



**Issue Date:** July 06, 2021  
**Deadline for Question:** July 17, 2021  
**Closing Date:** August 06, 2021  
**Closing Time:** 12:00 AM EST

**Subject:** Request for Application Number 7200AA21RFA00023

**Program Title:** Strengthening Natural Resources Safeguards for Large-Scale Linear Infrastructure in Asia (SNRS)

Ladies/Gentlemen:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking applications for a cooperative agreement from qualified entities to implement the “Strengthening Natural Resources Safeguards for Large-Scale Linear Infrastructure in Asia (SNRS)” program.

USAID intends to make an award to the applicant(s) who best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the merit review criteria described in this RFA subject to a risk assessment. Eligible parties interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this RFA thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements and selection process.

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information as required in this RFA and meet eligibility standards in Section C of this RFA. This funding opportunity is posted on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), and may be amended. It is the responsibility of the applicant to regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this notice of funding opportunity and to ensure that the RFA has been received from the internet in its entirety. USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion process. If you have difficulty registering on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) or accessing the RFA, please contact the Grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov) for technical assistance.

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements detailed in Section D.6. The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin registration early in the process.

Please send any questions to the points of contact identified in Section D. The deadline for questions is shown above. Responses to questions received prior to the deadline will be furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this notice posted to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

Issuance of this notice of funding opportunity does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government nor does it commit the Government to pay for any costs incurred in preparation or submission of comments/suggestions or an application. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Artaveya Carter', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Artaveya Carter  
Supervisory Agreement Officer, M/OAA/RM/AEM

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## **SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

This funding opportunity is authorized under the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended. The resulting award will be subject to 2 CFR 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and USAID’s supplement, 2 CFR 700, as well as the additional requirements found in Section F.

### **TITLE OF PROGRAM**

The title of USAID/Asia’s Environmental Security and Resilience Activity is “Strengthening Natural Resources Safeguards for Large-Scale Linear Infrastructure in Asia (SNRS)”.

### **BACKGROUND**

The [Asian Development Bank \(ADB\)](#) estimates that \$1.7 trillion per year in infrastructure investments is needed in the next ten years to maintain the Asia region’s growth momentum, tackle poverty, and respond to climate change. The sectors where most (85-90 percent) of that investment will take place have linear safeguards needs--power generation (52 percent) and transportation (35 percent).

The Asia region is home to some of the world’s most abundant biodiversity and is rich in natural resources like energy, water, and forests—which are all vital for countries’ long-term growth. Yet, high demand for these finite resources without strong safeguards in place is leading to irresponsible infrastructure development and reckless extraction.

Too often government institutions in Asia either have weak legal frameworks for natural resource management and/or perform poorly at enforcing environmental compliance. Even though the private-sector and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) are typically better prepared to develop environmental safeguards, implementation gaps remain. Some consequences of these deficiencies are reduced resilience to shocks, whether pandemic, climate or disaster-related, and irrevocable loss of life-sustaining biodiversity.

### **Relation to USAID Frameworks and Activities**

As part of the Indo-Pacific Framework and Agency commitments to mitigate and adapt to climate change, USAID/Asia is actively assisting partner countries to formulate and implement environmental safeguards that will protect valuable natural resources, support economic growth, and improve governance. Improvements in transparent government policies and increased adherence to internationally accepted standards should make it difficult for irresponsible infrastructure projects and resource extraction arrangements to succeed. These improvements are also crucial to long-term sustainability and resilience. One such USAID intervention is the [Mekong Safeguards Project](#) that supports policy-makers, government regulators, financiers, developers, and partners with information and tools to foster consistent application of environmental governance standards, particularly for power generation and transportation infrastructure in the Lower Mekong region.

USAID/Asia is currently implementing a Linear Infrastructure Safeguards in Asia (LISA) activity to conduct assessments of the region's linear infrastructure (LI) engineering capacities (local engineering and construction firms). It also is assessing current practices to avoid and prevent impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems, minimize unavoidable impacts, restore damaged biodiversity and ecosystems, and offset residual impacts. Information from LISA's analysis will allow USAID and its Partners to identify which ecosystems and species are most threatened by LI expansion in Asia, and the capability of focal countries to safeguard their natural capital and implement wildlife-friendly LI. We know from LISA's experience that for some countries in Asia there is an urgent need to conserve biodiversity, because it is relatively intact and unique, and there is good capacity among government and private-sector professionals to protect it. The Partner should consider building on these existing USAID efforts in Asia. Recommendations from LISA for improving the capacity of Asian countries to address the impacts of LI should lay the groundwork for environmental safeguards capacity-building for ministries, agencies, engineering/consulting firms and non-governmental organizations. LISA identified several key interventions for increasing country-level capacity and mainstreaming environmental measures to prevent, mitigate, monitor, and build resilience in the face of projected rapid development of LI in Asia.

### **Relationship to the Work of Development Partners**

In close coordination with USAID, the partner should strive to ensure strong complementarity and synergy with other development partner funded assistance activities in improving environmental safeguards for large infrastructure and avoid duplication of effort.

The ADB, World Bank Group, and other donors are also pursuing programs to ensure long-term sustainability of development efforts. For instance, the ADB is pursuing efforts to [enhance country safeguards systems](#), that is, the policies, practices, legal frameworks and institutions that a country puts in place to avoid, minimize or mitigate potentially adverse environmental and social impacts of development activities. The [World Bank - Australia Safeguards Partnership](#) is supporting environmental and social safeguards capacity assessments, capacity building, regional learning centers, common donor approaches to safeguards and more for the Asia Pacific region.

### **Goal**

The overall goal of SNRS is to enhance development and implementation of safeguards that will ameliorate adverse natural resource impacts from rapidly expanding linear infrastructure development in Asia. The focus will be on transportation- and energy-related infrastructure. Effective, widespread adoption of high-quality LI safeguards is needed to conserve nature, enhance human well-being, reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the overcutting of trees, and provide for healthy ecosystems for adaptation and resilience to climate change and to safeguard the future.

Given the immensity of LI expansion in the construction pipeline, USAID/Asia wishes to increase the commitments from government institutions to strengthen legal frameworks for natural resource management and for climate-resilient infrastructure; and to enhance environmental compliance enforcement. Concomitantly, we wish to foster engagement with the private-sector and IFIs on development and implementation of safeguards and promoting better public and

private adherence to international environmental standards. These resulting outcomes should increase resilience to pandemic-, climate-, and disaster-related shocks and improve biodiversity conservation.

