-Profit Organizations

U.S. and non-U.S. private non-profit organizations may apply for funding under this NOFO.

b) U.S. and Non-U.S. For-Profit Organizations

U.S. and non-U.S. private for-profit organizations may apply for funding under this NOFO. Potential for-profit applicants should note that, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.400(g), profit, which is any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs, is not an allowable cost for recipients of USAID assistance awards, and cannot be part of the project budget. However, the prohibition against profit does not apply to procurement contracts made under the assistance instrument when the recipient procures goods and services in accordance with the Procurement Standards found in 2 CFR 200.317 to 326.

c) U.S. and Non-U.S. Colleges and Universities

U.S. and non-U.S. colleges and universities may apply for funding under this NOFO. USAID generally treats colleges and universities as NGOs, rather than governmental organizations; hence, both public and private colleges and universities are eligible, except public colleges and universities in countries that are ineligible for assistance under the FAA or related appropriations acts. Please note, however, that this NOFO is focused on people-to-people programming that addresses divisions within a community and is not intended to fund academic research.

2. Public International Organizations (PIOs)

PIOs may apply for funding under this NOFO. Please see ADS 308 for USAID policy on PIOs: <http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/308>

B. Registration as a Private Voluntary Organization (PVO)

NGOs that meet the definition of a Private Voluntary Organization (PVO) as defined in 22 CFR 203 <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title22-vol1/xml/CFR-2014-title22-vol1-part203.xml> are encouraged to register as a PVO with USAID. Applicants may find registration instructions here: <http://www.usaid.gov/pvo> .

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 (for NGOs; ADS 308 for PIOs). 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 may submit one application for funding in response to this NOFO.

E. Cost Sharing

ADS 303.3.10 Cost Share defines cost share as “the resources a recipient contributes to the total cost of an agreement. It is the portion of project or program costs not borne by the Federal Government.” Although not required for this NOFO, USAID/Ukraine encourages the potential applicants to propose cost sharing since “it is critical that the activity continues after USAID assistance ends.” These cost sharing requirements can ensure that the project establishes adequate alternate sources of funding, as well as give the applicant a financial stake in the success of the program. The applicants’ proposed cost share may enable additional worthwhile activities to be undertaken which USAID funds could not support. Cost share may secure the programmatic and financial sustainability of the initiatives. USAID encourages applicants to propose for which activities and in which amount cost sharing will be applied. The exact level of cost share is left to applicants to propose per 303.3.10.1 (<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf>). For NGO recipient contributions to qualify as cost share, the cost share must be verifiable from the recipient’s records; for U.S. organizations it is subject to the requirements of 2 CFR 200.306, and for non-U.S. organizations it is subject to the Standard Provision, “Cost Share”; and can be audited. If the recipient does not meet its cost sharing requirement, it can result in questioned costs. The USAID Mission Agreement Officer will determine whether any proposed cost share shall become a condition of the award. For PIO recipients, while the term “cost sharing” is not used in USAID grants and cooperative agreements with PIOs, the concept of cost sharing is manifested by the USAID requirement that USAID must have audit rights, and the recipient must comply with USAID’s procurement requirements, if USAID will be the sole contributor to a trust fund established by a PIO.

Any proposed cost share will be reviewed for compliance with applicable regulations and policies describe above in this section.

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:

The federal grant process is web-enabled, allowing for applications to be submitted on-line. Complete Application packages shall be submitted electronically through grants.gov, and must be received no later than the closing date and time as indicated on the cover letter of the NOFO. Instructions to submit applications electronically on-line in response to this NOFO are found on Grants.gov in the “For Applicants” section – under “Apply for Grants.”

Applications must also 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 selection 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 – RANG NOFO - TECHNICAL APPLICATION
- 2) ORGANIZATION NAME – RANG NOFO - 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) **must be in MS Word or PDF** format, single spaced, utilizing **Times New Roman 12-font size**, typed on standard 8½"x11" sized paper with 1" 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 minimum of necessary information.

