



USAID | GEORGIA

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Issue Date: November 4, 2022
Deadline for Questions: November 15, 2022, 10:00 AM Tbilisi Time
Closing Date: December 16, 2022
Closing Time: 10:00 AM Tbilisi Time

Subject: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Number: 72011423RFA00001

Program Title: USAID Educating the Future Activity

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 98.001 Foreign Assistance for Programs Overseas

To Whom it May Concern:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking applications for a Cooperative Agreement from qualified entities to implement the USAID Educating the Future Program. Eligibility for this award is not restricted. See Section C of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for eligibility requirements.

USAID intends to make an award to the applicant who best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the merit review criteria described in this NOFO, subject to a risk assessment. Eligible parties interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this NFO thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements and selection process. The evaluation process will include oral presentations by all applicants, to be conducted virtually. Further information is included in Section D of this NOFO.

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information as required in this NFO and meet eligibility standards in Section C of this NOFO. This funding opportunity is posted on 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 NOFO 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 or accessing the NOFO, please contact the Grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at 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.g. 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 point(s) 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.

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,

Deborah Perlman
Agreement Officer
USAID/Georgia

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section A – Program Description

Section B – Federal Award Information

Section C – Eligibility Information

Section D – Application and Submission Information

Section E – Application Review Information

Section F – Federal Award Administration Information

Section G – Federal Awarding Agency Contacts

Section H – Other Information

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.

1. TITLE OF ACTIVITY

The USAID Educating the Future Activity

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Program is to strengthen the quality and equality of the general education system in Georgia. The activity will support the Government of Georgia (GoG) in enhancing the quality of pre-service teacher education programs; building the capacity of school administrators as instructional leaders; and strengthening the implementation of decentralization policies with a specific focus on refining the roles and responsibilities of Educational Resource Centers (ERCs) and improving their capacity to support schools.

The activity will work towards the following three objectives:

- Objective 1: Enhance the quality and inclusiveness of pre-service teacher education programs
- Objective 2: Improve school governance
- Objective 3: Support the decentralization of the basic education system

3. BACKGROUND

In 2022, the Government of Georgia (GOG) approved the [National Education and Science Strategy of Georgia 2022-2032](#)¹. The government has identified three broad goals for national reforms aimed at enhancing education 1) quality and relevance; 2) equity, inclusion and diversity; and 3) governance, funding and accountability.

The strategy indicates that, in order to improve the quality of teaching, the government will make efforts to secure access to and increase the retention of effective teachers and educators at all levels of education. Over the next ten years, important reforms will be launched and implemented in the preparation and induction of educators, their continuing professional development, and in their career systems, including systems for appraisals and incentives. The Ministry of Education and Science’s (MoES, or the Ministry) ten-year strategy also highlights how the government will promote school self-governance by using support from ERCs to enhance the autonomy of schools and strengthen the capacity of principals and teachers in order to improve their ability to function autonomously.

Quality: Georgian children have almost universal access to primary education, yet that has not translated into widespread access to quality primary education. Despite Georgia’s National

¹The strategy is currently available only in Georgian.

Education and Science Strategy calling for a focus on “learner-centered” approaches, a World Bank study found that Georgia’s education system continues to place too much emphasis on rote memorization, instead of teaching problem-solving and critical thinking. Georgia is ranked lower in education quality than comparable middle-income countries in the region such as Moldova, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan. About 35 percent of fourth graders possess less than the minimum required knowledge and skills in mathematics, and 40 percent have less than the minimum required skills in reading. Ethnic minority schools and classrooms struggle to provide quality instruction due to the scarcity of well-educated, native-language-speaking teachers or teachers that can instruct in both Georgian and ethnic minority languages. The gap in learning outcomes of Georgian and Azeri students is equivalent to more than three years of school.

The National Education and Science Strategy 2022-2032 states that “Over the last five years, on average 15-20 percent of pupils with a basic education diploma (9th grade) discontinued their education after a compulsory level or failed in school-leaving examinations at 11-12th grades. Many who abandon school are left without any formal further education opportunities. In Unified National Exams, which determine the entry to higher education, the failure rate ranges from 25 percent to 35 percent. Delayed completion and low completion rates reduce the efficiency in higher education.”

Gender stereotypes prevail in Georgia’s general education: female students attain better learning outcomes in primary grades, yet negative gender norms persist in younger generations due to gender-biased teaching materials and teachers with higher expectations for boys. Gender bias carries over into the professional world, where women are less likely to be hired for higher paying jobs in proportion to their learning achievements.

Governance: Georgia’s general education system includes twelve years of study and is carried out at three levels: Primary (elementary), equivalent to grades 1-6; Lower Secondary (basic), equivalent to grades 7-9; and Upper Secondary, equivalent to grades 10-12. Georgia’s 2,075 public schools, most of which provide all three levels of general education, enroll approximately 608,000 students. The general education system is predominantly dispersed across small rural schools and classrooms, half of which have less than 100 students, and approximately 60 percent have less than 200 students. However, in urban areas, public schools are often overcrowded with classrooms utilizing a shift system to accommodate more students. The student-teacher ratio is approximately 9:1 which is significantly lower than the OECD average of 24:1. In rural areas the ratio can be as low as 2:1 and in urban areas as high as 15:1.

Georgia’s general education system is based on a “school-based management” model, also known as school autonomy. Schools are governed by elected school boards representing the whole spectrum of the school community: parents, teachers, and students. Formally, school boards have the power to select school principals, approve school budgets, and approve school curricula; in reality, however these powers are not exercised, leaving little room for autonomy and independence.

In such a highly centralized system, an intermediary level of management could play a crucial role towards education decentralization and autonomy. Currently, Georgia’s general education system also includes 69 territorial ERCs, one in each administrative center of Georgia. Each ERC is staffed by a team of four to five individuals, who are responsible for coordination between schools and the Ministry. ERCs are the administrative arm of the Ministry, with no particular role

in school management or strategic direction. The Ministry's 10-year education strategy envisions the creation of a middle-level management unit, so called "school districts," built on ERCs. ERCs that take on the role of school districts will have enhanced roles and responsibilities in planning and overseeing the activities of their schools.

In Georgia, school principals are expected to be instructional and managerial leaders; however, they lack the capacity to act as instructional leaders. They have little access to a sustainable, continuous professional development training system, and are not supported at the time of induction. The majority of school principals are not trained in school management before becoming school principals, and only 60 percent receive training after their appointment (Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), 2018). The TALIS research showed that school principal participation in professional development activities in Georgia is lower than in other surveyed countries and the participation rate is even lower among principals in rural schools. With increased internet connectivity, new forms of professional development opportunities can be identified.

Pre-service teacher training programs and school teachers: Georgia introduced teacher certification requirements in 2007 where teachers had to demonstrate minimum competency in a subject as well as in pedagogy. Unfortunately, the majority of teachers failed to demonstrate the minimum required level of knowledge when they took the certification exams. In general education, teachers lack competencies in student-centered teaching and assessment methods, and only one in ten has passed the professional skills and subject exams with the minimum requirement. In addition, the average age of a teacher in Georgia is 50. This means that most teachers graduated within the Soviet system, which was teacher-centered as opposed to student-centered. In comparison, the average age of teachers across OECD countries and economies participating in TALIS is 44. These demographics mean that Georgia will have to renew more than 50 percent of its teaching workforce over the next decade.

According to the Teacher Education and Development Study of Mathematics (TEDS-M), an international survey of future math teachers, Georgia came last in a survey of 17 countries (the Russian Federation, Botswana, Canada, Chile, Germany, Malaysia, Norway, Oman, the Philippines, Poland, Singapore, Thailand, the United States, Chinese Taipei, Spain, and Switzerland) for both subject knowledge and pedagogy. TEDS-M examined how different countries have prepared their teachers to teach mathematics in primary and lower-secondary schools. Georgian future math teachers scored the lowest in terms of subject knowledge as well as pedagogical knowledge. Fortunately, there is an increased interest in the teaching profession which is reflected in concrete policies and figures. Enrollment rates at universities for teacher training programs are significantly increasing. Between 2010 and 2021, the GoG gradually increased teacher compensation from GEL 290 to GEL 1,010, introduced a teacher professional development scheme, and diversified ways to enter the teaching profession. This resulted in increased student enrollment rates for pre-service teacher training programs, although there is an increased need for primary grade, foreign language, math, civic education and many more subject specific teachers. Despite progress, a lingering issue is the limited competencies and skills of students enrolled in pre-service teacher training programs. According to a State Audit report published in May 2022, there is a deficit of qualified teachers in the regions, and teachers often teach more than three or four unrelated subjects.

In addition, there is a great shortage of qualified teachers in ethnic minority regions. There should be a particular emphasis on enhancing the quality of teacher training programs in and for ethnic minority regions, as well as popularizing the teaching profession by introducing the teaching profession to high achieving students from those communities.

4. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Education plays a life-changing role around the world, creating the opportunity and potential for development and change. Children need quality education which will help them to fully achieve their potential and increase their chances of becoming happy, healthy, successful, and contributing members of society. The core problem faced by Georgia's education system is the quality and inclusiveness of the general education system. The following direct causes lead to this core problem:

1. The poor quality of pre-service teacher education programs;
2. The fact that current and future school administrators lack the skills and practice they need to become instructional and management leaders in their schools; and
3. The central management of general education, leaving only a minor role for middle-level management, and a resulting lack of school autonomy that leaves little room for school-level innovation.

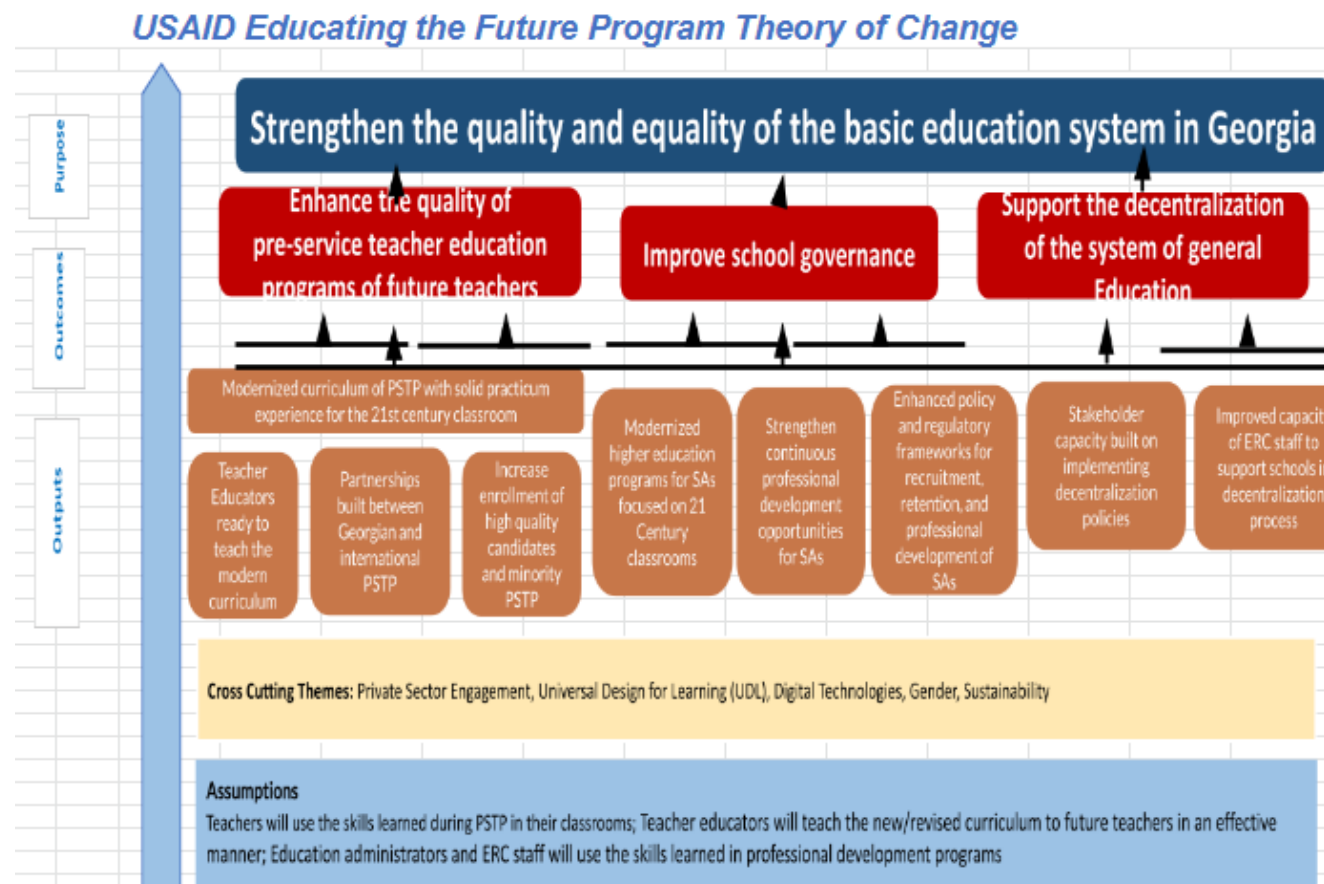
Georgia ranks lower for education quality than other regional middle-income countries. In 2021, Georgia scored 0.62 in Education Quality, falling behind Ukraine (0.72), Kazakhstan (0.86), and Russia (0.91). According to the international survey, Georgian pre-service teaching students underperform in subject knowledge as well as pedagogy. Teachers fail to demonstrate the minimum qualification of knowledge in their certification exams and use teacher-centered techniques rather than implementing student-centered tools and approaches. In addition to the poor quality of teacher training programs, most school principals are not trained in school management before taking up their positions, and only 60 percent receive training after their appointment. Principals lack the tools and resources to manage their schools and there is no systemic approach to the professional development of school principals in addition to the weak recruitment policies for principals which do not require adequate prior experience. The centralized education system does not provide technical support to schools and underutilizes the resources of the Educational Resource Centers.

Access to and ability to use digital tools and technologies in the teaching and learning process are limited across all levels of the Georgian education system. COVID-19 forced a rapid adoption and integration of technology in the classroom, although connectivity challenges, availability of online resources and platforms, and skills gaps prevail as obstacles to digital transformation in the education system.

Furthermore, the Georgian education sector lacks a strong level of engagement with the private sector to help address weaknesses in the administration and quality of pre-service teacher training. While the private sector has been playing a more active role in technical and vocational education, its engagement in general or higher education institutions remains nascent. Without the engagement of relevant private sector entities in teacher preparation, gaps in education outcomes, in areas such as mathematics, information communication technologies, and Science, Technology,

Engineering and Math (STEM) are likely to grow. Several leading companies in Georgia have prioritized investing in education as part of their corporate sustainability and corporate social responsibility efforts. However, this has not translated into collaboration and co-investments to the education system, specifically its administration, teacher education, and educational resources.

4.1 THEORY OF CHANGE



5. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

This activity aims to strengthen the quality and inclusiveness of the general education system in Georgia. The activity has three main objectives:

Objective 1: Enhance the quality and inclusiveness of pre-service teacher education programs

1. 1.1: Enhance the teaching and learning quality of existing pre-service teacher programs
- 1.2: Promote recruitment for higher-education teaching programs (with an emphasis on ethnic minorities)

Objective 2: Improve school governance

- 2.1: Improve the quality and inclusiveness of existing or new higher-education programs for education administrators
- 2.2: Strengthen GoG school governance policies and provide continuous professional development opportunities for school administrators

Objective 3: Support the decentralization of the general education system in Georgia

- 3.1: Strengthen GoG decentralization policies with a focus on ERCs
- 3.2: Support the continuous professional development of ERC staff

Objective 1: Enhance the quality and inclusiveness of pre-service teacher education programs

The goal of Objective 1 is to strengthen the quality of teacher training programs and ensure that program graduates have the knowledge and skills necessary to integrate student-centered pedagogies and inclusive approaches, including Universal Design for Learning (UDL), into instruction. Under this objective, the activity will aim to strengthen the quality and inclusiveness of existing pre-service teacher education programs, and to increase the number of high-achieving students enrolling in teacher education programs, including ethnic minority students. The activity will also ensure that teacher education programs include relevant gender training, including approaches to address the stereotypes and practices recurring in Georgia's education system.

Expected results:

Sub-objective 1.1: Enhance the quality and inclusiveness of existing pre-service teacher programs

Intended outcomes of Sub-objective 1.1:

- Improved curriculum for pre-service teacher programs with a focus on preparing future teachers to deliver student-centered, gender sensitive instruction based on UDL.
- Strong professional partnerships established with international higher education institutions;
- Steps identified to enable international accreditation and strategic plans developed with universities to put them on the path to international accreditation;
- Strengthened deep, sustained, and mutually beneficial partnerships between Universities and the public schools.

The activity will aim to improve the quality and inclusiveness of existing pre-service teacher programs (PSTP) in up to three universities in Georgia by developing Centers for Excellence/Schools of Success within a small set of public and/or private university programs. Through close partnerships with international universities, the activity will conduct an initial assessment to identify and engage Georgian universities in international partnerships. The assessment should also identify Georgian universities' capacity to carry out and sustain partnerships with other international universities. key strengths and challenges facing each university and PSTP program, and opportunities to build on and strengthen these areas through international partnerships. Working with international universities, the Georgian universities will leverage key learnings, good practices, and capacity building opportunities to strengthen PSTP to ensure graduates acquire sufficient skills and knowledge to deliver quality, inclusive, and

developmentally appropriate instruction. The activity should critically examine primary regulating legislative documents: sectoral benchmarks and accreditation standards and conduct comparative analysis with the best international practices. Additionally, the universities, where the Centers for Excellence/Schools of Success are developed, will seek to collaborate with other Georgian universities to share best practices and approaches to strengthen teacher preparation programs.

The activity will seek to strengthen teacher preparation programs with an emphasis on revising or developing the curriculum to prepare teachers to integrate student-centered and inclusive approaches in the classroom, including practices for gender equity and UDL. The activity will collaborate with targeted universities to revise and improve the curriculum for teacher education programs, including a focus on theory, pedagogy, and in-school practicums. Curriculum development or revision activities will ensure that teachers have the necessary content and pedagogical skills and knowledge to provide gender-sensitive, contextually and developmentally relevant hands-on instruction for all learners. To solidify classroom-based learning, it is important for future teachers to gain teaching practice through practicums or student teaching experiences. Pre-service teacher education programs should include partnerships with public or private schools, particularly schools participating in the USAID Basic Education Program, to provide opportunities for future teachers to gain hands-on experience in student-centered teaching approaches.

In addition to revising the PSTP curriculum and programmatic components, the activity will support institutional capacity building, ensuring teacher educators and professors are equipped to provide quality instruction and support to future teachers. Teacher educators should receive training and support to implement the revised curriculum and to integrate principles of gender equity and UDL to provide inclusive learning environments for future teachers.

Sub-objective 1.2: Promote recruitment for higher education teaching programs (with an emphasis on ethnic minorities)

Intended outcomes of Sub-objective 1.2:

- Increased enrollment in teacher education programs of high achieving students, with particular emphasis on ethnic minorities and other underrepresented groups in Georgia.

The activity will also aim to promote recruitment for higher education teaching programs, with an emphasis on ethnic minorities, male students, students with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups, to increase the number of students enrolling in teacher preparation programs. The activity will aim to understand the root causes for why high-achieving school graduates do not enroll in teacher preparation programs by using positive youth development approaches and engaging youth. The activity will seek to identify and implement approaches to address and mitigate these challenges, to advocate for policy reforms, and to attract and enroll high-achieving candidates in teacher preparation programs. Popularizing and increasing the attractiveness and prestige of the teaching profession is a key priority of this activity. The activity should identify incentives and support mechanisms to attract high-achieving students into the field and use social media and diverse channels to improve the public image of the teacher profession. The activity should conduct targeted outreach by proactively contacting underrepresented segments of the teacher population; introduce advantages of the profession and

success stories and provide additional preparation opportunities for underrepresented populations to prepare for certification exams.

Objective 2: Improve school governance

The goal of Objective 2 is to increase the quality and inclusiveness of new and existing higher education programs for education administrators, including in minority groups, to support GoG school governance policies, and to provide continuous professional development for education administrators. This objective aims to strengthen the school governance system by supporting education administrators to serve as effective instructional and institutional leaders by successfully managing the implementation of student-centered learning approaches, the principles for UDL, and best practices for gender equity.

Expected Results:

Sub-Objective 2.1: Improved quality and inclusiveness of new or existing higher education programs for education administrators.

Intended outcomes of Sub-objective 2.1:

- Strengthened and/or new higher education programs for education professionals;
- Increased capacity of and preparation for education administrators to provide management and supervision in their current or future schools or any other role in the field of education administration.

The activity will aim to improve the quality and inclusiveness of new or existing higher education programs for education administrators. The activity will aim to leverage the university partnerships established under Objective 1.1 to strengthen existing or develop new programs, as appropriate, to support the professional development of education administrators.

Through an initial landscape analysis, the activity will identify universities that are interested in developing or enhancing programs for education administrators. Based on these findings, the activity will develop and implement an approach to strengthen the quality and inclusiveness of higher education programs for education administrators, ensuring they develop key knowledge and skills needed to manage education programs, to attract and retain a diverse group of teachers, and to build the pedagogical and content knowledge needed to effectively work with teachers and act as mentors to teachers. The approach for strengthening education administrator professional development should be rooted in evidence from the landscape assessment, and could include strengthening the capacity of higher education instructors, supporting the processes for resource development, revising the curriculum for education administrators, and strengthening linkages with local schools to provide opportunities for mentorship and observation. The approach should involve key stakeholders, such as faculty, and include a shared vision among stakeholders.

Sub-objective 2.2: Support GoG school governance policies and provide continuous professional development for school administrators.

Intended outcomes of Sub-objective 2.2:

- Enhanced policy and regulatory frameworks for school administrator recruitment, retention, promotion, professional development, school governance;

- Strengthened continuous professional development systems and opportunities for school administrators;
- Enhanced skills and knowledge in both newly elected and established school principals.

The Activity will review current policies for school governance and education administrator recruitment, retention, and promotion in order to provide recommendations to strengthen existing policies and to fill gaps in policies, particularly policies related to gender equity and disability inclusiveness. The Activity will conduct an assessment on the existing regulatory framework for school administrators to better understand the current context, the strengths and weaknesses within the system, and identify challenges and areas for improvement. Building on these findings, the Activity will work with the GoG and wider stakeholders to develop a policy outlining expectations and plans for education administrator recruitment, retention, promotion, and professional development.

The Activity will also support the delivery of continuous professional development for school administrators through an online learning management system (LMS) platform. The system and its e-learning modules will be revised to incorporate the new performance standards and the content will be developed to reflect the key skills and knowledge needed to effectively manage schools, including modules on school governance and management, financial and human resource management, gender equity, learner-centered pedagogy, and UDL. Particular attention will be paid to ensuring that the online learning system incorporates best practices in e-learning, UDL, and instructional design. The Activity will aim to create professional development opportunities for school administrators that are tailored to their job requirements and aligned with existing online platforms. Mentoring and coaching are additional professional development opportunities that should be considered to support school administrators.

Objective 3: Support the decentralization of the general education system

The goal of Objective 3 is to support the decentralization of the general education system in Georgia. The Activity will support the GoG's decentralization policies, with a particular focus on strengthening the ERCs. Additionally, under Objective 3, the Activity will support the continuous professional development of ERC staff.

Sub-objective 3.1: Strengthen GoG decentralization policies with a focus on ERCs

Intended outcomes of Sub-objective 3.1:

- Improved and consistent implementation of education decentralization policies.

The activity will assist the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (MoES) to implement effective and efficient school support policies and mechanisms. The activity will work closely with the MoES and other relevant entities to identify the current needs and challenges related to education decentralization. Based on that analysis, the Activity will develop professional development activities for policy makers to introduce diversified approaches considering contextual factors and needs to effective decentralization and strengthen their ability to implement decentralization within the school system.

Sub-objective 3.2: Support the continuous professional development of ERC staff

Intended outcomes of Sub-objective 3.2:

- ERC staff roles and responsibilities better aligned with the decentralization policy framework;
- New professional development opportunities available for ERC staff.

To further support the MoES strategy to strengthen the decentralization process, the Activity will aim to enhance the abilities of ERC staff, and other key stakeholders in the decentralization process, to provide improved support to schools. The activity will implement a needs assessment to better understand how the ERCs currently function, including their current roles and responsibilities, and the challenges they face in supporting schools. Based on the needs assessment and the revised policy framework, the activity will update and revise the roles and responsibilities for ERC staff to align with the decentralization policies, clearly define performance standards for ERC Staff members, and develop a professional development approach aligned with these standards. The activity should propose a diversified approach to the school support system considering all relevant factors which are characteristic to the municipality as well as considering differentiated needs and priorities of schools. The Activity will build on the online LMS platform for school administrators to also manage and deliver continuous professional development for ERC staff.

6. OPERATING PRIORITIES AND POLICY GUIDANCE

The following operational guidance will be crucial for the successful and sustainable implementation of this activity. These priorities and guidance relate to: a) Collaboration with USAID/Georgia and US Embassy Programming; and b) Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL).

6.1. Collaboration with USAID/Georgia and US Embassy Programming

The Activity should closely collaborate with the ongoing USAID/Georgia and US Embassy Public Diplomacy Section education programming. Currently, USAID funds two Basic Education programs described below, and there will be other opportunities for collaboration and joint activities with youth and local governance programs under the Democracy, Rights and Governance office and the USAID Industry-Led Skills Development program under the Economic Growth office.

The six-year (2020-2026) **USAID Basic Education Program** aims to assist Georgia's education system to implement sustainable student-centered reforms in the primary grades. The USAID Basic Education Program objectives are: 1) Current primary grade teachers and administrators implement student-centered curricula; 2) Future teachers acquire student-centered teaching skills and future administrators acquire relevant instructional leadership skills; and 3) Educational policies are developed with the use of data and evidence. As a system-wide reform, the program will impact all stakeholders in the primary education sector in Georgia, including: primary grade students and their families, teachers and administrators, universities, local organizations, and the Ministry of Education and Science. The program aims to institutionalize student-centered instruction through far-reaching systemic reforms of pre-service and in-service teacher professional development and the use of research and data to inform policy and classroom practice. At the end of the program, the

Georgian education system will have the capacity to implement nationwide reforms grounded in student-centered instruction.

The current *USAID Basic Education Program* and the *USAID Educating the Future Activity* (when awarded) should have close partnerships particularly considering similarities under Objective 2 under the USAID Basic Education Program and Objective 1 under the USAID Educating the Future activity.

The USAID Civic Education Program (2022-2027) will use civic education to prepare the next generation of Georgians to be civically engaged, support them to understand and exercise their democratic rights and responsibilities, harness technology, and build partnerships, including with the private sector, to advocate for increased government accountability. USAID civic education work focuses on developing a more democratic culture in schools, introducing innovative approaches to extracurricular and experiential/project-based learning, establishing new forms of partnership including with the private sector, and preparing teachers and students to benefit from digital resources. The new program's objectives include: 1) Enhance student-led civic and democratic engagement in schools; 2) Strengthen engagement of the private sector in civic education at the school level; and 3) Students improve their ability and proficiency to responsibly use and harness technology to advance their civic agendas and participate in public discourse.

The activity should collaborate with other ongoing projects under USAID/Georgia's Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance Office and Economic Growth Office. In addition, the activity should coordinate efforts with relevant U.S. Embassy Public Diplomacy Section activities that occur during project implementation.

6.2. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) will be an integral part of this activity. MEL will be an on-going, collaborative process led by the awardee, with the participation of USAID and other key stakeholders. Below are the basic indicators that USAID/Georgia included in the Mission's Performance Management Plan (PMP) to measure the performance of the activity. However, these indicators are not exhaustive. Illustrative indicators as well as any additional indicators need to be disaggregated as appropriate (including sex, geography, etc) from the start of the activity and key terms should be defined.

Many of the indicators listed below are being reported on by the ongoing USAID Basic Education Program. It would be to the benefit of the two programs to consult with each other regarding the definitions, methodology and data for these indicators.

List of Performance Management Plan (PMP) Indicators

- [IR 2.2-5](#) Percent of learners who attain a minimum grade-level proficiency in reading at the end of grade 2 and grade 6 with USG assistance
- [IR 2.2-6](#) Percent of learners who attain a minimum grade-level proficiency in math at the end of grade 2 and grade 6 with USG assistance

List of Performance Plan And Report (PPR) Indicators

- ES.1-6 - Number of educators who complete professional development activities with USG assistance
- ES.1-3 - Number of learners in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings reached with USG education assistance
- ES 2.54: Number of USG-supported partnerships that address regional, national, and/or local development objectives through or with higher education institutions
- ES 2-1 Number of host country higher education institutions receiving capacity development support with USG assistance
- CBLD-10 Value (\$) of non-donor resources mobilized for local development priorities

6.3 Universal Design for Learning

Guided by Universal Design for Learning (UDL): The Educating the Future activity will approach all interventions using principles of UDL based upon the premise that all children and youth learn differently and as a result, the activity needs to provide learners with pathways to (1) be engaged, motivated and to learn through multiple means, (2) receive information in various ways, and (3) express their learning in multiple ways.

[Universal Design for Learning](#) is a framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people based on scientific insights into how humans learn. The goal of UDL is to support learners to become “expert learners” who are purposeful and motivated, resourceful and knowledgeable, and strategic and goal driven. Instead of changing the learner, UDL aims to change the design of learning environments to reduce barriers so that all learners can engage in rigorous, meaningful learning. UDL Guidelines provide a set of concrete suggestions that can be applied to any discipline or domain to ensure that all learners can access and participate in meaningful, challenging learning opportunities.

6.4 USAID Digital Strategy

[USAID’s Digital Strategy](#) charts an Agency-wide vision for development and humanitarian assistance in the world’s rapidly evolving digital landscape. The Digital Strategy seeks to improve measurable development and humanitarian assistance outcomes through the responsible use of digital technology and to strengthen the openness, inclusiveness, and security of country-level digital ecosystems. According to a study conducted by the National Assessment and Examination Center, before the pandemic, 79 percent of students were using computers with internet access either at home or at school, 69 percent of villages had poor internet connection, and 42 percent of teachers had not been trained in the usage of ICT technologies. The USAID Educating the Future Activity will aim to include Digital Development and digital technology approaches in a cross-cutting manner, where appropriate, to achieve the three program objectives. This will include supporting the creation/adaptation and implementation of digital tools with the goal of improving operations, and quality of teaching and learning. The Activity will include the appropriate technology in the context of the education ecosystem in Georgia, including opportunities for linking systems and data, leveraging technologies already in place, and accelerating and amplifying outcomes under the program objectives. The Activity will reflect key

considerations from the Principles for Digital Development into any technology-oriented interventions.

6.5 Private Sector Engagement

[USAID's Private Sector Engagement \(PSE\) Policy](#) calls for USAID staff and partners to actively assess the role of the private sector and use of market-based approaches in approaching development issues for greater development outcomes. Implementing partners play a vital role in advancing the PSE Policy by actively engaging relevant private sector partners, embracing market-based approaches, and integrating the unique capabilities of the private sector in addressing development challenges across sectors.

The Activity should integrate private sector engagement in its approach to achieve all three of the program's objectives. As a result, it is expected that private sector providers are actively engaged and co-invest their resources to enhance the quality and inclusiveness of pre-service teacher education programs. For example, as an impact of the program more students from underrepresented regions receive access to quality teacher education through private sector-supported interventions such as scholarships and thematic competitions. It is expected that relevant private sector partners are engaged to collaborate in improving school governance. School governance and administration should benefit from private-public dialogue. The Activity should engage private sector entities that can advance the decentralization of the system of general education. The Activity should actively explore how private education institutions can actively contribute financial and non-financial resources to improve education outcomes at all levels. The Activity should engage relevant companies in the ICT sector to co-create digital solutions for education administration and teacher education.

6.6 Communication

Communication is a vital component of the activity. The Activity is expected to integrate strong communication and outreach activities within each objective to ensure linkages and coordination between various education stakeholders, including but not limited to USAID-funded basic education activities, local schools and universities, and MoES entities.

Intended results:

- Teaching profession popularized among school children;
- Partnerships developed to strengthen linkages between international universities and Georgian universities;
- Communication and coordination between local universities and local schools strengthened;
- Collaboration among educators enhanced through multiple activities;
- Communication and collaboration between ERCs and schools strengthened.

6.7 Coordination and Collaboration

The Activity is expected to coordinate with all donors who are active at the time of project implementation. This list includes but is not limited to: the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and UNICEF.

6.8 Sustainability

The Activity turns on a sustainable vision - affecting universities, schools and the general education system in general. Engagement with key institutional partners, including but not limited to Universities, MoES and its agencies, ERCs, and schools, will be critical to promoting the sustainability of the Activity objectives.

6.9 Gender

The gender analysis for the Activity is rooted in the Mission's Gender Analysis² for the 2020-2025 Country Development Cooperation Strategy, USAID/Georgia's 2018 Gender Analysis in Education, and a number of credible third party sources, including reports and analyses by the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and UNICEF.

The analysis has identified specific gender disparities and stereotypes impeding girls' equal and equitable inclusion in the education sector. The findings have been integrated throughout this program description. The related statistics are also summarized below and the Activity should identify specific measures to address the identified gaps.

Gender disparities are deeply ingrained across the education sector, including lower participation, access, and education outcomes for male students in upper secondary, to a significantly low numbers of male teachers or administrators in all schools, to a lack of awareness of and sensitivity towards gender equity and equality in both the teaching community and wider society. These disparities are compounded by established societal gender norms and stereotypes that set rigid expectations about the roles women and men should or should not play in the education sector.

The Activity should incorporate and build on the analysis and its findings and reflect how the prevailing gender disparities and stereotypes will be addressed by the activity.

UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) 2021 showed that Georgia has a high drop-out rate from school at the upper secondary level: only 66 percent of children complete upper secondary. In this group, males are overrepresented (55 percent). The out-of-school children rate is also high, 11 percent among upper secondary age group children, and the out of school rate among males is 14 percent (compared to females at 8 percent). MICS also found that more boys than girls do not have access to the internet. The latest 2018 PISA analyses show that girls outperform boys across all domains and in reading and sciences this difference is statistically significant. USAID/Georgia's gender analysis towards the CDCS in 2019 found that female students are outperforming their male peers at all levels, though despite these higher levels of educational performance, gender disparities in employment opportunities persist. USAID/Georgia gender analysis also points to the fact that there are only a small number of male teachers in Georgian schools, which can reinforce the perception that teaching is a female profession. Gender stereotypes and prejudices are reinforced through textbooks, instructional practice, teachers, and parents and educators lack the appropriate training to deliver gender-sensitive approaches at the pre and in service levels for teachers.

²Available on the Development Experience Clearinghouse.

6.10. Staffing and Management

The Recipient must have the necessary mix of staff and requisite levels of professional expertise to implement the activity and should identify, recruit, hire, and support appropriate personnel. The Recipient must supply Key Personnel essential to the work to be performed under the award. Key Personnel are expected to be in-country (if applicable) and fully engaged by no later than 60 days after the award's effective date. When qualified personnel are available, the Recipient should utilize local personnel with appropriate experience and expertise.

The Recipient is expected to commit to gender equality and social inclusion and should consider equitable balance in staffing and staff requirements; personnel systems, hiring, and management; and capacity development principles and approaches.

Professional-level skills and management practices are required in the performance of the activity. Accordingly, the Recipient will be expected to establish an effective quality control program to assure that deliverables and other products meet professional standards and comply with terms and conditions of the Agreement.

The Recipient should have an organizational structure that adequately meets management needs to implement all initiatives and manage needs within each of the geographic areas.

END OF SECTION A

SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. ESTIMATE OF FUNDS AVAILABLE AND NUMBER OF AWARDS CONTEMPLATED

USAID intends to award one Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity. Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency. USAID intends to provide up to \$14,000,000 in total USAID funding over a 5-year period.

2. EXPECTED PERFORMANCE INDICATORS, TARGETS, BASELINE DATA, AND DATA COLLECTION

In line with the proposed Results Framework, the Recipient will develop an Activity MEL (MEL) plan which will include a set of corresponding quantitative and qualitative indicators that would directly measure proposed outcomes and outputs. This will include, but will not be limited to, appropriate Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators (F indicators) as mandated by USAID.. The Recipient must develop the baselines for indicators as appropriate and set final targets for each of the proposed indicators for the duration of the program.

The F indicators that apply to this activity are:

IR1: Quality of Programs for Future Teachers Enhanced

- ES.2-1: Number of host country tertiary education institutions receiving capacity development support with USG assistance
- ES.2-2: Number of individuals attending tertiary education institutions with USG scholarship or financial assistance
- ES 2.54: Number of USG-supported partnerships that address regional, national, and/or local development objectives through or with higher education institutions

IR2: School Governance Improved

- ES.1-6 - Number of educators who complete professional development activities with USG assistance
- ES 2-1 Number of host country higher education institutions receiving capacity development support with USG assistance

IR3: Education Decentralization Supported and Sustained

- ES.1-6 - Number of educators who complete professional development activities with USG assistance

Cross-cutting: Private Sector Engagement:

- CBLD-10 Value (\$) of non-donor resources mobilized for local development priorities

The Recipient is responsible for developing clearly defined and fit-for-purpose data collection methods for all indicators to inform continuous learning and adaptations for maximum activity impact. The Recipient is also responsible for storage, analysis, reporting as well as ensuring the

quality of indicator data, including those provided by any sub-awardees. The Recipient must ensure the validity, integrity, precision, reliability, and timeliness of data used for measuring performance of the Activity and informing decision making. All externally reported indicators must have a data quality assessment (DQA). The Recipient is also encouraged to be creative and innovative about learning and adapting methods that are outside of what has been described herein.

In order to better represent the results of USAID-funded activities, USAID requires geographically disaggregated indicators. Such indicators include information on the location or geographic scale of the Activity's performance, impact, or other information as deemed appropriate by USAID or the Recipient. Geographically disaggregated indicators enable the Activity to investigate the variation in performance to inform USAID decision-making and any adaptation to continually refine the activity over its four-year life.

The time it takes to ascertain potential baselines will depend on the nature of the indicators and their data sources, including data collection when needed. The final targets will be determined once the baseline is established. It is generally expected that all such baseline and target information must be included in the MEL Plan.

1. START DATE AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE FOR FEDERAL AWARDS

The anticipated period of performance is five (5) years from signing of the Cooperative Agreement. The estimated start date will be March/April 2023.

2. SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT

Substantial involvement during the implementation of this Agreement must be limited to approval of the elements listed below. An Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) will substantially be involved in the administration and be responsible for review and approval of the following components of a cooperative agreement to help the implementer achieve the agreement objectives in the following areas in accordance with ADS 303.3.11:

- Review and approval of Recipient's Annual Work Plan.
- Review and approval of Recipient's Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan (MEL) Plan and amendment/s to the MEL Plans.
- Review and approval of substantive provisions of proposed subawards or contracts. The Agreement Officer will approve all subawards unless the authority is delegated to the AOR.
- Review and approval of the specified key personnel assigned to the positions in the "Key Personnel" Section. The Agreement Officer will approve any changes to Key Personnel following technical concurrence by the AOR.
- Agency monitoring to permit direction or redirection of the work because of the interrelationships with other projects or activities, or based on communications with the Government of Georgia. All such direction or redirection must be within the program description budget, and other terms and conditions of the award.

KEY PERSONNEL

The three Key Personnel positions for this Cooperative Agreement are: Chief of Party, Deputy Chief of Party, and Senior Program Advisor for University Education. Minimum Qualifications for the Key Personnel are as follows:

The **Chief of Party (COP)** must have a master's degree in a relevant field and at least 10 years of work experience. The COP candidate must have held progressively responsible positions managing large-scale development programs, preferably in the Europe and Eurasia region; managing programs in education is required.

The COP must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the issues surrounding education and ability to effectively manage a diverse team of employees.

The COP must have experience in building relationships with the host governments, international donors, program stakeholders and beneficiaries.

The COP should have experience with fostering experimentation and encouraging programmatic risks where warranted; familiarity with performance management, project management, and reporting requirements is a must.

The COP must also have strong interpersonal skills and demonstrated ability to network and maintain effective working relationships with diverse sets of actors, including universities, private sector representatives, and the local governments. Fluency in English (both verbal and written) is required.

The **Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP)** must have a master's degree in education or other relevant field; minimum 7 years of experience working in the field of education and preferably with donor funded programs. Knowledge of the Georgian education system is required.

DCOP must have experience overseeing administrative components of projects such as procurement, human resources activities. The DCOP must have professional experience in a management position on multi-component programs and demonstrated ability to effectively manage staff.

The DCOP must have the strong interpersonal skills necessary to maintain good relations with formal and informal civic groups, partners, government officials, USAID, and other personnel associated with this program. Fluency in English (both verbal and written) is required.

The **Senior University Education Advisor** must have a master's degree and a minimum 7 years of experience working on higher education issues. The Senior University Education Adviser must be familiar with the administrative and teaching and learning processes in universities and have experience working for a university in a relevant capacity (for example teaching, project administration). The Senior University Education Adviser must have knowledge of international best practices of innovative teaching practices, and an understanding of the role of modern digital tools, technologies and platforms in the teaching and learning process.

The Senior University Education Advisor must have strong interpersonal skills, and the ability to establish and maintain strong business relations between the selected international and local universities, implementing partners, government officials, and donors. Fluency in English (both verbal and written) is required.

USAID encourages Applicants to propose highly qualified Georgian or regional key personnel. At least one of the three key personnel should have a background in private sector engagement.

3. AUTHORIZED GEOGRAPHIC CODE

The authorized geographic codes for procurement of goods and services under this award are 937 (the United States, the recipient country, and developing countries other than advanced developing countries, but excluding any country that is a prohibited source) and 110 (the United States, the independent states of the former Soviet Union, or a developing country, but excluding any country that is a prohibited source).

4. 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 USAID Educating the Future Activity which is authorized by Federal statute. The 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.

END OF SECTION B

SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligibility for this NOFO is not restricted.

U.S. and non-US organizations may participate under this NOFO.

Pursuant to Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 2 CFR 200.400(g), it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments such as cooperative agreements. While for-profit firms may participate, pursuant to 2 CFR 700.13(A)(1) Prohibition against profit, no funds will be paid as profit to any for-profit entity receiving or administering Federal financial assistance as a recipient or subrecipient, and as such, for-profit organizations must waive profits and/or fees to be eligible to submit an application.

USAID welcomes applications from organizations which have not previously received financial assistance from USAID. USAID will not accept applications from individuals. 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.

Applicants must have established financial management, monitoring and evaluation processes, internal control systems, and policies and procedures that comply with established U.S. Government standards, laws, and regulations. The successful applicant(s) may be subject to a responsibility determination assessment (Pre-award Survey) by the Agreement Officer (AO).

The Recipient must be a responsible entity. The AO may determine a pre-award survey is required to conduct an examination that will determine whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls, and technical skills or ability to obtain them in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award.

2. COST SHARING OR MATCHING

Cost sharing is suggested, but not required. Such funds may be provided directly by the recipient; other multilateral, bilateral, and foundation donors; host governments; and local organizations, communities and private businesses that contribute financially and in-kind to implementation of activities at the country level. This may include contribution of staff level of effort, office space or other facilities or equipment which may be used for the program, provided by the recipient. For guidance on cost sharing in grants and cooperative agreements see 2 CFR 200.306.

3. OTHER

In support of the Agency's interest in fostering a larger assistance base and expanding the number and sustainability of development partners, USAID encourages applications from potential new partners. When considering making an award to a potential partner with limited or no previous USAID experience, USAID will undertake necessary pre-award reviews to determine the

organization's "responsibility" as discussed below. The resultant award to this organization may take some time. The applicant should take this into account and plan their implementation dates and activities accordingly.

"Responsibility" of Applicant:

In order for an award to be made, the Agreement Officer must make an affirmative determination that the applicant is "responsible." A positive responsibility determination means that the applicant possesses or has the ability to obtain the necessary management and technical competence to plan and carry out the program to be funded, and that the applicant will practice mutually agreed upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided by USAID.

Exclusive Commitments: USAID discourages any applicant from requiring exclusive commitments by local organizations to participate as part of the consortium or sub-award. Local organizations participating in a consortium may elect to participate in another consortium under a different application.

END OF SECTION C

SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. AGENCY POINT OF CONTACT

Name: Ekaterine Gamezardashvili
Title: Acquisition and Assistance Specialist
Email: egamezardashvili@usaid.gov AND rcocaucasus@usaid.gov
Mail Address: Regional Contracting Office, 29, Georgian American Friendship Avenue,
Tbilisi 0131 Georgia

2. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions regarding this NOFO should be submitted in writing to Ekaterine Gamezardashvili via email at egamezardashvili@usaid.gov AND rcocaucasus@usaid.gov, no later than the date and time indicated on the cover letter. Any information given to a prospective Applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective Applicants as an amendment to this NOFO, if that information is necessary for submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant.

3. PREPARATION OF APPLICATIONS

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

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

- Name of the organization(s) submitting the application;
- Identification and signature of the primary contact person (by name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number and email address) and the identification of the alternate contact person (by name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number and email address);
- Program name;
- Notice of Funding Opportunity number;
- Name of any proposed sub-recipients or partnerships (identify if any of the organizations are local organizations, per USAID's definition of 'local entity' under ADS 303).

Any erasures or other changes to the application must be initialed by the person signing the application. Applications signed by an agent on behalf of the Applicant must be accompanied

by evidence of that agent's authority, unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.

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

Applications must comply with the following:

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

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

The Cost/Business Application is to be submitted under separate cover from the technical application. The Applicant is requested to submit a budget broken down by program years (in MS Excel with formulas unlocked) with an accompanying detailed budget narrative (in Word or PDF text accessible) which provides in detail the total costs for implementation of the program.

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 title page with the following legend:

“This application includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the U.S. Government and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, a grant is awarded to this Applicant as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, the U.S. Government shall have the right to

duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting grant. This restriction does not limit the U.S. Government's right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in sheets {insert sheet numbers}."

and mark each sheet of data it wished to restrict with the following legend:

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

Name:

Title:

Email:

Mail Address:

4. APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Applications in response to this NOFO must be submitted no later than the closing date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended. Applications must be submitted by email to rcocaucasus@usaid.gov and egamezardashvili@usaid.gov. Late applications may be considered at the discretion of the Agreement Officer. Applicants must retain proof of timely delivery in the form of {system generated documentation of delivery receipt date and time/confirmation from the receiving office/certified mail receipt}.

Email submissions must include the NOFO number and applicant's name in the subject line heading. In addition, for an application sent by multiple emails, the subject line must also indicate whether the email relates to the technical or cost application, and the desired sequence of the emails and their 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 that states: "[NOFO number], [organization name], Cost Application, Part 1 of 2."

USAID's preference is that the technical application and the cost application each be submitted as consolidated email attachments, i.e., that you consolidate the various parts of a technical application into a single document before sending it. 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.

After submitting an application electronically, applicants should immediately check their own email to confirm that the attachments were indeed sent. If an applicant discovers an error in transmission, please send the material again and note in the subject line of the email or indicate in the file name if submitted via grants.gov 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.

Applicants are reminded that e-mail is NOT instantaneous, and in some cases delays of several hours occur from transmission to receipt. Therefore, applicants are requested to send the

application in sufficient time ahead of the deadline. For this NOFO, the initial point of entry to the government infrastructure is the USAID mail server.

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 Technical Application in response to this solicitation must address how the Applicant intends to carry out the Program Description contained in Section A. It should clearly demonstrate how the Applicant will meet the goals and objectives of the program and fulfill the Applicant's program implementation responsibilities. The application should take into account the requirements of the program and evaluation criteria found in this NOFO.

Technical applications shall be organized by the technical evaluation criteria listed below. The Technical Application is limited to 25 pages excluding pages identified below. Any pages beyond these 25 will NOT be evaluated. However, required Annexes specified below will not be counted towards the page limit.

Required Order of the Technical Application:

1. Cover page: The cover page must not exceed one page and must contain information as specified in Section D.3 for the cover page of the Technical and Business (Cost) Applications (not included in the 25-page limit)
2. Table of Contents (not included in the 25-page limit)
3. Abbreviation list (not included in the 25-page limit)
4. Executive summary: must provide a maximum two-page high-level overview of key elements of the Technical Application (not included in the 25-page limit)
5. Technical Approach (15-page limit)
6. Management and Staffing Approach (5-page limit)
7. Organizational Capacity (5-page limit)
8. Required Annexes (not included in the 25-page limit)
 - a. Résumés for Key Personnel (not to exceed 3 pages each);
 - b. Letters of Commitment for Key Personnel (exclusive commitments are not recommended).

1.1 Technical Approach

The Technical Approach Section should include information sufficient to evaluate the application under the Technical Approach Criterion.

The Technical Approach should describe the applicant's overall approach and specific activities for achieving the objectives in the Program Description in Section A of this NOFO. The technical approach should be innovative, creative, realistic, sustainable, and scalable, and tailored to the Georgian education system. Proposed activities should respond to the identified challenges in the program description. The application should clearly describe how the applicant envisages

ensuring effective engagement of the private sector and establishment of strong private sector partnerships; incorporation of technological solutions and platforms; building local capacity and ownership; and including realistic steps towards ensuring sustainability of interventions after the end of the program. The technical application should also include a description of the applicant's approach to Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning and proposed indicators which accurately measure the achievement of results, set high yet realistic targets which can be used for timely management decisions, and can credibly measure the actual performance of the activity.

Oral Presentation

As part of the application process, all applicants will give an oral presentation. Applicants must describe their approaches to achieving the objectives listed below. The information presented should be consistent with the written application but should not simply repeat orally the information that is in the written application.

- Enhance the teaching and learning quality of existing pre-service teacher programs
- Strengthen GoG school governance policies and provide continuous professional development opportunities for school administrators
- Integrate Digital tools and technologies across all three objectives

Oral Presentation - Logistics, Format and Content

The factors below highlight the requirements of the oral presentation. The Selection Committee will evaluate each oral presentation, in accordance with the evaluation factors set forth under Section E.

A. Logistics & Format

1. Applicants will be notified of the date of their scheduled presentation. At this time, USAID anticipates such Oral Presentations to take place the week of January 16, 2023, subject to further change. Presentations will commence between 1500 and 1700 Tbilisi time. Specific logistic information will be provided.
2. Oral presentations will occur via videoconferencing utilizing the Google Meet platform.
3. The Applicant may have up to six (6) participants deliver the presentation. Offerors are encouraged, but not required, to include as presentation participants potential core management personnel, such as those the Applicant may consider to recruit as key personnel if selected for award, as well as include other consortium members as participants, particularly the university partners and/or those from local organizations. There is no obligation that such core management personnel or other local organizations be part of the presentation team. Participants from local entities as well as key or core management personnel that are considered for recruitment by multiple Offerors are not precluded from participating in multiple oral presentations.
4. The audience for the Oral Presentations will consist of the Selection Committee (SC), the Agreement Officer, and other Office of Acquisition & Assistance and USAID staff as observers. The Agreement Officer will chair the Oral Presentations. USAID may, however, use in-house or a contracted moderator to facilitate the presentations.

5. The presentation must last no more than 40 minutes, which will be followed by a 20-minute question and answer period.

6. The Selected Applicant is expected to be the “Presenter” of any Power point or similar presentation deck. Should there be any technology failures during videoconferencing, the Agreement Officer, at its sole discretion, will determine if and to what extent reasonable accommodation of additional time may be provided.

B. Oral Presentation Format

1. Selected Applicants may utilize a PowerPoint or similar presentation slide deck as supporting materials to the presentation. The slide deck should include a cover slide that identifies 1) the Applicant and other organizations that will be part of the Applicant’s consortium; 2) date of presentation; 3) Activity title; and 4) names, position title and organization of those specifically participating in the presentation.

2. There is no limitation to the number of slides the Applicant may utilize; however, the SC will only review slides that are shown as part of the presentation. The SC will not review these slides prior to the oral presentation. Any slides that were not incorporated into the presentation within the allocated time will be excluded from evaluation consideration.

3. Presentation materials must be submitted by no later than 2:00 pm the Friday prior to the week of presentations. The final deadline for the presentation materials will be provided when Applicants are notified of the date of their presentation.

1.2 Management Approach and Staffing

The Management Approach and Staffing section should include information sufficient to evaluate the application under the Management Approach and Staffing criterion. The Management Approach and Staffing section should describe the applicant’s proposed management structure and demonstrate how it is consistent with the technical approach, including how the proposed organizational structure, roles and the team, staffing and partnerships maximize flexibility and adaptive management. Applicants must propose individual candidates for all key personnel positions listed in Section B of this NOFO. The Management Approach and Staffing section should describe how the Key Personnel meet the minimum qualifications and how their qualifications, experience, past performance and skills are applicable to the roles/positions being proposed.

In support of the Key Personnel section, the applicant will also provide resumes/CVs of key personnel and an organizational chart in an annex. Resumes/CVs for key personnel may not exceed 3 pages in length. Each key personnel resume/CV will include at least 3 references within the last 3 years, along with an email address and phone number for each reference. The references may be listed on a fourth page.

The applicant should submit letters of commitment for key personnel in an Annex. Exclusive commitments are not recommended.

1.3 Organizational Capacity of University (Partner or Prime)

To implement sub objective 1.1 and sub-objective 2.1 of the Program Description, Applicants are expected to partner with international universities in order to enhance the teaching and learning quality of existing pre-service teacher programs and to improve the quality and inclusiveness of existing or new higher-education programs for education administrators in Georgia. If the Applicant is a university and will be using its own resources for the activity, it should describe its own capacity in this section. The Organizational Capacity section should describe the partner university's (or the Applicant's) teacher education programs including programs that address delivering inclusive education, innovating teaching methodologies, education leadership and technology-based courses. The applicant should also describe the human resources, including both administrative and academic personnel, that will work closely with universities with local Georgian universities. The Application should provide information on the approach to the sustainability of partnerships with Georgian universities and proposed measures for how to retain the impact of the interventional after the lifetime of the project.

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.3 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 or using the following links:

Instructions for SF-424	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424-instructions.html
Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html
Instructions for SF-424A	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424a-instructions.html
Budget Information (SF-424A)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html

Instructions for SF-424B	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424b-instructions.html
Assurances (SF-424B)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html

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 <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mav>
- (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 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 the 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 identified in Section F, 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. See Section H, Annex 1 for Summary Budget Template
- **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. The applicant’s budget must include position title, salary rate, level of effort, and salary escalation factors for each position. Allowances, when proposed, must be broken down by specific type and by position. Applicants must explain all assumptions in the Budget Narrative. The Budget Narrative must demonstrate that the proposed compensation is reasonable for the services rendered and consistent with what is paid for similar work in other activities of the applicant. Applicants must provide their established written policies on personnel compensation. If the applicant’s written policies do not address a specific element of compensation that is being proposed, the Budget Narrative must describe the rationale used and supporting market research.
- 2) **Fringe Benefits** – (if applicable) If the applicant has a fringe benefit rate approved by an agency of the U.S. Government, the applicant must use such rate and provide evidence of its approval. If an applicant does not have a fringe benefit rate approved, the applicant may 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, not to exceed the U.S. State Department rates. 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) **Construction** – not applicable
- 7) **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. The Applicant should include adequate funding for Branding and Marking and other outreach costs.

- 8) **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.

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

e) Prior Approvals in Accordance With 2 CFR 200.407

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

f) Approval of Subawards

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

- Name of organization
- Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)
- 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.

g) UEI and SAM Requirements

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier (UEI) (formerly the 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 and UEI 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).
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.

Note: The federal government is changing the unique identifier used for entities from the DUNS Number to the UEI generated by SAM.gov. On April 4, 2022, the DUNS Number will be removed from U.S. Government systems and the UEI will be the authoritative identifier. Include your DUNS Number and UEI on application documents until April 4; starting on April 4, 2022, you will use only the UEI.

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

Non-U.S. applicants can find additional resources for registering in SAM on the Federal Service Desk website by clicking on “Help on UEI Transition.” Applicants must confirm whether they have an active SAM registration and UEI as part of the Initial Application. Also, applicants can review a Quick Start Guide and a video on how to obtain an NCAGE code, on www.beta.sam.gov, navigate to Help, then to International Registrants.

h) History of Performance

In this section the applicant (including all partners of a joint venture) must provide information regarding its recent history of performance for all of its cost-reimbursement contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs, not to exceed seven (7) awards during the last five (5) years, using the attached Past Performance Information (PPI) form (Annex 2). The Applicant should provide information about a combined total of up to seven awards for itself and each major sub-applicant (defined as a sub-applicant whose proposed cost exceeds 10% of the applicant’s total proposed cost) in accordance with the following:

- Name of the Awarding Organization;
- Award Number;
- Activity Title;
- A brief description of the activity including scope of work or complexity/diversity of tasks;
- Period of Performance;
- Award Amount;
- Reports and findings from any audits performed in the last 3 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.

PPI must be submitted as an Annex to the Business (Cost) Application.

USAID recommends that applicants alert the contacts that their names have been submitted and that they are authorized to provide performance information concerning the listed contracts if and when USAID requests it.

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.

Past Performance is not an evaluation factor under this solicitation; however, PPI will be reviewed as part of a Pre-Award Risk Assessment of the apparently successful Applicant.

I. Branding Strategy & Marking Plan

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

I.1 Branding Strategy Pre-Award Term

- a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and negotiate a "Branding Strategy," describing how the program, project, or activity is named and positioned, and how it is promoted and communicated to beneficiaries and host country citizens.
- b. The request for a Branding Strategy, by the Agreement Officer from the applicant, confers no rights to the applicant and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.
- c. Failure to submit and negotiate a Branding Strategy within the time frame specified by the Agreement Officer will make the applicant ineligible for an award.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(i) Describe the main program message.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I.2 Marking Plan Pre-Award Term

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- (ii) Technical assistance, studies, reports, papers, publications, audiovisual productions, public service announcements, Web sites/Internet activities, promotional, informational, media, or communications products funded by USAID;
- (iii) Commodities, equipment, supplies, and other materials funded by USAID, including commodities or equipment provided under humanitarian assistance or disaster relief programs; and
- (iv) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity and the applicant's identity.
- (v) Events financed by USAID, such as training courses, conferences, seminars, exhibitions, fairs, workshops, press conferences and other public activities. If the USAID Identity cannot be displayed, the recipient is encouraged to otherwise acknowledge USAID and the support of the American people.

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

- (i) The program deliverables that the applicant plans to mark with the USAID Identity;
- (ii) The type of marking and what materials the applicant will use to mark the program deliverables;
- (iii) When in the performance period the applicant will mark the program deliverables, and where the applicant will place the marking;
- (iv) What program deliverables the applicant does not plan to mark with the USAID Identity, and
- (v) The rationale for not marking program deliverables.

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

- (i) Compromise the intrinsic independence or neutrality of a program or materials where independence or neutrality is an inherent aspect of the program and materials. The applicant must identify the USAID Development Objective, Interim Result, or program goal furthered by an appearance of neutrality, or state why an aspect of the award is presumptively neutral. Identify by category or deliverable item, examples of material for which an exemption is sought.
- (ii) Diminish the credibility of audits, reports, analyses, studies, or policy recommendations whose data or findings must be seen as independent. The applicant must explain why each particular deliverable must be seen as credible.
- (iii) Undercut host-country government “ownership” of constitutions, laws, regulations, policies, studies, assessments, reports, publications, surveys or audits, public service announcements, or other communications. The applicant must explain why each particular item or product is better positioned as host-country government item or product.
- (iv) Impair the functionality of an item. The applicant must explain how marking the item or commodity would impair its functionality.
- (v) Incur substantial costs or be impractical. The applicant must explain why marking would not be cost beneficial or practical.

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

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

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

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

J. Funding Restrictions

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 NOFO and must meet the source and nationality requirements set forth in 22 CFR 228.

K. Conflict of Interest Pre-Award Term

a. Personal Conflict of Interest

1. An actual or appearance of a conflict of interest exists when an applicant organization or an employee of the organization has a relationship with an Agency official involved in the competitive award decision-making process that could affect that Agency official's impartiality. The term "conflict of interest" includes situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, the obligations and duties of a USAID employee or recipient employee.

2. The applicant must provide conflict of interest disclosures when it submits an SF-424. Should the applicant discover a previously undisclosed conflict of interest after submitting the application, the applicant must disclose the conflict of interest to the AO no later than ten (10) calendar days following discovery.

b. Organizational Conflict of Interest

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

END OF SECTION D

SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. CRITERIA

The merit review criteria prescribed here are tailored to the requirements of this particular NOFO. 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.

The Technical Application will be evaluated by a Selection Committee (SC) using the criteria described in this section.

2. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

The application should represent the applicant's best ideas and efforts, and clearly respond to the subject Program Description. USAID reserves right, but is not under obligation, to enter into discussions with one or more applicants in order to obtain clarifications, additional details, or to suggest refinements in the proposed technical approach, budget, or other aspects of application, if doing so is determined to be in the best interest of the U.S. Government.

Applicants must note that these factors serve as the standard against which all technical information will be evaluated and serve to identify the significant matters which applications must address. Technical Approach, Management Approach and Staffing, Organizational Capacity of University (Partner or Prime) in that order of importance stated below, as described herein and prescribed by the Technical Application format.

As part of the merit review process, all applicants will give an oral presentation. The details about oral presentation are provided in Section D. Technical Application Format.

Applications will be reviewed by USAID direct hire and personal service contractors. The decision to issue an award vest with the Agreement Officer.

3. MERIT REVIEW

USAID will conduct a merit review of all applications received that comply with the instructions in this NOFO. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the criteria shown below.

The SC will evaluate the various components of the application set forth below in the stated order of importance.

1. Technical Approach (Most Important)
2. Management Approach and Staffing (Second Most Important)
3. Organizational Capacity of University (Partner or Prime) (Third Most Important).

The result of the SC's evaluation, using the Merit Review Criterion above will be used to determine the apparently successful applicant(s). A final risk assessment, including a review of cost and performance history, will then determine the final award(s) decisions.

Evaluation Criterion No. 1, Technical Approach (Most important):

There are no sub-criteria listed under this criterion:

The Technical Approach will be evaluated in terms of overall quality, responsiveness to the program description, and appropriateness for the Georgian context. Evaluation of this criterion will be based on both the written application and the oral presentation. This includes:

- a. The innovativeness, creativity, realism, sustainability, and scalability of the technical approach, and the extent to which it is tailored to the Georgian education system.
- b. The extent to which the proposed technical approach and activities respond to the identified challenges in the program description; effectively support private sector engagement and establishment of strong private sector partnerships; incorporate technological solutions and platforms; build local capacity and ownership; and include realistic steps towards ensuring sustainability of interventions after the end of the program.
- c. The extent to which the proposed Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) approach and proposed indicators are likely to accurately measure the achievement of results, set high yet realistic targets, can be used for timely management decisions, and can credibly measure the actual performance of the activity.

Evaluation Criterion No.2, Management Approach and Staffing (Second most important):

There are no sub-criteria listed under this criterion:

The Management Approach and Staffing Section will be evaluated for its quality, clarity and realism. This includes the following considerations:

- a. The extent to which the activity management structure is clear and consistent with the technical approach, including the extent to which the proposed organizational structure, roles of the team, staffing and partnerships maximize flexibility and adaptive management.
- b. The extent to which Key Personnel meet the minimum qualifications and have relevant and demonstrated qualifications, experience, past performance and skills applicable to the roles/positions being proposed.

Evaluation Criterion No. 3, Organizational Capacity of University (Partner or Prime) (Third most important):

There are no sub-criteria listed under this criterion:

Under the Organizational Capacity of University Criterion, the applicant's application will be evaluated based on the following areas:

- a. Quality and relevance of the University’s teacher education programs, including programs that address delivering inclusive education, innovative teaching methodologies, education leadership and technology-based courses. Demonstrated availability of human resources, including both administrative and academic personnel, to work closely and intensively with local Georgian universities.
- b. Realism of the approach to the sustainability of partnerships with Georgian universities and proposed measures for how to retain the impact of the interventions after the lifetime of the project.

If the applicant is a university and intends to do the work that is expected of a university partner, this section should address the applicant’s own capacity.

4. BUSINESS REVIEW

The Agency will evaluate the cost application of the applicant(s) under consideration for an award as a result of the merit criteria review to determine whether the costs are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.

The Agency will also consider (1) the extent of the applicant's understanding of the financial aspects of the program and the applicant's ability to perform the activities within the amount requested; (2) whether the applicant's plans will achieve the program objectives with reasonable economy and efficiency; and (3) whether any special conditions relating to costs should be included in the award.

Proposed cost share, if provided, will be reviewed for compliance with the standards set forth in 2 CFR 200.306, 2 CFR 700.10, and the Standard Provision "Cost Sharing (Matching)" for U.S. entities, or the Standard Provision "Cost Share" for non-U.S. entities.

The AO will perform a risk assessment (2 CFR 200.206). The AO may determine that a pre-award survey is required to inform the risk assessment in determining whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organizational, experience, accounting and operational controls, financial resources, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award. Depending on the result of the risk assessment, the AO will decide to execute the award, not execute the award, or award with “specific conditions” (2 CFR 200.208).

END OF SECTION E

SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

Award of the agreement contemplated by this NOFO cannot be made until funds have been appropriated, allocated and committed through internal USAID procedures. While USAID anticipates that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for the award. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed Agreement or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

2. Administrative & National Policy Requirements

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

The resulting award from this NOFO 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](#).

For Public International Organizations: Chapter 308 of USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS), including the Standard Provisions set forth in ADS 308.3.14. ADS Chapter 308: <http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/308>.

Please see USAID's ADS Sections 303.4 and 303.5. 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:

See Annex 2 for a list of the Standard Provisions that will be applicable to any awards resulting from this NOFO.

Authority to Obligate the Government: The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may

legally commit the Government to the expenditures of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Cooperative Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed Cooperative Agreement or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

3. Reporting Requirements

3.1 Financial Reporting:

Financial Reports must be submitted in accordance with 2 CFR 200.327 for U.S. organizations, and for Non-U.S. organizations financial reports will be required at a frequency depending on method of payment, but at least quarterly. Reporting requirements, such as the format, number of copies, information to be included, due dates and distribution will be finalized in consultation with the Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) after the issuance of the award.

(1) The recipient must submit the Federal Financial Form (SF-425) on a quarterly basis via electronic format to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (<http://www.dpm.psc.gov>). The recipient must submit a copy of the FFR at the same time to the Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) and to the Agreement Officer. The recipient must submit quarterly financial reports no later than 30 calendar days after the end of each reporting period. The following reporting period end dates shall be used for interim reports: 3/31, 6/30, 9/30, or 12/31.

(2) The recipient must submit the original and two copies of all final financial reports to USAID/Washington, M/CFO/CMPLOC Unit, the AOR and to the Agreement Officer. The recipient must submit an electronic version of the final Federal Financial Form (SF-425) to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in accordance with paragraph (1) above.

The recipient must submit the final financial report no later than 90 calendar days from the end of the agreement.

3.2 Performance Reporting

The Recipient must submit reports to the USAID Agreement Officer and Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) as described below.

3.2.1 Annual Work Plans

The recipient must work with USAID to develop and submit an annual work plan within 45 calendar days of the effective date of the award and should cover the time from the date of the award through the end of the fourth quarter of the US Government (USG) Fiscal Year (September 30). The Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) will review and approve the plan within 15 calendar days after receipt of the draft work plan. Subsequent annual work plans will be due to USAID 60 days prior to the start of the first quarter of the USG Fiscal Year unless an alternative schedule is agreed to by both USAID and the recipient.

Annual work plans are developed annually and include activities for the given year, time frame for implementation of annual activities, budget, and proposed outreach and communication deliverables including strategic communication activities.

The annual work plan will describe activities to be conducted at a greater level of detail than the Program Description of the award, but should be cross-referenced with the applicable sections in the Program Description. All activities must be within the scope and objectives of the award. Annual work plans must not change such scope and objectives or any other terms and conditions of the award in any way; such changes may only be approved by the Agreement Officer, in advance and in writing. Thereafter, if there are inconsistencies between the work plan and Program Description or other terms and conditions of the award, the latter will take precedence over the workplan.

Therefore, the work plans must include, at a minimum:

- A strategic statement, articulating major program impacts over the life of the program, including information on how proposed interventions will be implemented
- A strategic statement of challenges to be addressed in particular years, and opportunities.
- All proposed interventions, including expected accomplishments and progress towards achieving results and performance measures tied to the indicators agreed upon within the MEL Plan
- Personnel requirements and consultancy needs during program implementation
- Details of collaboration with other major partners
- Major commodities to be procured (as applicable)

As part of the CLA process, the Recipient must review the Year One Implementation Plan six months after the award date. The Recipient must inform the AOR if any revisions are required or appropriate to achieve the work plan by the end of Year One.

All work plans, including significant revisions thereto, must be approved by the AOR.

3.2.2 Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (AMEL) Plan

Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) will be an on-going, collaborative process led by the Recipient, with the participation of USAID and key stakeholders. The Recipient will submit a MEL Plan, along with the initial work plan, to the AOR for review and approval within 60 days of award.

Core Content

The MEL Plan must include the following core content: visual depiction of the activity logic model that directly connects to USAID/Georgia Development Objective; a narrative description of the logic model that explains how the activity advances USAID/Georgia strategic priorities; a set of quantitative and/or qualitative performance indicators that measure the goal/objective, intermediate outcomes and outputs of the logic model; context measures, as appropriate; a data collection, management and analysis plan (e.g. gender gaps); internal data quality assessment procedures; an internal and external evaluation plan; a learning plan that describes how monitoring data, assessments, evaluations, and pause-and-reflect sessions will be used for adaptive management; an annual schedule of key MEL activities (e.g. surveys, assessments, internal Data Quality Assessments, [quarterly/semi-annual/or annual] reporting to USAID, annual data entry into USAID's Development Information Solution (DIS) system, semi-annual reporting of location and other geographic-based data

to USAID, MEL plan updates, etc.); and the staffing structure and budget allocation to complete all MEL tasks.

Performance Indicators

In addition to indicators that measure the logic model, the MEL Plan will include all standard foreign assistance (F) indicators and USAID/Georgia Performance Management Plan (PMP) indicators assigned by the AOR. For each indicator, the MEL Plan must include a Performance Indicator Reference Sheet (PIRS) which provides a precise definition, information on disaggregation, the data source, frequency of data collection, collection method, the party responsible for data collection, when baseline information will be collected, and expected annual targets. All person-level data must be disaggregated by sex. The MEL Plan will also include a Performance Indicator Tracking Table (PITT), an excel-based file that tracks all quantitative performance data and lists baseline figures, quarterly and/or annual targets, quarterly and/or annual actuals, and life of award targets, disaggregated as appropriate.

The MEL Plan must consider indicator disaggregation by geographic location. When geographically disaggregated indicators are included, the MEL Plan must indicate the level of geographic detail at which the indicator data will be collected. Additionally, geographic indicator data must be collected and submitted in accordance with the geographic data collection and submissions standards outlined in Section 3.5 Geographic Information System (GIS) Reporting below.

Reporting

The Recipient will include performance data as part of quarterly and annual reports, in accordance with the reporting frequency of each indicator as defined in the PIRS and presented in the PITT. The PITT shall present measurable progress, or lack thereof, toward the award objectives. In particular, annual reporting on F indicators (actual results and updated targets, along with justifications and deviation narratives) must be provided no later than 30 days after the end of the [annual reporting period/fiscal year], i.e. September 30. All annual data must be submitted in the format requested by the AOR, e.g. standard data collection templates for F indicators in the Performance Plan and Report (PPR), data entry directly into the USAID's DIS, etc. Appropriate training will be provided by USAID to support and ensure compliance.

External Evaluation

USAID or its designee may conduct independent mid-term and/or final evaluations of the activity. If such an evaluation is conducted, the Recipient will make all its records and data available to the independent evaluation team.

Updates

The MEL Plan must be updated annually in collaboration with USAID to reflect all relevant changes, e.g. new F and USAID and the Activity PMP indicator assignments, revised targets, updates to the logic model, work plan updates, etc. In the event that USAID redesigns the standard F indicators, e.g. adds new required indicators, retires or replaces the existing indicators, etc., the Recipient must revise its MEL plan accordingly. The revised MEL Plan will be presented for review and approval along with the annual work plan throughout the life of the award.

3.2.3 Quarterly Performance Reports

The Recipient shall submit a quarterly performance report within 30 days after each quarter of the USG Fiscal Year. The quarterly performance report will document overall progress towards the sub-purposes of the project, activities completed during the reporting period, any problems and challenges encountered during implementation (including financial issues) and how they were mitigated, data on all indicators established in the MEL Plan, and specific activities planned for the next quarterly reporting period. The format of the progress reports will be determined in consultation with the AOR.

3.2.4 Annual Reports

The Annual Progress Report is due 45 calendar days after the end of the reporting period covering activities of the previous USG fiscal year. A fourth quarter Performance Report is not required; the Recipient may include results from the fourth quarter within the Annual Progress Report.

The report will provide a succinct presentation of achievements of activity objectives and targets during the year with supporting discussion to explain any shortfalls. The report will summarize program progress, provide an analysis of program impact based on activities completed or in-progress, identify success stories, and suggest resolution of any outstanding issues. The Annual Progress Report will provide a summary of activities, accomplishments and lessons learned regarding gender equality and social inclusion efforts and efforts to coordinate with other USAID activities and collaborate with private sector stakeholders. The Annual Progress Reports will include a performance-indicator data table presenting the baseline, targets established for each fiscal year, and the actual annual performance data using indicators from the MEL Plan.

The fourth quarterly report serves as the annual report to USAID – thus, it is more extensive and contains more information than a quarterly report. Annual Reports should reflect the structure of the annual work plan. Annual is defined according to the U.S. Government's Fiscal Year: October 1st to September 30th. The Annual Report must be submitted to the USAID by October 31 of each year. In addition to the requirements of the Quarterly Report, the Annual Report must also:

- Describe overall performance against targets and goals during the fiscal year, and why targets and goals were not achieved or why they were exceeded. Discuss problems and challenges and how they may affect out-year planning.
- Provide a table displaying the indicators the Recipient is responsible for reporting on and the indicator values for the year, along with prior year values and future year targets. It should also include explanations for any indicator values falling above or below target.
- Provide illustrative activities to demonstrate whether the overall goals of the project are being achieved.
- Identify prospects for achieving longer term impact where applicable.

3.2.5. Final Report:

The recipient shall prepare a final report on the award in lieu of the final quarterly performance report. The final report must be submitted no later than 90 days after the end of the award.

The final report will clearly describe major accomplishments and results achieved attributable to activities under this award, an account of the sustainability of these efforts and/or results, final data for indicators in the performance management plan, an account of any problems encountered

during implementation (including financial issues), and lessons learned and/or best practices identified during implementation.

The final report must be submitted to the Agreement Officer's Representative, to the Agreement Officer, and to USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) electronically at:

<https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/content/submit.aspx>

3.2.6. Close-out Plans:

Six (6) months prior to the completion of activities and/or the award end date, the recipient must submit a close-out plan for the award. The plan must include a) draft property disposition plan, b) plan for the phase-out of in-country operations, c) delivery schedule for all reports or other deliverables required under the agreement, and d) timetable for completing all required actions in the demobilization plan, including the submission date of the final property disposition plan to the Agreement Officer.

3.3 Gender Reporting

As part of its regular reports, the recipient must collect, analyze and submit sex disaggregated data and propose actions that will address any gender-related challenges that might arise from that data. The recipient will report any challenges to the AOR who, in turn, will work with the USAID Mission's gender specialist to find reasonable solutions.

3.4 Development Experience Clearinghouse Requirements

a) Submissions to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC).

- 1) The recipient must provide the Agreement Officer's Representative one copy of any Intellectual Work that is published, and a list of any Intellectual Work that is not published.
- 2) In addition, the recipient must submit Intellectual Work, whether published or not, to the DEC on-line. The recipient must review the DEC Web site for submission instructions, including document formatting and the types of documents to submit. Submission instructions can be found at: <http://dec.usaid.gov>.
- 3) For purposes of submissions to the DEC, Intellectual Work includes all works that document the implementation, evaluation, and results of international development assistance activities developed or acquired under this award, which may include program and communications materials, evaluations and assessments, information products, research and technical reports, progress and performance reports required under this award (excluding administrative financial information), and other reports, articles and papers prepared by the recipient under the award, whether published or not. The term does not include the recipient's information that is incidental to award administration, such as financial, administrative, cost or pricing, or management information.
- 4) Each document submitted should contain essential bibliographic information, such as (1) descriptive title; (2) author(s) name; (3) award number; (4) sponsoring USAID office; (5)

development objective; and (6) date of publication.

5) The recipient must not submit to the DEC any financially sensitive information or personally identifiable information, such as social security numbers, home addresses and dates of birth. Such information must be removed prior to submission. The recipient must not submit classified documents to the DEC.

b. In the event award funds are used to underwrite the cost of publishing, in lieu of the publisher assuming this cost as is the normal practice, any profits or royalties up to the amount of such cost must be credited to the award unless the schedule of the award has identified the profits or royalties as program income.

3.5. Geographic Information System (GIS) Reporting

1. Implementation Location Data: The recipient must provide the AOR] and Mission GIS Specialist with Implementation Location Data semi-annually on April 15 and October 15. The data should include the exact location of implementation. For this purpose, the [contractor/recipient] must fill in the “Activity Location Data GIS Report Template.” This template will be provided by the USAID/Georgia Strategy and Program Office.

2. Intended Beneficiary Location Data: The recipient must provide the AOR and Mission GIS Specialist with Intended Beneficiary Location Data semi-annually on April 15 and October 15. The data should include the location of intended beneficiaries at the municipality level (Admin 2). For this purpose, the recipient must fill in the “Activity Location Data GIS Report Template.” This template will be provided by the USAID/Georgia Strategy and Program Office.

3. Investment Data: The recipient must provide the AOR and Mission GIS Specialist with Investment Data annually on October 15. The data should follow the estimation process provided and be calculated at the municipality level (Admin 2). For this purpose, the recipient must fill in the “Activity Location Data GIS Report Template.” This template will be provided by the USAID/Georgia Strategy and Program Office.

4. Performance Indicators: The [contractor/recipient] must submit annually data for several Key Performance Indicators that measure the most significant outputs/deliverables of the activity by region, municipality, town or village. This data must be submitted no later than November 15 each year and must reflect the results for the previous fiscal year, i.e the actual value of the indicator for previous fiscal year disaggregated by geographic location. The recipient must work closely with the AOR to review the Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan to identify jointly Key Performance Indicators that reflect and convey the most important results achieved or to be achieved. USAID is interested in Performance Indicators that can be meaningfully disaggregated by geographic location. The number of these indicators will depend upon the complexity of the activity and could range in number approximately from 1 to 10. For this purpose, the [contractor/recipient] must fill in the “Performance Indicator GIS Report Template.” This template will be provided by the USAID/Georgia Strategy and Program Office.

5. Geographic Data: If created or acquired under this award, the recipient must provide annually on October 15 to the AOR and mission GIS Specialist any of the following types of Geographic Data:

- thematic data such as social and economic statistics at municipality level, poverty data, demographic and health indicators, land use, land cover, hydrology, and transportation infrastructure; USAID prefers to receive this data in GIS standard formats, however standard database formats are also allowed (e.g. poverty data can be submitted as an Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.);
- activity specific geographic data such as the analytical output of a geographic analysis that is conducted while implementing the activity and is useful to USAID’s development planning and project design purposes; or
- any other geographic data, such as cartographic products (e.g. maps, geographic data visualizations), aerial and satellite imagery created or acquired under this award. Cartographic products submitted to USAID must be in industry standard Esri Map Document .mxd format and in high resolution .jpg or .pdf formats. All data contained in the .mxd must be submitted according to the Geographic Data standards outlined in next paragraph.

Geographic Data submitted to USAID under this paragraph must be in industry standard formats such as Shapefile (.shp) or in a File Geodatabase and include metadata. Metadata is a summary document providing content, quality, type, creation, and spatial information about a data set. It represents who, what, when, where, why and how of the resource. Metadata can be stored in any format such as a text file, Extensible Markup Language (XML), or database record. Metadata records include core library catalog elements such as Title, Abstract, and Publication Data; geographic elements such as Geographic Extent and Projection Information; and database elements such as Attribute Label Definitions and Attribute Domain Values. Geographic Data must be projected to the Geographic Coordinate System World Geodetic System 1984 (GCS WGS 1984). All data must use the World Geodetic System 1984 (WGS 1984) datum.

3.6 Program Income

Program income, if any will be generated under the award, will be treated under the award in accordance with 2 CFR 200.307 or, for non-U.S. organizations, see the standard provision “Program Income.”

3.7 Branding & Marking:

It is a federal statutory and regulatory requirement (see Section 641, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, 2 CFR 700.16 and 22 CFR 226.91) that all USAID programs, projects, activities, public communications, and commodities that USAID partially or fully funds under a USAID grant or cooperative agreement or other assistance award or sub-award must be marked appropriately overseas with the USAID identity. In accordance with ADS 320.3.3 Branding and Marking Requirements for Assistance Awards USAID’s policy is that programs, projects, activities, public communications, or commodities implemented or delivered under co-funded instruments – such as grants, cooperative agreements, or other assistance awards that usually require a cost share – generally are “co-branded and co-marked.”

The successful applicant will be required to submit a branding strategy and marking plan. The Applicant may request a presumptive exemption to marking requirements established in 22 CFR

226.91 and 2 CFR 700.16. More information on Branding strategy and Marking plan are available at <http://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/branding/assistance-awards> .

The branding strategy and marking plan will become a material element of the cooperative agreement. Information on USAID's branding "assistance" applies to this RFA. ADS Chapter 320 sections concerning "acquisition" do not apply to this RFA. ADS Chapter 320 can be found on USAID website: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/320.pdf> .

3.8 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. Recipient environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs of this award.

In addition, the recipient must comply with host country environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. In case of conflict between host country and USAID regulations, the latter will govern.

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 "Regulation 216 environmental documentation.")

2) An Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) describing the successful activity's purpose, location, duration and intensity; considering alternatives; and assessing impacts, including cumulative impacts, in light of existing and proposed activities was prepared in accordance with USAID Environmental Procedures. The Request for Categorical Exclusion approved by the BEO is included into the NOFO as an attachment. The Environmental Compliance requirements will be developed based on this document.

As part of its initial work plan, and all work plans thereafter, the Recipient, in collaboration with the AOR and Mission Environmental Officer or Bureau Environmental Officer, as appropriate, must review all ongoing and planned activities under this Cooperative Agreement to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.

If the recipient plans any new activities outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, it must prepare an amendment to the documentation for USAID review and approval. No such new activities may be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments.

Any ongoing activities found to be outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation must be halted until an amendment to the documentation is

submitted and written approval is received from USAID.

END OF SECTION F

SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

1. NOFO Points of Contact

See Section D, Paragraph 1.

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)

END OF SECTION G

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.”

END OF SECTION H

ANNEX 1 - SUMMARY BUDGET TEMPLATE

The applicant is required to submit the SF-424A. In addition, the applicant must submit a detail and summary budget in Section D.2.d., according to the following suggested format:

Budget Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total USAID	Cost Share (if proposed)	Total Project
Personnel (Salaries and Allowances)	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Fringe Benefits	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Travel and Transportation	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Procurement of Equipment and Supplies	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Contractual/Subagreements	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Other Direct Cost	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Total Direct Costs	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Indirect Costs	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

ANNEX 2 - 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)
X		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)
X		RAA9. TITLE TO AND CARE OF PROPERTY (COOPERATING COUNTRY TITLE) (NOVEMBER 1985)
TBD		RAA10. COST SHARING (MATCHING) (FEBRUARY 2012)
		RAA11. PROHIBITION OF ASSISTANCE TO DRUG TRAFFICKERS (JUNE 1999)
		RAA12. INVESTMENT PROMOTION (NOVEMBER 2003)
X		RAA13. REPORTING HOST GOVERNMENT TAXES (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA14. FOREIGN GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (JUNE 2012)
X		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)
X		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)
X		RAA23. UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (NOVEMBER 2020)
X		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)
X		RAA27. CONTRACT PROVISION FOR DBA INSURANCE UNDER RECIPIENT PROCUREMENTS (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA28. AWARD TERM AND CONDITION FOR RECIPIENT INTEGRITY AND PERFORMANCE MATTERS (April 2016)
		RAA29. RESERVED
X		RAA30. PROGRAM INCOME (AUGUST 2020)
X		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)
X		RAA6. UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM OF AWARD MANAGEMENT (NOVEMBER 2020)
X		RAA7. REPORTING SUBAWARDS AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION (NOVEMBER 2020)
X		RAA8. SUBAWARDS (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA9. TRAVEL AND INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORTATION (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA10. OCEAN SHIPMENT OF GOODS (JUNE 2012)
X		RAA11. REPORTING HOST GOVERNMENT TAXES (JUNE 2012)
		RAA12. PATENT RIGHTS (JUNE 2012)
X		RAA13. EXCHANGE VISITORS AND PARTICIPANT TRAINING (JUNE 2012)

		RAA14. INVESTMENT PROMOTION (NOVEMBER 2003)
TBD		RAA 15. COST SHARE (JUNE 2012)
X		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)
X		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)
X		RAA28. CONTRACT PROVISION FOR DBA INSURANCE UNDER RECIPIENT PROCUREMENTS (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA29. CONTRACT AWARD TERM AND CONDITION FOR RECIPIENT INTEGRITY AND PERFORMANCE MATTERS (April 2016)
		RAA30. RESERVED
X		RAA31. NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY (NOVEMBER 2020)

ANNEX 3 – PAST PERFORMANCE INFORMATION (PPI)

(TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT)

1. AWARD NUMBER:
2. CONTRACTOR/RECIPIENT (NAME AND ADDRESS):
3. TYPE OF AWARD:
4. COMPLEXITY OF WORK: DIFFICULT __ ROUTINE ____
5. DESCRIPTION, LOCATION, AND RELEVANCY OF WORK:
6. DOLLAR VALUE OF WORK : _ STATUS: ACTIVE _ COMPLETED _____
7. DATE OF AWARD: _____ AWARD COMPLETION DATE (INCLUDING EXTENSIONS): _____
8. TYPE AND EXTENT OF SUBAWARDS:

**9. NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER, AND E-MAIL ADDRESS OF THE
AWARDING CONTRACTING/AGREEMENT OFFICER AND/OR THE
CONTRACTING/AGREEMENT OFFICER 'S REPRESENTATIVE (AND OTHER
REFERENCES AS APPLICABLE):**