SNRS will build on the achievements of USAID's existing LISA activity that is providing recommendations for improving the capacity of Asian countries to address the impacts of LI and laying the groundwork for environmental safeguards capacity-building for ministries, agencies, engineering/consulting firms and non-governmental organizations. LISA will conclude in September 2021.

### **Development Hypothesis-Theory of Change**

*If* environmental safeguards for most of the LI, currently being planned in Asia, is more effective in conserving biodiversity and maintaining ecosystem integrity;

*And if* capacity to implement improved infrastructure safeguards is sustained;

*And if* climate resilience of human and ecological communities is strengthened;

In a manner that improves gender equity and social inclusion; builds capacity of stakeholders for self-reliance; and improves policies, systems, and standards at all levels.

*Then* environmental security and resilience will be improved, and the Asia region will continue to harbor the abundant biodiversity upon which long-term economic growth depends.

### **Objectives**

Effective safeguards protect people and the environment from harm; they avoid, lessen, and/or mitigate impacts of construction and infrastructure on people and the environment. Furthermore, safeguarding natural resources like forests is vital to climate security to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions while providing for healthy ecosystems for services such as clean water which is becoming increasingly scarce exacerbated by climate change. As a result of the SNRS activity, it is expected that the relevant stakeholders, government institutions, and private-sector infrastructure project proponents, will have increased safeguards capacity and frameworks leading to better environmental and natural resource management. The national and local governments will be able to implement and enforce the laws, policies, regulations and other frameworks to ensure multiple economic and development benefits, including natural resources, are protected, conserved, and sustainably used while mitigating the impacts of climate change. This activity's goal is to increase private-sector infrastructure project proponents' adoption and incorporation of environmental safeguards and do-no-harm approaches to natural resources and the environment into their objectives for managing business success. Project proponents will have incentives and the ability to implement wildlife-friendly, climate-resilient and, overall, environmentally sustainable infrastructure projects through capacity building, government policies, and increasingly profitable outcomes. Consequently, natural resource safeguards and security in the Asia region will be strengthened achieving the Biden-Harris' Administration goals for the Indo-Pacific and combating the climate crisis. It also will be helpful for government and private-sector decision-makers to benchmark the quality of safeguards, levels of compliance, and private-sector

environmental commitments in the Indo-Pacific countries relative to the US or Western Europe, where environmental impact assessment laws and practices have a longer history.

The development objectives for SNRS are the following:

**Objective 1:** Government legal frameworks for natural resource management and LI safeguards strengthened.

**Objective 2:** Government implementation and enforcement of environmental compliance requirements improved.

**Objective 3:** Effectiveness of environmental safeguards for private-sector and IFI LI projects increased.

Progress toward these objectives will be measured primarily through standard (SPSD) indicators for Biodiversity and Climate Change by monitoring within the focal geographic area the change in relevant progress indicators for the three outcomes such as the number of hectares under improved management, measurable improvements in biophysical conditions, and changes in adaptive capacity.

SNRS's objectives are complementary to other USAID, USG, and other Development Partner activities in the energy, transportation, and environment sector and standards being developed under the [Blue Dot Network](#), bringing together governments, the private sector, and civil society under shared standards for quality infrastructure development. The objectives are also interrelated, and interventions must take this into account. The activity will be implemented primarily at the national or state/provincial level.

### **Objective 1: Legal Frameworks and LI Safeguards Strengthened**

To adequately protect species, critical habitats, and key ecosystems in Asia, it will be necessary for many developing countries to increase their capacity to address the adverse impacts of LI systems. There is an urgent need for improved and more cogent policies, frameworks, guidelines, and best practices to avoid and mitigate future adverse impacts of LI on Asia's natural capital. Providing best available scientific information, design standards, and training to support government agencies, engineering and planning firms, the NGO community, and investors to collectively devise improved policies, implement better transport plans, and design and construct more wildlife friendly LI projects in Asia is necessary. Effective solutions are critical to avoid, minimize, mitigate, or compensate for LI systems that have adverse impacts on Asia's unique environment and rich biodiversity and climate.

The LISA Activity identified constraints to implementation of safeguard measures in key countries. These constraints were related to technical capacity deficiencies, legal and regulatory constraints, and other issues. The Partner should further analyze some number of previously identified constraints, recommend measures for overcoming the constraints, and then make progress toward implementing the measures.

The LISA project used a systematic approach to selecting countries for more targeted LI safeguards intervention. They evaluated biodiversity factors, e.g., species richness, extent of critical habitat, proportion of country in critical habitat, etc.; measures of potential LI development; and level of

investment by three Asia-wide investors, e.g., Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Asian Development Bank, and USAID. They focused in-depth assessments in five countries: Bangladesh, India, Mongolia, Nepal, and Thailand. The Partner should consider whether to build upon the existing efforts and knowledge-base or to alter their focus.

### **Objective 2: Implementation and Enforcement of Compliance Requirements Improved**

Potential SNRS activities, such as workforce training and best practice sharing, should raise the performance of safeguards with demonstrated benefits to biodiversity and climate. However, the crucial biodiversity conservation challenge (in the face of infrastructure expansion) that might remain is lack of political will and lack of desire to negatively affect profit and fund transfers to politicians. It can also be the case in which different Ministries are not coordinating on details such as government-designated conservation areas; limits to tree felling and protection of endangered species or even riverbank erosion control. The Partner should consider a wide range of measures for addressing this objective that sound implementation and enforcement of safeguards are improved. One example could be establishing a coalition of conservation experts, private sector professionals, and environment and social governance actors with government ministries to make tangible progress in meeting this complex challenge of proper implementation so that this obstinate barrier to biodiversity conservation is lowered.

### **Objective 3: Effectiveness of Private-sector and IFI LI Safeguards Increased**

To effectively conserve biodiversity, maintain ecosystem integrity, and enhance climate change resilience, private-sector and IFI project proponents must not only commit to LI safeguards adoption, but also to designing and implementing them in a formal, science-based manner. Part of addressing this objective will include developing capacity building and training materials to assist Asian transport and energy practitioners responsible for but likely unfamiliar with planning, designing, constructing, and evaluating wildlife friendly LI. This could involve training materials that can be delivered virtually, and/or used for in-person workshops or symposia. The training materials would likely be modular, so that modules can be selected to tailor presentations to specific audiences and constituencies. Partnerships with engineering and consulting firms who can demonstrate industry leadership will be encouraged throughout the SNRS activity.

## **ACTIVITY PARAMETERS**

### **Target Beneficiaries**

Target beneficiaries will be private and public sector proponents of large infrastructure projects wishing to comply with environmental and natural resource requirements and the governmental institutions responsible for enforcing compliance with safeguards.

### **Geographic Focus**

The geographic focus is countries in Asia. Activities related to SNRS have been initiated (by LISA) in Bangladesh, India, Mongolia, Nepal, and Thailand. However, the SNRS activity is not required to choose these, but should develop criteria for narrowing the geographic scope (from all of Asia) should be presented in the application or in the subsequent annual work plan. Narrowing the geographic scope might entail review of key infrastructure projects and their locales. Also, much

LI in Asia is transboundary. Moreover, the LISA capacity building assessments in Bangladesh, India, Mongolia, Nepal and Thailand will likely help inform the follow-up trainings needed in these countries.

### **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)**

Gender and social inclusion, as well as indigenous peoples and resettlement considerations, will be included to enhance the success of the activity, therefore a plan for measurable integration of these will be developed.

### **Specialized Expertise**

The ideal partner will be a well-coordinated team comprised of highly qualified experts, who are competent on the basis of training, education, and experience, in most or all of the following disciplines:

- Road ecology
- Public- and Private-sector capacity building
- International environmental and social safeguard standards and best practices
- Government and private-sector infrastructure investment
- Multilateral development bank processes
- Environmental economics

### **CROSS-CUTTING REQUIREMENTS**

There are several cross-cutting themes that might contribute to the success of this activity. The Partner should describe the contribution of themes that will enhance success and how the activity will orchestrate its themes toward a successful outcome. Likely themes include but are not limited to: market-based solutions, private-sector engagement, local capacity development, connecting citizens to government, and host country contribution. Benchmarking could be another theme, especially if Asian government and private-sector decision-makers will benefit from comparing their quality of safeguards, levels of compliance, and private-sector environmental commitments to the state of environmental impact assessment laws and practices in the US or Western Europe.

If government institutions do not sustain efforts to improve environmental compliance enforcement and private sector infrastructure proponents tire of embracing environmental protection objectives as crucial for managing business success, the benefits of this activity will be short-term.

Local institutional capacity and human capital are likely key to sustained development impact. The Partner must engage local institutions and provide entry points for organizations to contribute to USAID's SNRS Activity goals at different stages of implementation. The Partner must build technical and management capacity within targeted institutions and communities, working with or through host country systems when appropriate, to ensure capacity for uptake of its technical products, and transfer managerial and activity implementation responsibility to local institutions, including community groups with the necessary structures in place.

Strategic private sector engagement as related to natural resources is a priority for USAID/Asia and must be a significant area of focus for the SNRS Partner.

In summary, successful applicants will:

- Describe one or more approaches for increasing the effectiveness of environmental safeguards for private-sector and IFI LI projects that not only lead to measurable results but also demonstrate integration and complementarity across the three objectives.
- Demonstrate an implementation approach that is clearly based on sound and thorough analysis and aligns with market demands.
- Clearly describe plans for encouraging adoption of safeguards measures that can be adopted as effective standard operating procedures.
- Present clear and well-reasoned plans for how results of the activity can best be communicated and contribute to collaboration and learning.

### **USAID’s Involvement in Decision-Making**

The Partner must work in close consultation with the USAID AOR. This includes developing each annual work plan, with built-in reviews for any necessary course corrections. The Partner will be accountable for achieving the annual work plan and the contract objectives.

### **Collaborating, Learning and Adapting**

The Partner is encouraged to use flexible and adaptable systems and work plans to accommodate unanticipated changes and as means to take up new priorities that may arise during contract implementation.

Success of this project will depend on building meaningful relationships with the appropriate government institutions and private sector (and potentially financial sector actors, like banks and insurance companies) entities, especially ones that are committed to making the improvements envisioned. The extent to which this activity complements or augments similar natural resource conservation efforts of multi- and bilateral donors in the same geographic region, will also be crucial.

## **SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

### **1. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated**

USAID intends to award one (1) Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity. Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency, USAID intends to provide \$6,037,311 in total USAID funding over a four (4) – years year period.

## **2. Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Awards**

The anticipated period of performance is four (4) years. The estimated start date will be September 30, 2021.

## **3. Substantial Involvement**

The award will be a Cooperative Agreement and in accordance with ADS 303.3.11, the intended areas of substantial involvement are:

1. Approval of the recipient's implementation plans.
2. Approval of subaward and subcontract templates
3. Approval of proposed Key Personnel candidate(s).
4. Agency and Recipient collaboration or joint participation.
5. Agency monitoring to permit specific kinds of direction or redirection of the work because of the interrelationships with other projects or activities.

## **4. Authorized Geographic Code**

The geographic code for the procurement of commodities and services under this program is code 937, which includes the United States, the recipient country, and developing countries other than advanced developing countries, but excluding any country that is a prohibitive source.

## **5. Nature of the Relationship between USAID and the Recipient**

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient and under the subject program is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of the Strengthening Natural Resources Safeguards for Large-Scale Linear Infrastructure in Asia (SNRS), which is authorized by Federal statute. The successful Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program 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, program objectives, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.

## **SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **1. Eligible Applicants**

Eligibility for this RFA is not restricted. USAID welcomes applications from organizations that have not previously received financial assistance from USAID.

Faith-based organizations are eligible to apply for federal financial assistance on the same basis as any other organization and are subject to the protections and requirements of Federal law.

## SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### 1. Agency Point of Contact

Artaveya Cater  
Agreement Officer, M/OAA/RM/AEM  
US Agency for International Development  
500 D Street SW, UA 11.7.0E  
Washington, DC 20547  
Email: [acarter@usaid.gov](mailto:acarter@usaid.gov)

Yusuf Akoll  
Agreement Specialist, M/OAA/RM/AEM  
US Agency for International Development  
500 D Street SW, Ste. 11.7.1D  
Washington, DC 20547  
Email: [yakoll@usaid.gov](mailto:yakoll@usaid.gov)

### 2. Questions and Answers

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

### 3. General Content and Form of Application

The application and modifications thereof must be submitted in two separate volumes electronically via email: (a) technical and (b) cost applications. Email submissions must include the following in the subject line:

“Technical application under **7200AA21RFA00023**, submitted by: [name of Applicant organization].”

“Cost application under **7200AA21RFA00023**, submitted by: [name of Applicant organization].”

The application received by the deadline will be reviewed for responsiveness to the specifications outlined in these guidelines and compliance with the application format. The Applicant is expected to review, understand, and comply with all aspects of this RFA. Failure to do so will be at the Applicant's risk. The Applicant must provide the information required by this RFA. The Applicant must sign the application and print or type their name on the Cover Page of the technical and cost applications. Erasures or other changes must be initialed by the person signing the application. An application signed by an agent must be accompanied by evidence of that agent's authority, unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.

If the Applicant includes data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation purposes, the Applicant should:

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, an award 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 award. 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 sheets.”