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 (MEL) Plan and Collaboration, Learning and Adapting (CLA) Plan. There is a 3-page limit for Institutional Capability and a 2-page limit for Past Performance. The aggregate length of the 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 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.
- Any proposed sub grantees (or implementing partners) should be listed separately

Applicants should also state clearly whether the identified contact person has the authority to negotiate on behalf of the 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 2 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 activity 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 and in sufficient detail describe 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 the Ukrainian political and social context 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.

The proposed activity must be well-conceived, clear, technically sound, innovative and ambitious, yet feasible in achieving the objectives identified in this NOFO, with specific descriptions and illustrative examples of proposed interventions. Specifically, under Technical Approach the applicant's program description should address the following:

- Discussion of the proposed interventions, and how each will ultimately lead to achievement of expected results;
- Approaches and interventions applicants believe should be prioritized and why;
- Discussion of relevant and meaningful interventions at each level – Objective and Sub-Level Result - which should each be linked or flow from each level unto the

next. For example, each intervention must correspond to a sub-level result and each outcome must correspond to the relevant objective. 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 capitalizing on existing local capacity and building on it to position the sub-recipient(s) to effectively manage the project;
- Strategy for the phase-out and sustainability of activities and results.

Mandatory cross-cutting considerations: The cross-cutting considerations presented in Section I, Program Description of this NOFO must be incorporated throughout applicants' program. Specifically:

- ***Geographic Targeting:*** Ukraine features both urban centers and vast rural areas, with varying political, economic, and social dynamics. Applicants should display an understanding of these geographic factors, identify strategy for determining at which level (national or sub-national level) interventions would be most appropriate, and an ability to monitor, observe, and analyze development in all regions of the country.
- ***Conflict Sensitivity and Political Awareness:*** The Applicant's should convey its understanding of Ukraine's conflict dynamics and integrates conflict-sensitivity in all interventions.
- ***Partnering Approach & Sustainability:*** The Applicant should present an approach to identify, engage, and support a broad range of Ukrainian stakeholders inside and outside the government in addressing the activity objectives through a coordinated, Ukrainian-led approach. The Applicant's approach should also present a strategy for building Ukrainian capacity and ownership of RANG's interventions to sustain the results beyond the life of the activity.
- ***Gender Integration & Inclusion:*** The Applicant should address gender issues in a substantive and integrated manner, describing specific approaches for addressing gender constraints and capitalizing on opportunities. The Applicant should identify gender-related dynamics and/or inequalities that may affect the activity and describe how the activity will address those issues as well as ensuring an inclusive approach for all citizens, particularly women, youth, and vulnerable populations.

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

Applicants shall include a draft implementation plan that describes how and when specific core interventions 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 during the first year of implementation;
- Partner involvement and contributions to achieving the results;
- Timeline;
- Implementation timelines schedule; and
- Proposed plan for effective, timely launch of activities.

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 home office support and implementing partners (i.e., sub-recipient(s)), 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, and how it will utilize Ukrainian professionals for country staff.

It should also include 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 must propose two key leadership positions which will be designated as Key Personnel under the resulting award.

Example:

- ***Chief of Party (COP) or equivalent title***
- ***Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP) or equivalent title***

Applicants must demonstrate that the proposed Key Personnel have:

- Experience managing complex donor-funded development programs in areas such as legislative strengthening or related areas.
- Track record of successfully building and effectively managing diverse teams of employees.
- Ability to analyze complex, politically sensitive issues and ensure strategic program coherence in dynamic environments.
- Expertise in political analysis, legislative development and/or democracy programming at large.
- Effective interpersonal skills, creative problem-solving, ethical management and outstanding judgement.

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

- Organizational chart for the program team;
- A plan which allows for early identification and proposed resolution of problems by the prime awardee and provision of related information to USAID;
- Description of lines of communication between the prime recipient and its sub-awardees (including both Ukrainian local partners or other non-local partners) which ensures a cohesive working relationship and achievement of results;
- List of proposed staff with attention to gender balance, and the development of indigenous Ukrainian capacity;
- If the applicant plans to collaborate with other organizations for the implementation of this activity, the services to be provided by each organization shall be described. [Note: Ukrainian organizations receiving sub-awards or technical assistance from the project would be considered recipients, and therefore should not be included in the proposal]
- The activity should have at minimum one staff member with gender and inclusive development programming and integration skills and expertise.

