



USAID | DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

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Reference: Annual Program Statement Number (APS) No.: 7200AA20APS00007

Subject: DRC Addendum to YouthPower 2 (YP2) - 7200AA20APS00007

Program Name : *Enseignement Technique pour Opportunités Inclusives, Lucratives et Équitables (ETOILE)*

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance: 98.001, Foreign Assistance for Programs Overseas

Pursuant to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, the United States Government, as represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), USAID/Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is announcing the *Enseignement Technique pour Opportunités Inclusives, Lucratives et Équitables (ETOILE)* Addendum to the YouthPower 2 (YP2) Annual Program Statement (APS), hereafter known as the YP2 APS.

ETOILE disseminates information to prospective Applicants so they may develop and submit Concept Notes in response and ultimately to be considered for USAID funding. The ETOILE Addendum describes and provides:

- Type of activities for which Concept Notes will be considered;
- Available funding, process and requirements for submitting Concept Notes;
- Criteria for evaluating Concept Notes; and
- References for prospective Applicants to relevant documentation and resources.

USAID/DRC anticipates awarding a cooperative agreement under this Addendum. Issuance of this Addendum does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of the U.S. Government to make an award, nor does it commit the U.S. Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a Concept Note or Application(s). The actual number of assistance awards, if any, is subject to the availability of funds, as well as the viability of eventual full Applications received.

Based on submitted Concept Note(s), USAID/DRC will determine whether to request a Full Application from (an) eligible organization(s). To be competitive under ETOILE, Concept Notes and Full Applications must be fully responsive to all directions.

It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that the entire APS and Addendum Opportunity has been downloaded from www.grants.gov and USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion process. If you

have difficulty registering on www.grants.gov or accessing the APS, please contact the grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at support@grants.gov for technical assistance.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

Michele Maximilien
Agreement Officer
USAID/DRC/OAA

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ANNOUNCEMENT

CALL FOR CONCEPT NOTES

*Enseignement Technique pour Opportunités Inclusives, Lucratives et Équitables
(ETOILE)*

UNDER EXISTING

YouthPower 2 (YP2) Annual Program Statement

APS No. 7200AA20APS00007

PLEASE NOTE: As an addendum to the YouthPower 2 (YP2) Annual Program Statement (APS), ETOILE is open to applications from *all interested parties who qualify under the geographic code of 937*.

This is an addendum to an existing announcement. Interested organizations can review both the ETOILE addendum and the full YP2 APS announcement, which can be found here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=325906>

The focus of applicants' proposals should be on the specific expectations outlined in this DRC-specific addendum. For more information about YP2, including a link to the YP2 APS on grants.gov, please visit youthpower.org/youthpower-2-aps.

This activity is authorized in accordance with Part 1 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

Through the ETOILE Addendum to the YP2 APS No. 7200AA20APS00007, USAID/DRC seeks to enhance inclusive workforce development to improve livelihoods for Congolese youth, particularly those from marginalized and underrepresented backgrounds.

ETOILE seeks applicants that propose innovative concepts to address this goal so that young people can fully partake in the responsibilities of adulthood, with all its social markers. These include earning a living, becoming independent, establishing and providing for their families, and becoming contributors to society to attain self-worth with dignity.¹

¹ See definition of *waithood* in The Time of Youth: Work, Social Change, and Politics in Africa Alcinda M. Honwana, Boulder, CO: Kumarian Press, 2012.

Applicants may target one or more underrepresented or marginalized youth population, such as youth with disabilities, single mothers, or gender and sexual minorities, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI+). Applicants may also identify other marginalized youth populations to include in the activity. Within these marginalized youth populations, applicants are encouraged to pay particular attention to the needs of young women. For each group, it will be necessary for applicants to be intentional about their program design and to create budget markers or set-asides that take these key groups into consideration rather than labeling activities as cross-cutting.

The geographic focus will be urban and peri-urban areas throughout the DRC.

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID/DRC anticipates supporting one (1) or multiple new award(s) totaling up to **\$25.5 million** with a cost share of 10-20% for a **5-year program**. Cost share should be expressed as a dollar figure rather than a percentage to assist in monitoring the amount.

USAID encourages applicants to become aware of the prohibitions associated with Section 889 of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Section (a)(1)(B) and Section (b)(1). Effective August 13, 2020, 2 CFR 200.216 for U.S. organizations and the mandatory standard provision “Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment (AUGUST 2020)” for non-U.S. organizations prohibits the use of award funds, including direct and indirect costs, cost-share and program income, to procure covered telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment. Applicants should reference the [USAID Section 889 Partner website](#) for more information.

Eligible parties interested in applying are encouraged to read this announcement thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, concept note submission requirements, and selection process. Unless otherwise stated herein, all terms and conditions of the FY 2020 [YP2 APS](#) apply.

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SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

I. INTRODUCTION

ETOILE will enhance inclusive workforce development for Congolese youth, particularly those from marginalized and underrepresented populations, resulting in improved social mobility and economic livelihoods.

This activity will particularly target underrepresented or marginalized youth populations, such as youth with disabilities and/or gender and sexual minorities, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI+) youth. These youth populations, and particularly girls and young women within them, are among the most marginalized and underserved in the DRC. Common barriers include discrimination, lack of legal protections or enforcement of protections, and inaccessibility of the environment, all of which limit full and effective participation in education, employment, and health services.

ETOILE's objectives are to:

- 1) Provide Congolese youth skills and knowledge they need to build livelihoods; and
- 2) Give Congolese youth, particularly those from marginalized communities, improved access to livelihood-building activities.

USAID/DRC seeks to support applicants with a defined plan to achieve these outcomes through a process of co-creation and consultation with USAID to refine the final program and reflect [Positive Youth Development \(PYD\)](#) with inclusive development approaches.

Applicants should demonstrate that they have reviewed lessons learned from prior interventions and highlight how their proposed activities might align with and complement ongoing USAID initiatives. See [Appendix 1](#).

II. BACKGROUND

DRC remains one of the least developed and poorest countries in the world. Affected by instability, conflict, limited infrastructure, and low levels of education. DRC has consistently been ranked at the bottom of the Human Development Index. Over 60% of the population is under the age of 20². At this growth rate, the country is projected to have a population of 120 million by 2030, the majority of which will be under the age of 35³.

Youth Access to Quality Education

Research has shown that DRC's youth are ill-equipped for the world of work because:

² UNICEF. MICS Palu 2018 :<https://www.unicef.org/drcongo/en/reports/mics-palu-2018>.

³ <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/publications/world-population-prospects-2015-revision.html>

- Over 20% of primary age children and youth are out of school.
- Over 30% of youth at the lower-secondary level are out of school⁴. Access to and quality of primary, secondary, and vocational education and technical training is limited.

In DRC, marginalized youth, especially LGBTQI+ youth, young women, and young people with disabilities, have a comparatively lower probability of advancing through school, and finding gainful employment and accessing opportunities for social mobility.

At the strategic and policy level, the education sector, including the technical and vocational education training (TVET) sub-sector, is governed by the [2016-2025 Education and Training Strategy](#) that includes three main pillars:

1. broadening access to education for children and youth in DRC;
2. improving the quality of education; and
3. strengthening governance of the sector.

TVET providers include numerous private and public education training centers that are either under the leadership of the *Ministre des Affaires Sociales, Actions Humanitaires et Solidarité Nationale*, the Ministry of Youth, or the Ministry of Vocational Training and Trades. Some other institutions, such as the *Institut National de Préparation Professionnelle* (INPP) are under the leadership of the Ministry of Labor. Sector dialogue with employer bodies like the *Fédération des Entreprises du Congo* and other similar groups remains very limited and contributes to the mismatch between skills demanded by employers and current TVET provisions.

Youth Skills & Employment

DRC's labor market largely consists of informal jobs of self-employment or a family's small enterprise. The informal sector represents 88.6% of the total employment structure, with 59.7% of the workforce participating in the agricultural sector and 28.9% in the non-agriculture sector. Formal wage labor is rare, representing just 11.4% of the total employment structure, and it is inequitably distributed between the public sector (5.7%), the para-public sector (2.9%), and the private sector (2.8%)⁵.

Young people — especially those from marginalized and/or underserved communities — have very few stable, safe opportunities to earn income and must rely on multiple income streams to generate enough subsistence income to support themselves and contribute to their households⁶. At 32%, the official youth unemployment rate is nearly double the national average of 18% in the formal economy, however, the actual scale of

⁴ UNICEF, idem.

⁵ Organisation Internationale du Travail (OIT). *État des lieux du système de formation professionnelle*. RDC

⁶ <https://reliefweb.int/report/democratic-republic-congo/promoting-youth-employment-kinshasa>

underemployment and unemployment among youth is unknown. Some estimate it to above 35%⁷. These grim statistics are even more concerning given DRC's high youth population.

Adolescent Girls & Young Women

The education of adolescent girls and young women in DRC is a priority for USAID. Educating girls and young women is often seen as less important in DRC, with families preferring to send boys and young men to school, professional training, and workforce development programs. Girls and young women also find themselves the target of limited academic expectations by teachers and administrators due to harmful gender norms that consider women as fit only for domestic or household duties.

DRC's rate of school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) is among the highest of any nation in the world. This includes a steady stream of sexual harassment from teachers, administrators, and fellow students.

Girls and young women with disabilities and LBTQI+ are prone to higher rates of gender-based violence, gender discrimination in education and employment, and may also be subjected to early and forced marriages.

Literacy and transition rates for girls are low, especially at the lower-secondary level. USAID/DRC in collaboration with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (GDRC) are providing comprehensive support to improve this situation. USAID is committed to providing inclusive education and skill-building pathways so that all adolescent girls and young women can strive for a productive future.

Adolescent girls and young women are represented throughout the marginalized groups listed below. Applicants are encouraged to consider ways that adolescent girls and young women face particular challenges based on their membership in other marginalized groups and to design explicit programming to meet those needs.

LGBTQI+ youth

LGBTQI+ youth in DRC face violence, discrimination, and stigma. Discrimination against LGBTQI+ people can manifest in education, employment, and health settings and can lead to lower education levels, lower productivity, and unequal access to health and financial services. These issues negatively impact the livelihoods of LGBTQI+ persons and their families throughout DRC, creating hurdles for reducing poverty. Gender and sexual diversity are often associated with witchcraft and is highly stigmatized. LGBTQI+ youth are at increased risk for being abandoned by their families and rejected, barred, or deterred from accessing schools, all of which undermine their ability to learn and develop

⁷ OIT., idem

the skills that are necessary for a productive life as an adult. Youth who identify as or are perceived to be LGBTQI+ at school often face harassment, bullying, and physical violence. Teachers and school personnel are typically not equipped or willing to respond to the needs of LGBTQI+ students.

Global data of LGBTQI+ youth in school show that sexual education that is inclusive of sexual and gender diversity can significantly reduce physical and psychological health risks for LGBTQI+ youth and can mitigate risky behaviors and distrust of health services. LGBTQI+ persons are frequently not hired explicitly because they are LGBTQI+. In DRC, there are no national workplace nondiscrimination protections that are inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity so LGBTQI+ employees who experience harassment may not have avenues to pursue workplace dispute resolution. These factors lead to severe mental health challenges for LGBTQI+ people and young LGBTQI+ people in particular.

Youth with Disabilities

DRC has historically fostered a climate of discrimination toward and unequal participation of persons with disabilities and the concept of inclusive education is not widely accepted. Despite the country's 2015 ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which includes a commitment to inclusive education at all levels. Education establishments are often inaccessible, and lack appropriate facilities to accommodate or assistive devices necessary for the inclusion and academic success of students with disabilities. Children with disabilities rarely go to school. The strong stigma attached to disabilities often causes families to keep their children at home to avoid public humiliation. By the time they enter adolescence, youth with disabilities run a high risk of being illiterate, leading to restricted opportunities for further education and employment.

In DRC, persons with disabilities are not considered to be productive members of society or the workforce. The [World Report on Disability](#) cites data from 51 countries showing that employment rates for women with disabilities are 19.6%, compared with 29.9% for women without disabilities; and 52.8% for men with disabilities, compared with 64.9% for men without disabilities. There is a direct link between having a disability and heightened rates of GBV.

USAID recognizes that to further increase participation of persons with disabilities in our programs, we must remove a range of barriers, such as physical inaccessibility and negative stereotypes.

Youth Access to Reproductive Health Services

The [National Strategic Plan for the Health and Welfare of Adolescents and Youth 2021-2025](#) prioritizes the improvement of health services adapted to adolescents and youth

with the reduction of barriers to access and use of service delivery points. Youth generally have limited access to accurate health services information about their physical and sexual development. When information is provided, it may not be accessible in a language or format learners can understand (i.e., a national sign language, braille, or simplified text).

Further, marginalized young people face stigmatization from healthcare providers, leading to poor treatment and an avoidance of health care. For marginalized and underserved youth populations, their vulnerability will increase to exploitation, violence, and poor health outcomes, while their propensity to adopt risky behaviors such as greater sexual and reproductive health problems increases. These risky behaviors expose marginalized youth to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and may lead to unplanned pregnancies.

III. PURPOSE

Problem Statement: Population growth models predict that DRC will experience a youth bulge in a decade's time. This potential demographic dividend can be a rising challenge or an exciting opportunity, depending on actions taken today. LGBTQI+ youth and youth with disabilities, and particularly young women who are part of these groups, continue to face obstacles in securing and maintaining employment. While all youth are challenged by limited education and training systems, conflict and instability, in addition to inadequate healthcare, youth from marginalized and underrepresented communities face heightened barriers and exclusion in all facets of society. This context makes it vital for youth, especially youth from marginalized and underrepresented groups, to play a greater role in contributing to the workforce development.

Purpose: ETOILE seeks to enhance inclusive workforce development for Congolese youth, particularly those from marginalized and underrepresented backgrounds, to improve social mobility and economic livelihoods.

Theory of Change: USAID/DRC hypothesizes that **IF** Congolese youth, especially those who are underrepresented and marginalized, have access to inclusive social and economic development opportunities and gain relevant skills, **THEN** they will be able to improve their social and economic well-being.

Objective 1: Provide Congolese youth with the skills and knowledge they need to build livelihoods.

- 1.1: Expand access to locally relevant skills training and TVET.
- 1.2: Build core workforce readiness competencies, including basic/functional numeracy, literacy, and soft skills.
- 1.3: Expand access to high-quality youth reproductive health services.

A significant majority of the economic opportunities available to Congolese youth are in the informal sector.

Given the limitations of the formal TVET sector, it will be critical for applicants to take a close look at options beyond traditional vocational education and to instead explore the broader category of skills training.

Existing TVET institutions are often stuck in a rut of traditional vocational offerings and lack positive, creative role models for success in a real-world employment context. These institutions tend to cater to a predominantly male and urban demographic rather than to female learners and those with extremely limited levels of education.⁸

Illustrative of these approaches, and depending on the geographic and social context, skills training could include areas such as raising small livestock (rabbits, guinea fowl, ducks, or grasscutters), bicycle repair, apiculture, improved clay brick production/bricklaying, dent repair/removal, tiling, basic childcare skills, shoe repair, basic leatherwork/pleather repair, home piping/basic plumbing, motor/engine rewinding, food preparation, juice making, catering, household electrical wiring, soldering and fitting, paving stone installation, tire repair, dugout canoe manufacture, basic furniture upholstery, truck/car driving, taxi driving, solar panel assembly and installation, wooden bike (chukudu) production and repair, fishing net threading and assembly, pushcart production and repair, casket making, sheet metalworking, carpentry installation work, basic motorcycle mechanics, pork breeding, roofing, embroidery, event hairstyling, hair braiding, wallpapering, small-scale urban gardening, and textile dyeing.

Certain non-traditional skills that have been tested in DRC include sub-skills of the major trades, which can be offered in a time-bound manner in order to reduce the training period and minimize the risk that work may not initially be identified. For instance, while many youths might not have the time or prior education to learn a full mechanics course, they might be able to broach moto dent repair/removal, which is a highly sought skill.

Generally, young people's set of choices in DRC are related to the assets they hold, which in many cases are merely a means for survival rather than a long-term career. Having options available that offer initial paraprofessional training, tutored apprenticeship training, and on-the-job training are ideal for Congo's rapidly shifting labor market. In addition, offering vocational counseling in tandem with modules for upskilling and reskilling are critical to success.

The current DRC education system leaves youth largely unprepared for a fluid labor market. Common problems include mismatches between what is learned and what the labor market needs. In many cases, those who have the highest levels of need are lacking

⁸ These traditional approaches focus on the building trades of carpentry, masonry, metal work, welding, plumbing, mechanics, and electricity, as well as tailoring/sewing, hospitality, tourism, agriculture, and computers/secretarial skills.

numeracy and literacy skills. Teaching about the merits of starting small group ventures, marketing skills, and customer service principles could make positive inroads.

Finally, access to high-quality reproductive health services, especially for marginalized youth, is essential for long-term career success. Reproductive health information in formats that are accessible to marginalized youth and designed to meet the particular reproductive health needs of these populations; and engage with healthcare providers in the community.

Objective 2: Give Congolese youth, particularly those from marginalized communities, improved access to livelihood-building opportunities.

2.1: Enhance youth understanding of and engagement with local labor markets.

2.2: Improve perceptions of marginalized communities within local labor markets.

Successful workforce interventions must ensure that young people can make sense of the dynamic local labor market and broader local economy in order to take advantage of emerging employment opportunities. Youth should also be drivers within these markets and interventions that will benefit from peer engagement and small-scale training modules that are responsive to the changing local conditions.

Fostering positive perceptions of marginalized youth among employers, local government officials, and community stakeholders is one of the most challenging areas to address in workforce development programming but essential for ensuring sustainable employment opportunities exist for young people.

IV. PROGRAMMATIC AND GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Guiding Implementation Principles/Frameworks:

The concept application must abide by and reflect the following principles and best practices for success and sustainability. These are guideposts for the overall activity and should be reflected throughout the technical approach:

- **Engage youth-led and youth-serving organizations throughout the lifecycle of the project:** Congolese youth face a complex and varied set of workforce opportunities and barriers.
- **Youth is a key source of information:** Youth guidance for navigating real-world employment conditions is particularly true for marginalized youth populations.
- **Gender-sensitive programming:** Promote gender equity and equality to ensure the advancement of rights and uphold the dignity of all persons.
- **Use a Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach:** PYD engages youth along with their families, communities and/or governments so that youth are empowered to reach their full potential. PYD approaches build skills, assets, and

competencies; foster healthy relationships; strengthen the environment; and transform systems.

- **Commit to a “do no harm” ethos and ensure protection for all participants:** Ensure the programming does not put LGBTQI+ individuals or groups at increased risk of harm or raise their public profile in a way that could lead to a backlash. Youth face a range of protection challenges, including sociocultural, political, digital, and gender-based threats, which risk being exacerbated by outside intervention. These protection issues are particularly acute for youth from marginalized backgrounds, including LGBTQI+ youth and youth with disabilities, whose identity status might be publicly highlighted by their participation in the program, resulting in them facing increased threats.

This principle is especially important when working in contexts in which LGBTQI+ people are subjected to violence, discrimination, stigma, and/or criminalization. “Do no harm” does not mean “do nothing.” Instead, it means take into consideration the safety and security concerns of the activity beneficiaries. Examples of the “Do no harm” principle include holding meetings with LGBTQI+ stakeholders in safe/secure settings, not sharing/using the names or photographs of LGBTQI+ beneficiaries or groups, ensuring all data is safely stored, anonymous and not traceable to a specific individuals, vetting any public messaging about program components with LGBTQI-led organizations, and training implementing partners engaging on LGBTQI+ issues to ensure safety/security for both staff and beneficiaries.

- **Engage the private sector:** Private sector engagement enables USAID and partner countries to collaborate, co-create, and co-design market-based and enterprise-led development approaches. In the Congolese context, the private sector is equally defined to be at the most localized level, including one-person workshops, home-based businesses, or a canoe-based floating market—as well as with more established entities.

Geographic Focus:

This activity will address the workforce development challenges of underrepresented and marginalized youth in the outskirts, exurbs, peri-urban, and urban areas of significant population centers in DRC. Such centers may include Kinshasa, Lubumbashi, Beni, Mbuji-Mayi, Kisangani, Kananga, Likasi, Tshikapa, Bukavu, Mbandaka, Matadi, Boma, Kolwezi and/or other provincial capitals or significant population centers. It will be necessary to localize approaches that are appropriate to the realities of each area.

Demographic Focus:

Applicants should identify ways to work with one or more underrepresented and marginalized group(s) of young people. For the purpose of this application, youth can range in age from 13 to 35, although partners are encouraged to further specify the age range of target beneficiaries.

V. APPLICATION PROCESS

USAID/DRC has outlined the application process in Section D of this Addendum. Please see the YP2 APS for additional information.

VI. COORDINATION AND COMPLEMENTARITY WITH OTHER ACTIVITIES

Successful applicants should identify ways to coordinate with, complement, and learn from existing activities funded by USAID and other donors. Please see [Appendix 1](#) for a list of such initiatives.

SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

I. ESTIMATE OF FUNDS AVAILABLE AND NUMBER OF AWARDS CONTEMPLATED

This program is authorized in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended. Issuance of this Addendum does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. Government, nor does it commit the U.S. Government to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of questions, comments, suggestions, concept notes, or an application. Applicants submit Concept Note applications at their own risk, and all preparation and submission costs are at their expense.

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID/DRC anticipates supporting one or multiple award(s) totaling approximately \$25.5 million over the life of the award(s) with a cost share requirement of 10-20%. USAID reserves the right to award more or fewer awards than this estimate and is not obligated to make any awards.

II. START DATE AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE FOR FEDERAL AWARD

The anticipated period of performance for awards made under ETOILE is 5 years from the date of award.

III. TYPE OF INSTRUMENT

Awards that result from the ETOILE Addendum will take the form of a cooperative agreement.

[END OF SECTION B]

SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

I. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

All U.S. and non-U.S. public, private, for-profit, and non-profit organizations, and non-governmental organizations are eligible to submit a concept note that meets the 937 geographic code requirements.

All interested organizations are restricted to submitting only one Concept Note as the Prime Applicant. If more than one Concept Note is received with the same **Prime Applicant**, USAID will seek written clarification from the relevant entity regarding which Concept Note should be considered for review. If clarification is not resolved within five (5) business days, all Concept Notes submitted by the Applicant will be deemed ineligible.

Please note that Applicants can serve as sub-awardees or supporting partners on multiple Concept Notes under this Addendum. Applicants are encouraged to work with local partners as their sub-awardees.

[END OF SECTION C]

SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

I. AGENCY POINT OF CONTACT

Questions regarding this ETOILE Addendum can be submitted to Senior A&A Specialist Lauralea Gilpin (lgilpin@usaid.gov) with a copy to Geraldine Kyazze (gkyazze@usaid.gov) and to Aline Chikuru (achikuru@usaid.gov) by the date and time listed on the cover page. .

USAID/DRC will post all the questions and responses through an amendment to the Addendum on grants.gov.

II. APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process for ETOILE will happen in three phases:

1. An open call for a brief (5-page) Concept Note in English with a 1-page summary budget; No budget information should be contained in the technical portion of the concept notes. Concept Notes will be reviewed by USAID/DRC and the best concept note applications will be notified to proceed to the next step.
2. Selected concept note applicants and other stakeholders will be invited to an in-person and/or virtual co-creation discussions and/or workshop(s), and
3. The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) will be issued by invitation only.

Phase I: Concept Note Submission

All concept notes must be prepared and submitted in English using the provided template (see [Attachment 1](#)) on www.grants.gov. Applicants are asked to download the template from grants.gov in Word format, provide their concept note, and email a PDF saved copy of the document to Senior A&A Specialist Lauralea Gilpin (lgilpin@usaid.gov) with a copy to Geraldine Kyazze (gkyazze@usaid.gov) and Aline Chikuru (achikuru@usaid.gov) with the file name saved as: “ETOILE_CN_[applicant’s institution] APS 72066022APS00001”. Concept notes must be five (5) pages or less, in 12-point Times New Roman font and one-inch margins on the electronic equivalent of 8.5 x 11 inch paper. Additional content/annexes will not be reviewed. Concept notes are due by the date and time listed on the cover page. Concept notes submitted after the deadline will not be reviewed. No paper submissions will be accepted.

Concept Note Review

Concept notes will be reviewed based on the merit review criteria in Section E of this addendum. Therefore, applicants should read the merit review criteria carefully to ensure that the concept notes address all the areas that will be reviewed. Additionally, concepts should be consistent with USAID legal and policy restrictions, including those set forth in USAID’s Automated Directives System (ADS) and in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

All terms and conditions of the YP2 APS apply.

The purpose of the initial review and related communications is to determine whether USAID wishes to engage in further discussions regarding the proposed approach and activities. The initial review and communication will result in one of the three approaches:

- A decision to forego further consideration of the approach proposed in the Concept Note;
- An invitation to engage in more in-depth and specific co-creation discussions aimed at further developing the proposed approach and determining whether to request a Full Application

USAID/DRC anticipates notifying all applicants within 75 days of the closing date of submissions of concept notes whether USAID/DRC wishes to engage with them in further discussions and whether to pursue or not pursue co-creation.

Phase II: Co-Creation Process

USAID will invite applicants to propose approaches in response to this problem statement and theory of change that are innovative, and which can be further developed in the co-creation process. Applicants should work directly with civil society organizations, youth-led organizations, and representatives of underserved and marginalized populations to formulate concepts.

USAID/DRC will invite a subset of the most highly qualified concept note applicants to engage in a round of co-creation with USAID/DRC prior to submission of full applications. The aim of the co-creation phase is to further define activity objectives, design interventions, and align timelines. This process may involve extensive discussions with USAID/Washington, USAID Mission staff, or other experts within or outside of USAID.

By applying to the ETOILE addendum, applicants give USAID/DRC the right to share concept notes with appropriate external partners for the purposes of evaluation or co-creation. All party's privy to the contents of submitted concept notes, whether within or outside of USAID, will be required to keep contents in confidence. Additional information about the co-creation process can be found in the "Co-Creation, Collaboration, and Communication under YP2 APS" section of the umbrella YP2 APS and through USAID's Co-creation Toolkits.

Note: Communication with USAID/DRC during the concept note/co-creation phase should NOT be interpreted as a commitment to funding or guaranteed request for a full application. Any expenses incurred by applicants during this time are solely the responsibility of the applicants.

If USAID/DRC decides to continue with the proposed activities following the co-creation phase, USAID/DRC will issue the NOFO for a full application from successful applicants resulting from the co-creation phase.

Phase III: Full Application

USAID/DRC will only accept full applications from successful concept note applicants invited to continue in the application process. It is expected that full applications will expand upon their concept note and incorporate any discussions, ideas, plans, feedback or changes from USAID/DRC and other partners discussed during the co-creation phase.

Note: USAID/DRC's Request for Application (RFA) should not be interpreted as a commitment of funds.

[END OF SECTION D]

SECTION E: INFORMATION ON THE REVIEW OF CONCEPT NOTE APPLICATIONS

I. REVIEW

Once a Concept Note has been submitted in response to the ETOILE Addendum, USAID/DRC will conduct an initial review of the Concept Note using the criteria outlined in the Merit Review Criteria and Considerations section below.

II. MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA AND CONSIDERATIONS

Based on Criterion 1, 2, & 3 below are of equal importance, ETOILE concept notes will be assessed according to the following adjectival scoring system:

	Description	Outcome
Green	Innovative ideas in line with USAID/DRC Mission-focused objectives and needs of targeted youth.	Move forward to co-creation.
Red	Did not capture the essence of youth’s challenges that would need to be addressed. Concept not innovative or inclusive.	Concept unacceptable so no additional submissions required.

Selection Criterion # 1: Quality of Partnership and Collaboration Approach for Youth Engagement and Capacity Building

Extent to which the proposed partnerships, research, projects, or activities describes a commitment to equitable collaboration and deep partnership with youth-led and youth-serving organizations, including marginalized groups as defined by the reference to [ADS 201 Additional Help](#), at every stage of the concept development, activity design, and implementation; proposes appropriate, inclusive, equitable, and effective capacity building strategies for youth-serving and youth-led organizational partners; and demonstrates partner commitment to proposed collaboration(s), including a brief synopsis of how each partner will engage within the partnership.

Selection Criterion # 2: Technical Merit Including PYD Approach and Alignment with USAID Programming Priorities

Extent to which the proposed partnerships, research, projects, or activities and PYD Approach align with USAID Strategies and Policies, particularly the Youth in

Development Policy and reflects youth's cross-sectoral needs; ensures effective youth engagement; demonstrates relevant technical expertise in PYD programming; and proposes effective approach(es) to achieving objectives/outcomes that are technically sound, well-defined, and achievable. Proposed activities should be tailored to meet the particular needs of marginalized Congolese youth in target intervention zones.

Selection Criterion # 3: Sustainability of Anticipated Outcomes and Impact

Extent to which the proposed partnerships, research, projects, or activities demonstrates contribution to sustainable outcomes beyond the lifetime of the award; demonstrates engagement with the private sector and leverages new or existing resources; and proposes an evidence-informed plan for analyzing, synthesizing and disseminating data and findings that will inform ongoing and future programming and contribute to sustainable outcomes and impact; and contribute to evidence and learning on PYD.

Note: More comprehensive information regarding the application and review processes (including concept note submission, co-creation, full application, and merit review stages) can be found in the umbrella YP2 APS, located at grants.gov. Applicants are advised to refer to both the umbrella APS and this addendum in preparing concept notes and full applications, as applicable.

III. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Applicants should ensure that their concept note is aligned with USAID strategies, policies, and priorities, such as the [USAID/DRC County Development Strategy \(CDCS\)](#); [USAID Education Policy](#); [USAID Disability Policy](#); [Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy](#); [LGBT Vision for Action](#); [USAID Youth in Development Policy](#); [USG International Basic Education Strategy](#), [Strategy on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance](#), [U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally \(GBV Strategy\)](#); [USAID Global Health Research and Development Strategy](#), [Family Planning 2020 Goals](#); [President's Plan for AIDS Relief \(PEPFAR\) 3.0](#), [Children in Adversity](#), [USG Global Food Security Strategy](#), [USG Feed the Future Initiative](#).

[END OF SECTION E]

SECTION F: INFORMATION ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF FEDERAL AWARDS

I. FEDERAL AWARD NOTICES

The USAID Agreement Officer (AO) is the only individual who may legally commit the U.S. Government to the expenditure of public funds. Applicants are prohibited from charging or incurring costs to the proposed award prior to receipt of either a fully executed award or a specific, written authorization from the AO. USAID will administer awards in accordance with Parts 700 and 200 of Title 2 of the CFR, and Standard Provisions for U.S./non-U.S. organizations.

II. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON AWARD ADMINISTRATION

Resulting awards under this Addendum will be governed by the Standard Provisions for the U.S Organizations and the Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations found in ADS 303 below:

- ADS Chapter 201 Program Cycle Operational Policy:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/201.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 204 Environmental Procedures:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/204.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 205 - Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/205.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 303 Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mab.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 303 Standard Provisions for U.S. organizations:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303maa.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 318 Intellectual Property Rights:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1876/318.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 579 USAID Development Data:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/579.pdf>
- Grant and Contract Process: <https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/get-grant-or-contract/grant-and-contract-process>
- USAID Graphic Standards Manual and Partner Co-branding Guide:
https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1869/USAID_GSM_03_05_2019.pdf

[END OF SECTION F]

SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

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APPENDIX 1: RESOURCES

USAID encourages applicants to leverage work being supported by USAID, as well as other donors and stakeholders. The list of programs and resources below, while not exhaustive, is intended to guide applicants to relevant research and ongoing projects to help inform their proposals. USAID emphasizes that ETOILE is **not** a follow-on mechanism to any of the projects mentioned below.

- **Youth Excel/Youth Represent-DRC**: Youth Represent-DRC is an ongoing implementation research activity where youth themselves seek to understand the problems of inclusive workforce development. Click [here for more information](#).
- **KinEmploi** is Enabel's ongoing [youth workforce project](#) in several DRC cities.
- **PROMOST** is SwissContact's Great Lakes [TVET program](#).
- **Sober Youth** is an [initiative](#) from the World Federation Against Drugs to support youth involved in street gangs in Kinshasa to break cycles of violence. They have a host of interventions, including psychosocial support and vocational training.
- **VIA Don Bosco** has a [youth workforce intervention](#) in several DRC cities to help street children find employment.
- **Norwegian Refugee Council** provides [educational opportunities](#) for displaced youth to build livelihood and professional skills.
- **Catholic Relief Services** has partnered with USAID/DRC to implement their [Savings and Internal Lending](#) methodology to support workforce development initiatives.
- **International Rescue Committee** has partnered with USAID/DRC to deploy their [Safe Healing and Learning Spaces](#) approach to bolster social-emotional learning in education interventions.

USAID/DRC Health-related project:

- **Integrated Health Program (IHP)**: Operating over a seven-year period (2018-2025), IHP aims to strengthen Congolese institutions and communities to provide integrated, quality health services, sustainably reduce maternal and child deaths, and combat infectious diseases. Under the youth-friendly health center approach, IHP's Reproductive Health/Family Planning program is contributing to the implementation of various health strategies and policies related to adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health.

- **Partnership for the Development of Eastern Congo (P-DEC):** Mercy Corps leads this USAID-funded project, which is implemented in North Kivu and Ituri Provinces. It prioritizes engaging youth in civically minded economic and social activities to draw them away from armed groups and associated illicit enterprises.
- [GiveDirectly's Household Grants](#) for youth program has provided 6,000 unconditional cash transfers to youth living in North and South Kivu since 2018. This program has studied the impact of cash transfers on a variety of outcomes, including entrepreneurship and education spending.
- **Cash Benchmarking Research:** A number of studies in recent years have sought to weigh the efficacy of traditional workforce development interventions against the impact of [equivalent cash transfers](#). [This paper](#) presents the results of one such study in Rwanda. Applicants are encouraged to submit concept notes that are informed by cash benchmarking research.

See the [Youth Excel Initial Analysis](#) for more ideas on engaging youth-led and youth-serving organizations.

[END OF APS 72066022APS00001 Addendum to YP2 7200AA20APS00007]