**and**

Mark each sheet of restricted data 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."

The application must be prepared according to the structural format set forth below. The Applicant is expected to review, understand, and comply with all aspects of the RFA.

Preparation of the Application:

The Applicant shall furnish the information required by this RFA. The application shall be submitted in two separate parts: (a) Technical Application, and (b) Cost/Business Application.

An application signed by an agent on behalf of the Applicant shall be accompanied by evidence of that agent's authority, unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.

The Applicant should retain for their records one (1) copy of the application and all enclosures which accompany it.

#### **4. Application Submission Procedures**

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

The Applicant must submit their application in electronic format directly to Yusuf Akoll at [yakoll@usaid.gov](mailto:yakoll@usaid.gov) by **12:00 Midnight Washington, DC time on August 06, 2021**. Please copy Supervisory Agreement Officer Ms. Artaveya Carter at [acarter@usaid.gov](mailto:acarter@usaid.gov), on all correspondence.

For an application sent by multiple emails, please indicate in the subject line of the email whether the email relates to the technical or cost application, and the desired sequence of multiple emails (if more than one is sent) and of attachments (e.g. "No. 1 of 4", etc.). For example, if your cost application is being sent in two emails, the first email should have a subject line which says: "[organization name], Cost Application, Part 1 of 2".

Our preference is that the technical application and the cost application be submitted as single email attachments, e.g., consolidate the various parts of a technical application into a single document before sending them. If this is not possible, please provide instructions on how to collate the attachments. USAID will not be responsible for errors in compiling electronic applications if no instructions are provided or are unclear. The application received by the submission deadline will be reviewed for responsiveness to the RFA and the application format. No addition or modifications will be accepted after the submission date.

After you have sent your application electronically, immediately check your own email to confirm that the attachments you intended to send were indeed sent. If you discover an error in your transmission, please send the material again and note in the subject line of the email that it is a "corrected" submission. Do not send the same email more than once unless there has been a change, and if so, please note that it is a "corrected" email.

## **5. Technical Application Format**

The technical application will be the most important factor for consideration in selection for award of the proposed Cooperative Agreement. The technical application should be specific, complete and presented concisely. The application should demonstrate the Applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this program. The application should take into account the requirements of the program and evaluation criteria found in this RFA.

USAID will not review any pages in excess of the page limits noted in the subsequent sections. Please ensure that the application complies with the page limitations.

- Written in English.
- The technical application must not exceed 15 single-spaced typed pages, utilizing standard 8 ½" x 11", single sided, single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1" margins, left justification and headers and/or footers on each page including consecutive page numbers, date of submission, and applicant's name.
- 10 point font can be used for graphs and charts. Tables however, must comply with the 12 point Times New Roman requirement.
- Submitted via Microsoft Word or PDF formats, except budget files which must be submitted in Microsoft Excel.
- The estimated start date identified in Section B of this RFA must be used in the Cost Application.
- The Technical Application must be a searchable and editable Word or PDF format as appropriate.
- The Cost Schedule must include an Excel spreadsheet with all cells unlocked and no hidden formulas or sheets. A PDF version of the Excel spreadsheet may be submitted in addition to the Excel version at the applicant's discretion, however, the official cost application submission is the unlocked Excel version.

Annexes are excluded from the page limitation.

The Applicant is advised that any pages exceeding the limit will not be considered for evaluation.

The technical application must clearly demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the development challenges in context, outline specific activities and explain how the proposed activities would help achieve the activity objectives stated in Section A. The Applicant is encouraged to propose innovative yet realistic approaches that are most appropriate in the context of the presented issues as well as methods by which new approaches will be analyzed and adapted as needed throughout implementation.

The technical approach must clearly address the factors outlined in the evaluation criteria found in Section D.

**Application Contents:** The Technical Application, at a minimum, must contain the following **all of which count towards the page limit:**

**(a) Cover Page (not to exceed one page)**

A single page with the project title and RFA number, the name of the organization applying as the lead or primary Applicant clearly identified. Any proposed sub-awardees will be listed separately. In addition, the Cover Page must provide a 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 email address. State whether the contact person is the person with authority to contract for the Applicant, and if not, that person will also be listed with contact information. If applicable, the TIN and DUNS numbers of the Applicant must also be listed on the cover page.

**(b) Table of Contents (not to exceed one page)**

Listing all parts of the technical application, with page numbers and attachments.

**(c) Executive Summary (not to exceed two pages)**

Briefly describe: a) the proposed vision and goals for the program and b) the managerial approach and resources that the Applicant will bring to bear on the overall management of the program.

**(d) Technical Approach**

**Criterion 1: Technical Approach**

In this section, the Applicant is not to merely repeat what is already described in this RFA. The Applicant must focus on describing how they propose to achieve the program objectives and how the program will make a significant contribution towards achieving the development objectives of USAID as identified in the program description. The Applicant must elaborate in their technical approach on the most effective way to develop and realize the program objectives. The Applicant must present a convincing and compelling articulation of their technical approach as follows:

- Must describe a level/depth of understanding of the current challenges facing the adoption and implementation of environmental and social safeguards in Linear Infrastructure projects by Governments, financial institutions and the private sector to protect biodiversity including forests and support adaptation to climate change in selected countries in Asia.
- Technical approach must present a well-developed, informed, and sound strategy to achieve development objectives of strengthened government legal frameworks for natural resource management and Linear Infrastructure safeguards, improved Government enforcement of environmental compliance requirements, and increased

effectiveness of environmental safeguards for private-sector and international financial institutions (IFI) LI projects.

- Must include a plan for encouraging adoption of safeguard measures as standard operating procedures for sustainability including engagement with the private sector.
- Include the ability to build the capacity of civil society, research institutions and governments to promote and apply sustainable and quality infrastructure development options.
- Must include plans to integrate within trainings and activities the associated social safeguards, to avoid, minimize or mitigate the impacts of infrastructure on local communities, indigenous peoples and different genders.
- Include plans to include local and regional stakeholder perspectives into planning, program implementation and monitoring activities including an illustrative monitoring and evaluation plan.
- Applicants should present initial plans for how results of this program will be communicated and how it can most effectively contribute to collaboration and learning.

## **Criteria 2: Key Personnel**

The application shall provide evidence of the applicant's ability to recruit, employ and retain skilled individuals to successfully manage the Cooperative Agreement. It must demonstrate the quality and appropriateness of the proposed personnel and their ability to operate independently and deliver results of the program in the technical proposal. The proposed Chief of Party/ Program Director must have relevant experience, knowledge and skills in overseeing similar programs.

## **Criteria 3: Organizational Capacity and Management Plan**

The Applicant must articulate in the narrative how its organizational capacity and experience and that of proposed partners (if applicable) demonstrate the institutional capability to plan, implement, and support complex programming and the range of activities in this RFA. The Applicant must make clear the delineation of roles, responsibilities, authority, and processes for decision making within the implementation team. A management plan must clearly describe the applicant's administrative arrangements for the overall implementation of the program, including organizational structure for technical and operational management, and the applicant's approach to program monitoring, data management and reporting.

### **(e) Annexes**

The following Annexes must be attached to the Technical Application and **do not count towards the 15-page limit above.**

**Annex 1.** Personnel - Resumes (each resume must not exceed 3 pages). This section shall include resumes for all personnel whose salaries will be paid with USAID funds. Resumes shall not exceed three pages in length and shall be in chronological order starting with the most recent experience.

**Annex 2.** Organizational Chart (not to exceed 1 page). The chart shall show the staff reporting lines and relationships between the different positions.

## 6. Business (Cost) Application Format

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

Prior to award, applicants may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to assess the applicant's risk in accordance with 2 CFR 200.206. Applicants should not submit any additional information with their initial application.

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

a) **Cover Page** (See Section D.5 above for requirements)

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

The applicant must sign and submit the cost application using the SF-424 series. Standard Forms can be accessed electronically at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) or using the following links:

<b>Instructions for SF-424</b>	<a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424-instructions.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424-instructions.html</a>
<b>Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)</b>	<a href="https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html">https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html</a>
<b>Instructions for SF-424A</b>	<a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424a-instructions.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424a-instructions.html</a>
<b>Budget Information (SF-424A)</b>	<a href="https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html">https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html</a>
<b>Instructions for SF-424B</b>	<a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424b-instructions.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424b-instructions.html</a>
<b>Assurances (SF-424B)</b>	<a href="https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html">https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html</a>

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

c) **Required Certifications and Assurances**

The applicant must complete the following documents and submit a signed copy with their application:

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

- (3) Certificate of Compliance: Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA).

**d) Budget and Budget Narrative**

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

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

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

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

- 1) **Salaries and Allowances** – Must be proposed consistent with 2 CFR 200.430 Compensation - Personal Services. The applicant's budget must include position title, salary rate, level of effort, and salary escalation factors for each position. Allowances, when proposed, must be broken down by specific type and by position. Applicants must explain all assumptions in the Budget Narrative. The Budget Narrative must demonstrate that the proposed compensation is reasonable for the services rendered and consistent with what is paid for similar work in other activities of the applicant. Applicants must provide their established written policies on personnel compensation. If the applicant's written policies do not address a specific element of compensation that is being proposed, the Budget Narrative must describe the rationale used and supporting market research.
- 2) **Fringe Benefits** – If the applicant has a fringe benefit rate approved by an agency of the U.S. Government, the applicant must use such rate and provide evidence of its approval. If an applicant does not have a fringe benefit rate approved, the applicant must propose a rate and explain how the applicant determined the rate. In this case, the Budget Narrative must include

a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits (e.g., superannuation, gratuity, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in U.S. dollars and as a percentage of salaries.

- 3) **Travel and Transportation** – Provide details to explain the purpose of the trips, the number of trips, the origin and destination, the number of individuals traveling, and the duration of the trips. Per Diem and associated travel costs must be based on the applicant’s normal travel policies. When appropriate please provide supporting documentation as an attachment, such as company travel policy, and explain assumptions in the Budget Narrative.
- 4) **Procurement or Rental of Goods (Equipment & Supplies), Services, and Real Property** – Must include information on estimated types of equipment, models, supplies and the cost per unit and quantity. The Budget Narrative must include the purpose of the equipment and supplies and the basis for the estimates. The Budget Narrative must support the necessity of any rental costs and reasonableness in light of such factors as: rental costs of comparable property, if any; market conditions in the area; alternatives available; and the type, life expectancy, condition, and value of the property leased.
- 5) **Subawards** – Specify the budget for the portion of the program to be passed through to any subrecipients. See 2 CFR 200 for assistance in determining whether the sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor. The subrecipient budgets must align with the same requirements as the applicant’s budget, including those related to fringe and indirect costs.
- 6) **Other Direct Costs** – This may include other costs not elsewhere specified, such as report preparation costs, passports and visas fees, medical exams and inoculations, as well as any other miscellaneous costs which directly benefit the program proposed by the applicant. The applicant should indicate the subject, venue and duration of any proposed conferences and seminars, and their relationship to the objectives of the program, along with estimates of costs. Otherwise, the narrative should be minimal.
- 7) **Indirect Costs** – Applicants must indicate whether they are proposing indirect costs or will charge all costs directly. In order to better understand indirect costs please see Subpart E of 2 CFR 200. The application must identify which approach they are requesting and provide the applicable supporting information. Below are the most commonly used Indirect Cost Rate methods:

Method 1 - Direct Charge Only

Eligibility: Any applicant

Initial Application Requirements: See above on direct costs

Method 2 - Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)

Eligibility: Any applicant with a NICRA issued by a USG Agency must use that NICRA

Initial Application Requirements: If the applicant has a current NICRA, submit your approved NICRA and the associated disclosed practices. If your NICRA was issued by an Agency other than USAID, provide the contact information for the approving Agency. Additionally, at the Agency’s discretion, a provisional rate may be set forth in the award subject to audit and

finalization. See [USAID's Indirect Cost Rate Guide for Non Profit Organizations](#) for further guidance.

#### Method 3 - De minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC)

Eligibility: Any applicant that does not have a current NICRA

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

#### Method 4 - Indirect Costs Charged As A Fixed Amount

Eligibility: Non U.S. non-profit organizations without a NICRA may request, but approval is at the discretion of the AO

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

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

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

### **8) Monitoring and Evaluation Costs**

Pursuant to ADS 203.3.5 Monitoring Activities/Implementing Mechanisms, recipients are required to provide in the budget a separate line item for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). The line item must include minimal costs for data collection, analysis, and reporting. This line item will be tracked during implementation of the activity. The Applicant will propose to USAID the most cost efficient and effective way to address this requirement.

### **9) Seminars and Conference**

The Applicant will indicate the subject, venue and duration of proposed conferences and seminars, and their relationship to the objectives of the program, along with estimates of costs.

### **e) Consortium or Legal Relationship Among Partners**

If the Applicant has established a consortium or another legal relationship among its partners, the Cost/Business application must include a copy of the legal relationship between the parties. The agreement should include a full discussion of the relationship between the Applicant and Sub-Applicant(s) including identification of the Applicant with whom USAID will work with for purposes of Agreement administration, identity of the Applicant which will have accounting responsibility, how Agreement effort will be allocated and the express agreement of the principals thereto to be held jointly and severally liable for the acts or omissions of the other.

### **f) Additional Documentation**

The Applicant is required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to make an affirmative determination of responsibility.

Evidence of responsibility the Agreement Officer can use to determine the Applicant:

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

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).

As written above, the proposed budget should provide separate cost estimates for the management of the program (including program monitoring). the Applicant should minimize their administrative and support costs for managing the project to maximize the funds available for project activities.

The cost/business portion of the application should describe procedures for financial reporting. Discuss the management information procedure you will employ to ensure accountability for the use of U.S. Government funds. Describe program budgeting, financial and related program reporting procedures.

Indicate if financial commitments were made among partners during the preparation of the application. Budgets shall indicate the amounts committed to each member of the team. Letters of commitments from partners should be included (if available).

### **g) Prior Approvals in accordance with 2 CFR 200.407**

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

### **h) Approval of Subawards**

The applicant must submit information for all subawards that it wishes to have approved at the time of award. For each proposed subaward the applicant must provide the following:

- Name of organization;
- DUNS Number;
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not appear on the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) list;
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not have active exclusions in the System for Award Management (SAM) ;
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not listed in the United Nations Security designation list;
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not suspended or debarred;
- Confirmation that the applicant has completed a risk assessment of the subrecipient, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.332(b);
- Any negative findings as a result of the risk assessment and the applicant's plan for mitigation;

### **i) Dun and Bradstreet and SAM Requirements**

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

1. Provide a valid DUNS number for the applicant and all proposed sub-recipients;
2. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. SAM is streamlining processes, eliminating the need to enter the same data multiple times, and consolidating hosting to make the process of doing business with the government more efficient ([www.beta.sam.gov](http://www.beta.sam.gov)).
3. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

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

DUNS number: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

SAM registration: <http://www.beta.sam.gov>

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

### **j) History of Performance**

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

- Name of the Awarding Organization;
- Award Number;
- Activity Title;
- A brief description of the activity;
- Period of Performance;
- Award Amount;
- Reports and findings from any audits performed in the last four (4) years; and
- Name of at least two (2) updated professional contacts who most directly observed the work at the organization for which the service was performed with complete current contact information including telephone number, and e-mail address for each proposed individual.

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

### **k) Branding Strategy & Marking Plan**

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

## **l) Funding Restrictions**

Profit is not allowable for recipients or subrecipients under this award. See 2 CFR 200.331 for assistance in determining whether a sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor.

Construction will not be authorized under this award.

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

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

## **m) Conflict of Interest Pre-Award Term**

### **a. Personal Conflict of Interest:**

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

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

## **SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

### **1. Criteria**

The merit review criteria prescribed here are tailored to the requirements of this particular RFA. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters which the applicants should address in their applications, and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated.

Technical and other factors will be evaluated relative to each other, as described here and prescribed by the Technical Application Format. The Technical Application will be scored by a Selection Committee (SC) using the criteria described in this section.

### **2. Review and Selection Process**

The technical application will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria set forth below by a Source Selection Committee (SSC) composed of USAID employees, and, if necessary, other U.S. Government representatives. The team of technical experts will review and score the application received in response to this RFA.

The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the U.S. Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either an Agreement signed by the Agreement Officer or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

#### **a) Merit Review**

USAID will conduct a merit review of all applications received that comply with the instructions in this RFA. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the following criteria shown in a descending order of importance where Technical Approach and Key Personnel have the same weight:

#### **Evaluation Criteria 1: Technical Approach**

##### **Will be reviewed and evaluated based on:**

- the level/depth of understanding of the current challenges facing the adoption and implementation of environmental and social safeguards in Linear Infrastructure projects by Governments, financial institutions and the private sector to protect biodiversity including forests and support adaptation to climate change in selected countries in Asia.
- The degree to which the technical approach presents a well-developed, informed, and sound strategy to achieve development objectives of strengthened government legal frameworks for natural resource management and Linear Infrastructure safeguards, improved Government enforcement of environmental compliance requirements, and increased effectiveness of environmental safeguards for private-sector and international financial institutions (IFI) LI projects.

- The ability to resubmit plans for encouraging adoption of safeguard measures as standard operating procedures for sustainability including engagement with the private sector.
- Demonstrated ability to build the capacity of civil society, research institutions and government to promote and apply sustainable and quality infrastructure development options.
- Plans to integrate within trainings and activities the associated social safeguards, to avoid, minimize or mitigate the impacts of infrastructure on local communities, indigenous peoples and different genders.
- Description of plans to include local and regional stakeholder perspectives into planning, program implementation and monitoring activities including an illustrative monitoring and evaluation plan.
- ability to present initial plans for how results of this program will be communicated and how it can most effectively contribute to collaboration and learning.

### **Evaluation Criteria 2: Key Personnel**

#### **Will be reviewed and evaluated based on:**

- Evidence, provided by the applicant's, of the ability to recruit, employ and retain skilled individuals to successfully manage the Cooperative Agreement.
- The quality and appropriateness of the proposed personnel and their ability to operate independently and deliver results of the program in the technical proposal.
- The proposed Chief of Party/ Program Director relevant experience, knowledge and skills in overseeing similar programs.

### **Evaluation Criteria 3: Organizational Capacity and Management Plan**

#### **Will be reviewed and evaluated based on:**

- Demonstrated organizational capacity and experience of the applicant and proposed partners (if applicable) to plan, implement, and support complex programming and the range of activities in this RFA.
- The clear delineation of roles, responsibilities, authority, and processes for decision making within the implementation team.
- The management plan clear description of the applicant's administrative arrangements for the overall implementation of the program, including organizational structure for technical and operational management, and the applicant's approach to program monitoring, data management and reporting.

### **B. Business Review**

The cost application of the Applicant will be evaluated by the Agreement Officer on cost effectiveness and cost realism analysis. While Cost is less important than technical and is not weighed, the cost application of the Applicant will be evaluated for cost effectiveness. 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 for a responsibility determination.

The Selection Committee (SSC) Chair will validate the Applicant's past performance reference information based on existing evaluations to the maximum extent possible in accordance with ADS 303.3.9. The final award decision is made, while considering the recommendations of the SSC, by the Agreement Officer.

## **SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **1. Federal Award Notices**

Award of the agreement contemplated by this RFA 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.

### **2. Administrative & National Policy Requirements**

The resulting award from this RFA will be administered in accordance with the following policies and regulations.

For US organizations: [ADS 303](#), [2 CFR 700](#), [2 CFR 200](#), and [Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-governmental organizations](#).

For Non US organizations: [Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations](#).

### **3. Reporting Requirements**

- Financial Reporting:

Financial reporting will be in accordance with 2 CFR 200.327 and required on a quarterly basis.

- Program Reporting

The Recipient shall provide performance reports in accordance with the following:

#### **I. Reporting Requirements for the Grant Agreement:**

A. Quarterly Reports: The Recipient shall report orally to the AOR via teleconference on a quarterly basis.

B. Written Performance Reports will be provided to the AOR annually. Performance reports shall generally contain brief information on each of the following:

- (1) A comparison of actual accomplishments with the goals and objectives established for the period, the findings of the investigator, or both. Whenever

appropriate and the output of programs or projects can be readily quantified, such quantitative data should be related to cost data for computation of unit costs.

(2) Reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate.

(3) Other pertinent information including, when appropriate, analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs.

(4) Recipient shall immediately notify USAID of developments that have a significant impact on the award-supported activities. Also, notification shall be given in the case of problems, delays, or adverse conditions which materially impair the ability to meet the objectives of the award. This notification shall include a statement of the action taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation.

C. Final Report: The Final Performance Report must present the project information for the duration of the award. The Final Performance Report must include an executive summary, an overall description of the Recipient's activities, accomplishments and attainment of results and impact against agreed-upon indicators, an assessment of progress made toward accomplishing the objectives and expected results, and conclusions and lessons learned, including identification of future challenges and opportunities for replicating similar programs. The Final Performance Report should detail all deliverables produced by the Program.

D. The Recipient shall submit the final report electronically via e-mail to the Agreement Officer and the AOR, and separately in electronic form to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC). Reports to the DEC should be submitted with the note "for internal USAID only". Documents by E-mail: [docsubmit@dec.cdie.org](mailto:docsubmit@dec.cdie.org) ; or (b) Online: <http://www.dec.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=docSubmit.home>

E. All Reports and deliverables should be provided to the AOR in a format to be agreed upon with AOR.

2. Life of Project Work Plan: The Life of Project Work Plan must be submitted within 60 days of award.

3. Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP): A detailed PMP must be submitted within 60 days of award.

#### **4. Environmental Compliance**

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 117 requires that the impact of USAID's activities on the environment be considered, and that USAID include environmental sustainability as a central consideration in designing and carrying out its development programs.

This mandate is codified in Federal Regulations (22 CFR 216) and in USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) Parts 201.5.10g and 204 (<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/200/>), which, in part, require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified

prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all activities.

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). As part of its initial Work Plan, and all Annual Work Plans thereafter, the USAID Agreement Officer Representative in collaboration with the Mission Environmental Officer or Bureau Environmental Officer, as appropriate, shall review all ongoing and planned activities under this CA to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental Documentation.

### **C. Compliance with U.S. Laws and Regulations**

All USAID grantees are reminded that they are expected to comply with all terms of their grant agreements as well as with all U.S. laws and USG regulations. This includes but is not limited to the following:

- (a) Grantees must observe U.S. laws that protect copyrights and other intellectual property. Without advance written permission from holders of copyrights, grantees may not copy books, videos, audio cassettes, CDs, computer software and other informational materials for dissemination in the U.S. or elsewhere.
- (b) Because of the First Amendment to the Constitution, grantees may not use USG funds to purchase, copy, mail, or distribute religious or anti-religious materials.

### **D. Non-Federal Audits**

In accordance with 2 CFR 200, the Recipient and its sub-recipients are subject to the audit requirements contained in the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 U.S.C. 7501–7507). The Recipient and its sub-recipients must use an independent, non-Federal auditor or audit organization which meets the general standards specified in generally accepted government auditing standards (GAGAS) to fulfill these requirements.

### **E. Financial Reviews and Audits**

Under this USAID program, additional financial reviews and audits may be required.

### **F. Special Travel Liability Clause for Russia**

**Disclosure and Assumption of Risk:** If certain activities under this grant agreement will be performed in Russia and other similarly restrictive environments in the Eurasia region. Working in a closed society, such as Russia, presents particular challenges and risks to the Recipient (including its subrecipients, consultants, etc.). The U.S. government cannot ensure the safety and security of Recipient assets and personnel, particularly as relates to individuals traveling to Russia under

USAID funding. Implementation of USAID programs in Russia requires Recipient awareness of political sensitivities and assumption of risks associated with hostile actions of the Russian government.

The Recipient will not serve as an agent or act under the direction of USAID and will be responsible for the efficient and effective administration of its own programs with sound business judgment, including any precautions inherent therein. USAID will reimburse costs to the extent allowable--i.e., reasonable and allocable to the grant--up to the stated amount of the grant. To the extent not prohibited or contradicted elsewhere by Federal law, regulation, or policy, the Recipient shall not hold USAID liable for injury, death, detainment, incarceration, kidnapping, property loss, damages, or expenses incidental to those liabilities, suffered by, or attributable to the acts, omissions or negligence of, the Recipient, its agents, or its employees implementing programs in Russia or other similarly restrictive environments in Eurasia under this RFA.

## **SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)**

### **1. RFA Points of Contact**

Agency points of contacts for this RFA are the following:

**Artaveya Cater**

Agreement Officer, M/OAA/RM/AEM  
US Agency for International Development  
500 D Street SW, UA 11.7.0E  
Washington, DC 20547  
Email: [acarter@usaid.gov](mailto:acarter@usaid.gov)

**Yusuf Akoll**

Agreement Specialist, M/OAA/RM/AEM  
US Agency for International Development  
500 D Street SW, Ste. 11.7.1D  
Washington, DC 20547  
Email: [yakoll@usaid.gov](mailto:yakoll@usaid.gov)

All questions and comments regarding this RFA must be submitted by email to the Agency's contacts no later than the date and time indicated on the cover letter.

**Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR):** After an award is made, an AOR and Alternate AOR will be designated in writing by the AO. They will provide programmatic and administrative oversight of the assistance instrument. This authority is not re-delegable other than as specified in the AO's designation letter. The AOR ensures that USAID exercises prudent management over the award and monitors the recipient's progress in achieving the objectives of the program description. Name and contact address of AOR will be provided at the award stage.

### **2. Acquisition and Assistance Ombudsman**

The A&A Ombudsman helps ensure equitable treatment of all parties who participate in USAID's acquisition and assistance process. The A&A Ombudsman serves as a resource for all organizations who are doing or wish to do business with USAID. Please visit this page for additional information: <https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/acquisition-assistance-ombudsman>

[The A&A Ombudsman may be contacted via: Ombudsman@usaid.gov](mailto:Ombudsman@usaid.gov)

## SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. Any award and subsequent incremental funding will be subject to the availability of funds and continued relevance to Agency programming.

### Applications with Proprietary Data

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 purpose, should mark the cover page with the following:

“This application includes data that must not be disclosed duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, an award is made as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, the U.S. Government will have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting award. 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 sheets {insert sheet numbers}.”

Additionally, the applicant must mark each sheet of data it wishes to restrict with the following:

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

## ANNEX 1 - STANDARD PROVISIONS

(Note: the full text of these provisions may be found at: <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303maa> and <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mab>). The actual Standard Provisions included in the award will be dependent on the organization that is selected. The award will include the latest Mandatory Provisions for either U.S. or non-U.S. Nongovernmental organizations. The award will also contain the following “required as applicable” Standard Provisions:

**Please note that the resulting award will include all standard provisions (both mandatory and required as applicable) in full text.**

### **REQUIRED AS APPLICABLE STANDARD PROVISIONS FOR U.S. NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Required	Not Required	Standard Provision
TBD		RAA1. NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATES - PREDETERMINED (NOVEMBER 2020)

	RAA2. NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATES - PROVISIONAL (Nonprofit) (NOVEMBER 2020)
	RAA3. NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE - PROVISIONAL (Profit) (DECEMBER 2014)
	RAA4. INDIRECT COSTS – DE MINIMIS RATE (NOVEMBER 2020)
	RAA5. EXCHANGE VISITORS AND PARTICIPANT TRAINING (JUNE 2012)
	RAA6. VOLUNTARY POPULATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES – SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIREMENTS (JANUARY 2009)
	RAA7. PROTECTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT (APRIL 1998)
	RAA8. CARE OF LABORATORY ANIMALS (MARCH 2004)
	RAA9. TITLE TO AND CARE OF PROPERTY (COOPERATING COUNTRY TITLE) (NOVEMBER 1985)
	RAA10. COST SHARING (MATCHING) (FEBRUARY 2012)
	RAA11. PROHIBITION OF ASSISTANCE TO DRUG TRAFFICKERS (JUNE 1999)
	RAA12. INVESTMENT PROMOTION (NOVEMBER 2003)
	RAA13. REPORTING HOST GOVERNMENT TAXES (DECEMBER 2014)
	RAA14. FOREIGN GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (JUNE 2012)
	RAA15. CONSCIENCE CLAUSE IMPLEMENTATION (ASSISTANCE) (FEBRUARY 2012)
	RAA16. CONDOMS (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
	RAA17. PROHIBITION ON THE PROMOTION OR ADVOCACY OF THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION OR SEX TRAFFICKING (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
	RAA18. USAID DISABILITY POLICY - ASSISTANCE (DECEMBER 2004)
	RAA19. STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED IN USAID ASSISTANCE AWARDS INVOLVING CONSTRUCTION (SEPTEMBER 2004)
	RAA20. STATEMENT FOR IMPLEMENTERS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES ON LACK OF SUPPORT FOR PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
	RAA21. ELIGIBILITY OF SUBRECIPIENTS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS (JUNE 2012)
	RAA22. PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS TO PROMOTE, SUPPORT, OR ADVOCATE FOR THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)

		RAA23. UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA24. REPORTING SUBAWARDS AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA25. PATENT REPORTING PROCEDURES (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA26. ACCESS TO USAID FACILITIES AND USAID'S INFORMATION SYSTEMS (AUGUST 2013)
		RAA27. CONTRACT PROVISION FOR DBA INSURANCE UNDER RECIPIENT PROCUREMENTS (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA28. AWARD TERM AND CONDITION FOR RECIPIENT INTEGRITY AND PERFORMANCE MATTERS (April 2016)
		RAA29. RESERVED
		RAA30. PROGRAM INCOME (AUGUST 2020)
		RAA31. NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY (NOVEMBER 2020)

**REQUIRED AS APPLICABLE STANDARD PROVISIONS FOR NON-U.S. NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Required	Not Required	Standard Provision
TBD		RAA1. ADVANCE PAYMENT AND REFUNDS (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA2. REIMBURSEMENT PAYMENT AND REFUNDS (DECEMBER 2014)
TBD		RAA3. INDIRECT COSTS – NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT (NICRA) (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA4. INDIRECT COSTS – CHARGED AS A FIXED AMOUNT (NONPROFIT) (JUNE 2012)
		RAA5. INDIRECT COSTS – DE MINIMIS RATE (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA6. UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM OF AWARD MANAGEMENT (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA7. REPORTING SUBAWARDS AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA8. SUBAWARDS (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA9. TRAVEL AND INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORTATION (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA10. OCEAN SHIPMENT OF GOODS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA11. REPORTING HOST GOVERNMENT TAXES (JUNE 2012)
		RAA12. PATENT RIGHTS (JUNE 2012)

		RAA13. EXCHANGE VISITORS AND PARTICIPANT TRAINING (JUNE 2012)
		RAA14. INVESTMENT PROMOTION (NOVEMBER 2003)
		RAA 15. COST SHARE (JUNE 2012)
		RAA16. PROGRAM INCOME (AUGUST 2020)
		RAA17. FOREIGN GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (JUNE 2012)
		RAA18. STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED IN USAID ASSISTANCE AWARDS INVOLVING CONSTRUCTION (SEPTEMBER 2004)
		RAA19. PROTECTION OF HUMAN RESEARCH SUBJECTS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA20. STATEMENT FOR IMPLEMENTERS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES ON LACK OF SUPPORT FOR PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
		RAA21. ELIGIBILITY OF SUBRECIPIENTS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA22. PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS TO PROMOTE, SUPPORT, OR ADVOCATE FOR THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
		RAA23. VOLUNTARY POPULATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES – SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIREMENTS (JANUARY 2009)
		RAA24. CONSCIENCE CLAUSE IMPLEMENTATION (ASSISTANCE) (FEBRUARY 2012)
		RAA25. CONDOMS (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
		RAA26. PROHIBITION ON THE PROMOTION OR ADVOCACY OF THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION OR SEX TRAFFICKING(ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
		RAA27. LIMITATION ON SUBAWARDS TO NON-LOCAL ENTITIES (JULY 2014)
		RAA28. CONTRACT PROVISION FOR DBA INSURANCE UNDER RECIPIENT PROCUREMENTS (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA29. CONTRACT AWARD TERM AND CONDITION FOR RECIPIENT INTEGRITY AND PERFORMANCE MATTERS (April 2016)
		RAA30. RESERVED
		RAA31. NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY (NOVEMBER 2020)

**END OF THE REQUEST FOR APPLICATION**