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 two 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 (in an Annex) 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** (in an Annex). There is no special format for the references. Applicants should provide current phone, e-mail address information for each reference contact.

Applicants are encouraged to maximize the use of local staff wherever possible. Local staff should be fluent in Ukrainian and English. Knowledge of other languages from the region is a plus.

Applicants may propose, *but not required*, additional non-key personnel positions to address cross-cutting activity themes, such as Gender and Inclusion Advisor, Grants Manager, MELP/Research Specialist, etc.

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

In presenting its approach to CLA, the applicant shall take into consideration:

- Flexibility in adapting to changing needs and circumstances, as well as plans and methods for assessing, mitigating, and adapting to risk factors.
- Clarity, appropriateness, consistency, and soundness of an illustrative (draft) Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan for measuring progress in achieving expected results

of the program, 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.

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

In designing the overall MEL Plan, 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 MEL Plan 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, training, and other technical assistance, as well as their experience in managing similar activities in the past.

The Applicant should provide similar information for major partnering organization(s) (*if proposed*) 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 areas of youth development, confidence building, civic engagement, inclusion, or related areas.
 - Collaborations with donors, host country governments, and other stakeholders including civil society, youth, and the 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 any partnering organization(s) (*if proposed*), has 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 any major partnering organization(s) (*if proposed*) 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, Letters of Commitment and references for all key personnel candidates (per the details above, prescribed in section Staffing Plan).

Applicants shall also include signed Letters of Commitment for any major partnering organization(s) (*if proposed*) that will have significant role in the implementation of the program (excluding Ukrainian organizations that will receive assistance under this program).

Exclusivity arrangements with potential sub-partners are not required.

3. COST/BUSINESS APPLICATION FORMAT AND CONTENT:

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 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.
- **(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.
- **(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 on how to complete the forms and Standard Forms can be accessed electronically at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.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, if any, subaward(s). Applicants who intend to utilize other partnering organization(s) should indicate the extent intended and a complete cost breakdown, as well as all the information required herein for the applicant. **Major partnering organization(s) financial plans should follow the same cost format as submitted by the 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.
- **Cost share:** ADS 303.3.10 Cost Share defines cost share as “the resources a recipient contributes to the total cost of an agreement. It is the portion of project or program costs not borne by the Federal Government.” Although not required for this NOFO, it is encouraged.

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.

The US Embassy/USAID local compensation plan is an objective benchmark for evaluation the reasonableness of proposed salaries of local employees. Ukrainian labor market conditions are the same for USAID-funded contracts or assistance agreements.

The maximum daily rate for senior locally hired specialists is \$265 under USAID contracts. Applicants are expected to conduct their own market research for determining the salary scale for locally hired positions in Ukraine or rely on their previous work experience and other implementing partners' experience in the region.

- (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, Cooperating Country Nationals (CCNs) 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 applicant 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. Should the applicant have a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) with the U.S. Government, submission of their approved NICRA is all that is required.
- (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 MEL Plan 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) Details regarding the level of cost share your organization is proposing for this activity **if any**. Cost sharing is desired but not required.
- (9) Indirect Charges: The applicant and/or Major Partners must provide the organization's Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) if it has one.

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 and other Statements of the Applicant

Required assurance, certifications and representations: Applicants are required to complete Certifications, Assurances and other Statements of the Recipient. Please note that these certifications are required for both the applicant and all sub-grantees. Applicants may view the current Certifications, Assurances and Other Statements of the Recipient in ADS 303: <http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mav> (Parts I-V).

3. Additional Information

Applicants 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).

5. **Statutory and Regulation Certifications:**

The applicant shall complete the certifications in Required Certifications (see above) and sign and date in the signature space provided. The signed and dated printout must then be submitted with the application as an attachment to the cost application.

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 applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has 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 (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 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 NOFO. The criteria are listed in descending order of importance.

- 1. Technical Approach:** The technical and implementation approach will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant provides a sound, innovative, and flexible approach that will effectively achieve the objectives of the Activity, taking into consideration the institutional, political, social and economic context of Ukraine as outlined in the Program Description. The extent to which the draft Initial Implementation Plan presents a realistic and feasible plan to launch Activity operations in a timely manner, achieve results in Year 1, and addresses cross-cutting considerations. The extent to which the Applicant demonstrates its ability to build partnerships among government, civil society, and the private sector to achieve the expected results.
- 2. Staffing and Management Plan:** Appropriateness of the Applicant’s approach to achieve the objectives/results and manage the composition and organizational structure of the in-country team in an effective way. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates an ability to operate independently and effectively, including a clear and effective staffing plan with roles and responsibilities among different positions, and headquarters, adequately delineated to demonstrate an efficient use of human resources. The extent to which the proposed personnel and their experience are relevant and necessary for the implementation of the activity.
- 3. Collaboration, Learning and Adapting (CLA):** The extent to which the draft MEL Plan demonstrates an effective system for monitoring, evaluating and managing performance while incorporating learning. The extent to which the Applicant demonstrates an understanding of innovative approaches that allow for flexibility and the ability to adapt activity interventions throughout the course of implementation.
- 4. Institutional Capability:** The extent to which the applicant’s organizational capability and experience demonstrates its ability to manage technical and administrative aspects of similarly complex cross-sectoral political, legislative strengthening, good governance and civic engagement 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 awards to **U.S. non-governmental organizations** will be administered in accordance with 2 CFR 700, 2 CFR 200, and Chapter 303 of USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS),

including ADS 303maa, Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations. These 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>
- ADS 303maa, Standard Provisions of U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations:
<http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303maa>
- ADS Chapter 303:
<http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303>

Resulting award to **non-U.S., 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>

Resulting awards to **public international organizations** will be administered in accordance with Chapter 308 of USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS), including the Standard Provisions set forth in ADS 308.3.14. ADS Chapter 308 is available at <http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/308>.

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 30 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 (MEL) Plan:

Within the first 30 days of the signing the Cooperative Agreement and before major activity implementation actions begin, the Recipient shall submit an activity MEL Plan together with the Initial Implementation Plan to the USAID AOR for review and approval.

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 M&E Plan 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 M&E Plan require prior written approval of the AOR.

Activity MEL Plan submitted to USAID should include only those indicators that the USAID Mission needs for activity management, rather than the entire set of all indicators an activity implementer uses for its management purposes. The number of indicators reported to USAID should not exceed fifteen.

USAID is currently rolling out the New Partnership Initiative (NPI) and applying the new Agency-wide approach to measuring improved performance of new and underutilized partners through developing their organizational capacity. The Implementing Partner will be required to collect and analyze data related to the standard cross-cutting CBLD-9 indicator *Percent of USG-assisted organizations with improved performance*. USAID will provide further guidance.

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

The MEL Plan should include a comprehensive strategy for monitoring and reporting progress made towards activity purpose and results. The MEL Plan should contain the following required 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 it;
- annual 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; and,
- Learning Section.

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

The MEL Plan for this Activity will also be consistent with and meet the data collection needs of the Democratic Governance Project (2019) MEL Plan, the USAID's Performance Management Plan (PMP), and the Mission's annual Performance Plan and Report (PPR).

Performance indicators should comply with the following criteria: direct, objective, practical, adequate, and useful in managing for results. MEL Plan data should be based on US fiscal year.

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, USAID AOR or a third party contractor designated by USAID/Ukraine 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 partner 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, USAID AOR or a third party contractor designated by USAID/Ukraine 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.

USAID AOR or a third party contractor designated by USAID/Ukraine conducts the DQA. This may entail site visits to physically inspect records maintained by the activity implementing partner. The activity USAID AOR or a third party contractor designated by USAID/Ukraine will document DQA findings, including decisions concerning data quality problems and steps identified to address them. The findings will be shared with the implementer and an action plan to address data quality issues will be developed 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.

The M&E Plan 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 MEL Plan a number of indicators to help USAID measure the immediate activity results.

USAID may elect to organize and carry out an independent performance evaluation of this 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.

Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA)

RANG 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:** RANG will coordinate with other USG partners, other donors, civil society, development partners, and the Government of Ukraine to address the

Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine's (VRU) most critical challenges and enable the VRU to become a modern, effective institution that promotes accountability and democratic development in Ukraine. For RANG to succeed, the Recipient will employ a collaborative approach with other democratic and legislative processes activities implementers (including donors), and other stakeholders, (including Ministries, local governments, and relevant civil society development actors), exchanging knowledge and ensuring complementarity rather than duplication of activities.

- **Learning:** RANG will systematically and continuously review evidence from program implementation and external sources to inform program strategy, design and management. RANG 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:** RANG 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 RANG will be its flexibility to rapidly adapt to effectively address the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine's (VRU) most critical challenges and enable the VRU to become a modern, effective institution that promotes accountability and democratic development in Ukraine.

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

DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION SOLUTION (DIS)

The Development Information Solution (DIS), USAID's new agency-wide unified portfolio management system, is being deployed to USAID/Ukraine for centralized performance results reporting. DIS is envisioned as a comprehensive single-entry data point for activity-level information. The (Recipient/Contractor) will be trained to enter quantitative data and narratives through the DIS Partner Portal. The Partner Portal does not allow implementing partners access to AIDnet. Implementing partners will also be able to access the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) and the Development Data Library (DDL) through hyperlinks in the DIS Partner Portal.

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 RADA the Next Generation (RANG) Activity. A mid-term program performance evaluation in FY 2023 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 RANG, 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 RANG. 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 the RANG Activity may include:

- To what extent did the implementing partners(s) effectively collaborate to achieve the activity objectives?
- To what extent did the Activity expanded role of citizens in monitoring the work of Parliament?
- To what extent did the program successfully strengthen role of legislature in providing independent oversight of the executive branch?
- To what extent did the VRU become a modern, effective institution that promotes accountability and democratic development in Ukraine?
- To what extent did the Activity improve public representation in the legislative process?
- What RANG tools and approaches have been most innovative in advancing activity objectives?
- To what extent has the Activity advanced the overarching objective, three supporting objectives, and achieved the expected results?
- To what extent has the Activity effectively enabled strategic collaboration on legislative process implementation and strengthening initiatives among other international donors?
- What Activity results will be (may be) sustainable without USAID support?

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 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; and constituencies. 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 2nd Quarterly 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 M&E Plan 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.

Pre-Award Terms 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 2021-UKR-011 (Annex 1 of this NOFO) has been approved for the Program funding this NOFO. It will cover program activities through June 2026. 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.

SPECIAL AWARD REQUIREMENTS:

FOR U.S. ORGANIZATIONS

Special Award Requirement Relating to the Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment (November 2020)

USAID has been granted a temporary waiver under Section 889(d)(2) that will allow the recipient to use award funds through September 30, 2022, to procure certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment as specified in 2 CFR 200.216. Based on this waiver, all costs incurred for covered telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment will be allowable through September 30, 2022, without regard to the cost principle at 2 CFR 200.471. Procurements made on or after October 1, 2022, will be unallowable in accordance with 2 CFR 200.471.

[End of Special Award Requirement]

FOR NON-U.S. ORGANIZATIONS

Special Award Requirement Relating to the Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment (November 2020)

USAID has been granted a temporary waiver under Section 889(d)(2) that will allow the recipient to use award funds through September 30, 2022, to procure certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment as specified in the standard provision “Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment (AUGUST 2020).” Based on this waiver, all costs incurred for covered telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment will be allowable through September 30, 2022, without regard to the standard provision “Allowable Costs” and the cost principle at 2 CFR 200.471. Procurements made on or after October 1, 2022, will be unallowable in accordance with the standard provision “Allowable Costs” and 2 CFR 200.471.

[End of Special Award Requirement]

[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 (RCE) (2021-UKR-011)

ANNEX 2 – 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)

[END OF NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY]