



ISSUANCE DATE: April 23, 2023
DEADLINE FOR QUESTIONS: May 10, 2023, 11:00 p.m., IST
CLOSING DATE & TIME: June 07, 2023, 11:00 p.m., IST

Subject: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) No. 72038623RFA00004

Activity Title: Strengthening Preservation of Tibetan Culture

Federal Assistance Listing Number: 98.001

Dear Prospective Applicants:

The United States Agency for International Development through its Mission in India (USAID/India) is seeking applications for a Cooperative Agreement from qualified organizations to implement the activity titled **Strengthening Preservation of Tibetan Culture**. This award is open to all eligible and qualified non-government entities. Therefore, USAID encourages the participation, to the maximum extent possible, of all local and international organizations.

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

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID anticipates making a single award as a result of this funding opportunity that 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.

Please send any questions to the point(s) of contact identified in Section D by the deadline shown above. Responses to questions received by the deadline will be furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this notice posted to www.grants.gov.

USAID **may not** award an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifiers and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements detailed in SECTION D. The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, **applicants are encouraged to obtain proper SAM credentials early to be eligible to apply for this NOFO.**

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of USAID, nor does it commit USAID to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Further, USAID reserves the right to reject any or all applications received. In addition, the final award of any resultant Assistance Award will not be made until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated, and committed through internal USAID procedures.

Thank you for your interest in USAID Programs.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Hodge-
Snead

 Digitally signed by Cheryl Hodge-
Snead
Date: 2023.04.23 13:53:12 +05'30'

Cheryl Hodge-Snead
Agreement Officer
USAID/India

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	4
A.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
A.2 PROGRAM FRAMEWORK	4
SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION	21
B.1 ESTIMATED FUNDS AVAILABLE AND NUMBER OF AWARDS CONTEMPLATED	21
B.2 EXPECTED PERFORMANCE INDICATORS, TARGETS, BASELINE DATA AND DATA COLLECTION	
B.3 START DATE AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE	22
B.4 SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT	22
B.5 AUTHORIZED GEOGRAPHIC CODE	23
B.6 NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN USAID AND THE RECIPIENT	23
SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION	24
C.1 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS	24
C.2 OTHER	24
SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION	26
D.1 AGENCY POINT OF CONTACT	26
D.2 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	26
D.3 GENERAL CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION	26
D.4 APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES	28
D.5 TECHNICAL APPLICATION FORMAT	30
D.6 FULL APPLICATION FORMAT (For Information Purpose Only)	32
SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION	42
SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION	47
SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDED AGENCY CONTACT(S)	57
SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION	58
ANNEX 1: PRELIMINARY GENDER ANALYSIS PLAN	60
ANNEX 2: CERTIFICATIONS, ASSURANCES, REPRESENTATIONS, AND OTHER STATEMENTS OF THE RECIPIENT	66

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.

A.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the proposed activity ‘Strengthening Preservation of Tibetan Culture’ is to work in close coordination with the Social Resource and Development Fund (SARD)¹ for ensuring cultural continuity of the Tibetan community through digital preservation of ancient Tibetan manuscripts and artifacts in India and Nepal on a secure, sustainable and accessible digital platform managed by the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA)². Through this activity, the Awardee hereby referred to as Implementing Partner (IP) will work with SARD to strengthen the cultural resilience of the Tibetan diaspora by: (1) Improved preservation of Tibetan manuscripts and cultural resources leveraging innovative and latest digital technology (2) Increased accessibility of cultural resources for the Tibetan community and (3) Strengthened capacity of the CTA to govern and manage the digital platform in a sustainable manner.

A.2 PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

A.2.1 Background

In March 1959, more than eighty thousand Tibetans along with the HH Dalai Lama arrived in India fleeing the aggressive Chinese invasion of Tibet and settled down in the Himalayan town of Mcleodganj in Dharamshala, also called the Little Tibet. The exodus of Tibetan refugees in India continued for several years until stringent restrictions were imposed by the Chinese authorities at the borders of Tibet. The host government provided an enabling environment for the Tibetans to settle down in their communities for the protection and preservation of their unique cultural identity. The Tibetan community with a total estimated population of 127,935 is

¹ **SARD** is a non-profit organization established in 1997 by the CTA to help mobilize resources and support development efforts of Tibetans living in exile. It works in diverse development areas including agriculture, arts and culture, capacity building, democracy and human rights, education, entrepreneurship, health, leadership development, livelihood and skills training, and women empowerment. SARD serves as CTA’s nodal agency for development aid assistance provided by government, institutional and individual funders. It partners closely with various implementing partners such as the departments of CTA and other Tibetan civil society organizations serving more than 100,000 Tibetan peoples living across the world.

² **Central Tibetan Administration (CTA)** is the Tibetan Government in Exile, with its central seat at Dharamshala covering its representative Offices of Tibet in 12 countries. The CTA functions as a democratic parliamentary institution and represents all Tibetan exiles spread in India, Nepal, Bhutan, and across 40 countries in the rest of the world (RoW). It has a representative governance structure with a political office headed by the Sikyong (President) and seven departments, an elected Tibetan Parliament in Exile and Tibetan Judiciary known as the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission. The CTA currently operates under a policy framework known as the “Five-Fifty Vision” which calls for maximizing efforts to resolve the Tibet issue in five years based on the Middle Way Approach while ensuring the CTA’s resilience to sustain the Tibetan freedom struggle and preserve Tibetan culture for the next fifty years if needed. The Five-Fifty Vision is concerned with sustaining Tibetan culture, strengthening Tibetan education, improving Tibetan public health, and improving the economic development of the Tibetan exile community.

today scattered across 52 settlements in India (94,203), Nepal(13, 514), Bhutan (1,298) and the rest of the world (18, 920).

In the same year, H.H the Dalai Lama established the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), as the Tibetan government in exile to administer the Tibetan community on the path of self-reliance and resilience. Under the political leadership of the CTA and the spiritual guidance of HH Dalai Lama, Tibetans have made remarkable strides in establishing systems and networks to maintain cultural resilience and social connectivity in a dispersed community spread across the world.

Since the beginning of the cultural revolution in Tibet during the 1960s, the protection, preservation and sustainability of Tibetan culture and identity has remained under massive threat. The popular Tibetan movement resulted in the destruction of rare Tibetan manuscripts and cultural resources that were fundamental to Tibetan Buddhism and the transmission of its foundational principles. The Tibetans while escaping to India tried to carry with them possible cultural resources including the ancient manuscripts and closely guarded the same through the treacherous journey across the Himalayas. Many manuscripts perished along the way while others fell prey to the unstable lives of the Tibetan refugees and the harsh monsoon weather in India. Most surviving manuscripts were offered to the Dalai Lama and the others were kept in various monasteries in India and with the local people.

The Tibetans were largely motivated by the vision of HH The Dalai Lama to protect the identity of the community while living in exile. This vision drove many localized efforts to restore and preserve old manuscripts and cultural resources leading to the establishment of several prominent Tibetan libraries across the country and overseas. Currently several scattered initiatives are underway that preserve and digitize these valuable cultural resources for transmission to successive generations.

As per CTA, there are over hundred monasteries in India and Nepal which hold manuscripts in varying degrees. Though the exact extent of digitization of these manuscripts is yet to be ascertained, the Department of Religion and Culture estimates that approximately 70% of all the available manuscripts are yet to be digitally preserved.

A.2.2 Challenges

Though some of the existing manuscripts along with the audio-video recordings of teachings and oral commentaries have been recorded and digitized, the remaining repository of manuscripts continue to be vulnerable to destruction. Several private or not for profit initiatives are presently in progress to preserve these rich cultural resources, however, these efforts are largely restrained by resources as well as operational limitations. Some of the noteworthy Tibetan libraries in India which have undertaken the digitization of Tibetan manuscripts include as: Sakya Library, Songtsen Library, Men Tsee Khang Archives, Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, Sarah College Library & Archives and Central Institute Higher Tibetan Studies (CIHTS).

Extensive consultations with these libraries have highlighted several key issues that pose major roadblocks for a unified and integrated approach for digital preservation of Tibetan cultural resources. These challenges include lack of resources for continued digitization, absence of

technical expertise for application of latest digital technology and lack of coordination with relevant stakeholders to mitigate challenges and replicate best practices. Furthermore, limited resources of these Tibetan institutions make it challenging for them to employ the latest digital technology which leads to continuity of antiquated practices preventing long term culture preservation solutions. In the absence of a coordinating mechanism and a unified approach, the current digitization efforts remain as scattered initiatives throughout the country resulting in the lack of CTA's ownership of these digitized cultural repositories.

Due to the complex geopolitical dynamics and sensitivities in the Tibetan context, there is significant lack of data and research on the Tibetan digital landscape. This particularly applies to the exact availability of Tibetan manuscripts in India and the specific approaches to consolidation and preservation of the resources, which make evidence-based planning of digitization initiatives more challenging.

As the Tibetans are a globally dispersed community, there is a strong need to have unified access to these resources based on strong research, a more viable and sustainable approach and use of latest emerging technological innovations. Special focus is needed to create online mechanisms to make digital resources easily accessible and user friendly through use of state-of-the art digital technology. As stakeholders are currently engaged in preservation of the rare Tibetan scripts it is critical that they are all connected so efforts are more holistic, and solutions can be developed through leveraging synergies.

In consideration of the present challenge to preserve and promote the rare Tibetan manuscripts that stand threatened today, this activity is to utilize the latest state of the art technology to create a comprehensive online digital platform and secure archive. The vast archival resource of Tibetan manuscripts and resources will be available to the wider Tibetan community worldwide under an online digital platform in a secure, accessible and secured fashion. This digital platform is intended to lay the foundation for sustainable accessibility of the digitized cultural resources across the globe under the overall management of the CTA, which eventually contribute to the goal of continuity of Tibetan culture.

A.2.3 Theory of Change

USAID's illustrative theory of change for the activity holds that:

IF the rare Tibetan manuscripts and cultural resources are protected, preserved and promoted on a secured and sustainable digital platform that makes available the vast repository of digitized Tibetan resources,

AND the Tibetan diaspora and international community have enhanced, secured and sustainable access to these digitized cultural resources,

AND an enabling environment is created for the sustainability of the digital platform through the capacity building of relevant stakeholders and Tibetan administration and creation of necessary cybersecurity infrastructure,

THEN this will directly contribute towards ensuring the cultural continuity of the Tibetan community.

Objectives and Illustrative Outcomes

The activity seeks to contribute to the overarching objective of ensuring cultural continuity of the Tibetan community through digital preservation of Tibetan manuscripts and artifacts in India and Nepal on a secured, sustainable and accessible digital platform managed by the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA).

The proposed initiative would address the following **three main outcomes**:

- (1) **Improved preservation of Tibetan manuscripts and cultural resources** leveraging innovative and latest digital technology
- (2) **Increased accessibility of cultural resources** for the Tibetan community
- (3) **Strengthened capacity of the CTA to govern and manage the digital platform in a sustainable manner**

Component 1: Improved preservation of Tibetan manuscripts and cultural resources leveraging innovative and latest digital technology

This component seeks to address the urgent need to protect, preserve and promote the Tibetan manuscripts and texts through the digital preservation of Tibetan manuscripts based on the application of the latest technological innovation. These digitized resources will be hosted in an accessible and secured online digital platform which will provide unified access to all the digitized Tibetan manuscripts. The digital platform will serve to unify scattered digitization efforts of Tibetan libraries in India and Nepal and create a centralized mechanism to coordinate these initiatives, using the latest technological standards. Strengthening the preservation of the centuries old Tibetan manuscripts through innovative technology and techniques is envisioned to contribute towards the continuity of classical Tibetan Buddhism in the long run.

The proposed initiative would begin with a landscape assessment of the condition and format of the manuscript collections, which are held in various repositories across India and Nepal, determine the preservation needs and identify the best technological innovation for undertaking digitization of the Tibetan manuscripts. The initiative would explore the possibility of end-to-end application of most innovative and latest digital technology for the preservation of the manuscripts covering collection inventory, digitization of the identified resources, metadata creation and facilitating accessibility of these resources in a simple and intuitive way to the end user through the adoption of suitable models, schemas and secure digital platforms. The latest frontier technological innovations would be applied based on adherence to the ethical principles such as equity, governability, traceability, reliability and responsibility.

This component would incorporate proven approaches to enhance the technical soundness of the digitization process and the development of online digital platform. Some of the proposed factors to be considered in this process include digitization technology, internet connectivity and physical quality of manuscripts that vary across locations based on adaptability of proposed hardware, equipment and other tools to provide required outputs reliably at a viable cost. Further to the digitization process, the initiative will execute capacity building initiatives for Tibetan youth and libraries for dissemination of technical skills and expertise in the community. This is intended to enhance the employability of Tibetans in the technical field and equip them with requisite know-how to assist with support functions in the regular management of the digital platform in the long run.

It is important to note that the interventions will be closely aligned with the vision of the CTA leadership and the IP must work hand in hand in developing the online digital platform.

*Please refer to **Appendix 1** for detailed technical specifications.*

Expected results of this activity include-

- (i) landscape assessment conducted in collaboration with SARD to understand the extent of digitization of Tibetan manuscripts, the stakeholders involvement, and strategic analysis of existing opportunities and challenges and the preservation needs for the Tibetan manuscripts.
- (ii) a strategic implementation plan developed to address gaps for ensuring quality digitization of all resources based on the outcomes of the assessment.
- (iii) physical conservation of Tibetan manuscripts and texts facilitated in collaboration with SARD.
- (iv) modern technological innovations employed for digitization of Tibetan manuscripts and creation of a centralized digital platform, as part of preserving Tibetan culture in a sustainable fashion.
- (v) digitization training implemented in collaboration with SARD for young Tibetan youth and Tibetan libraries for enhanced technical expertise in the Tibetan community.
- (vi) Livelihood opportunities explored in collaboration with SARD based on the dissemination of skills for preservation and digitization of Tibetan manuscripts.

Component 2: Increased accessibility of cultural resources for the Tibetan community

This component aims to ensure that the gamut of digitized manuscripts and texts are accessible to the Tibetan diaspora and international community in a simpler, secured, sustainable and user-friendly manner. This platform is intended to be effectively used to transmit the resources to the future generation thus acting as a digital resource portal on Tibetan Buddhism. It is intended to specifically attract Tibetan and international scholars for accessing the repository of digitized resources and support a congenial learning environment for monastic education and academic pursuits. Under this component, both the applicant and SARD will closely engage to design a robust marketing and outreach strategy for ensuring optimum visibility of the digital platform.

User access of the archival material will vary depending on the associated level of sensitivity. The proposed technology environment is intended to provide for absolute privacy for endangered materials and security against cyberattacks for publicly available materials. With the objective of enhancing user engagement (particularly the younger generations) with archival resources, digitization processes are proposed to allow for maximum searchability of acquired materials and approaches that increase user engagement with collections.

*Please refer to **Appendix 2** for detailed technical specifications.*

Expected results of this component includes-

- (i) increased awareness and dissemination of the knowledge of classical Tibetan Buddhism worldwide based on a robust outreach strategy.
- (ii) improved accessibility to rare Tibetan manuscripts and cultural resources supports monastic education and scholarly/research pursuits of the Tibetan community and international scholars.
- (iii) developed a digital platform that serves as a resource center on the unique aspects of classical Tibetan Buddhism.

Component 3: Strengthened capacity of the CTA to govern and manage the digital platform in a sustainable manner

This component seeks to address the vital need for sustainability of the Tibetan digital platform managed and governed by the CTA beyond the life of the project. Sustainable management approaches such as capacity building of the CTA officials to govern the digital platform, formation of a governing body, training of Tibetan youth on IT skills for increased employability, development of governance structures, technical processes, standard operating practices and management protocols are recommended to be explored for long term continuity of the platform. Further, the component would consider creation of effective linkages with the development partners to learn about successful governance mechanisms aimed at building sustainability of the digital platform. The activity will collaborate with SARD to identify and establish credible financial models of sustainability of the digital platform through replication of best practices in the similar spectrum.

To ensure technical robustness of the platform, this component proposes exploring innovations including open-source or collaborative tools which allow for greater digitization of the Tibetan script, integration with other Tibetan digital collections and accessibility of digitized materials. In addition to this, this component would consider establishing technical systems that allow sustainability of processes in a cost-efficient manner in the long term.

*Please refer to **Appendix 3** for detailed technical specifications.*

Expected results of this component include-

- i. enhanced technical capacity of CTA officials and other stakeholders to operate an innovative model of digital platform.
- ii. Tibetan community including youth trained, in collaboration with SARD, on IT skills and international standards for enhancing their employability in the technical field and roles associated with the proposed Tibetan digital platform.
- iii. improved instructional materials, policies, strategies and standard operating processes adopted and practiced for establishing and smooth functioning of digital platform.
- iv. self-sustainable financial models identified to ensure continuity of the digital platform.

A.2.4 Activity Structure

USAID estimates a total budget of up to \$5 million over five years, inclusive of a three-year base period and a renewal period of two years. The total funding of the base period (Phase 1: FY 2023-2026) for the prospective technical applicant is \$3 million. The Phase I of the proposed activity would focus on working in collaboration with SARD to achieve the three anticipated outcomes (a) Improved preservation of Tibetan manuscripts and cultural resources leveraging innovative digital technology (b) Increased accessibility of cultural resources for the Tibetan community; and (c) Strengthened capacity of the CTA to govern and manage the digital platform in a sustainable way. During Phase I, emphasis would be on consolidation of the digitized manuscripts under a single platform that provides optimum accessibility of the resources to the Tibetan diaspora and the international community in a sustainable and secure environment. It would also aim at leveraging the synergies of the relevant stakeholders in the digitization spectrum to ensure complementarity of approach.

The Phase II (2026-2028) renewal period, if initiated, will be based on the lessons learned from program implementation to explore and develop the feasibility of virtual reality options and immersive experience in replication of successful global models. The implementation of this would depend on availability of funds, financial terms being met, the achievement of compliance, and successful evaluation of activities implemented during Phase I. In response to this NOFO, the applicants should submit an application for the Phase I for a three-year program to be implemented in close coordination with SARD, Tibetan libraries and other relevant stakeholders.

A.2.5 Geographic Focus

Geographically, the initiative shall focus on important Tibetan settlements in India and Nepal engaging all relevant stakeholders based on a participatory approach. The activity would ensure adherence to CTA's policies related to protection and preservation of Tibetan culture and heritage while engaging in information gathering from the institutions that work in this field. The activity would also focus on strategic engagements with multiple stakeholders regionally and globally to capitalize on their rich experience of digitization of cultural resources, including the opportunities and challenges in the domain.

A.2.6 Links to Agency Priorities

This activity will focus on USAID/India's 2020-2024 CDCS Special Objective (SO), which is "Economic and Cultural Resilience of Tibetan Communities in India and Nepal Strengthened".

Specifically, the Activity will contribute to the intermediate result (IR-2) of strengthening key Tibetan institutions and preservation of culture essential to ensuring continuity of effective development strategies and long-term impact on community self-reliance and resilience.

The results of this activity will help improve the resiliency of the Tibetan communities and protect, preserve and restore Tibetan culture against possible threats of extinction among the exiled Tibetan community. Collectively, the proposed activity will strengthen the Tibetan institutions, focusing in particular on the CTA, partner organizations affiliated with the CTA, and institutions contributing to community resilience through culture preservation.

The activity will directly address the congressional mandate *to promote and preserve Tibetan culture and language in the refugee and diaspora Tibetan communities, development, and the resilience of Tibetan communities and the Central Tibetan Administration in India and Nepal, and to assist in the education and development of the next generation of Tibetan leaders from such communities*. This mandate is intended to be achieved through digital preservation of Tibetan manuscripts and institutional capacity building of the CTA for effective governance of the proposed digital platform.

A.2.7 Collaboration and Coordination

The IP will work closely with SARD to achieve the programmatic outcomes of the activity and will broadly be based on CTA's vision for preservation and sustainability of Tibetan culture. All the anticipated outcomes mentioned under the programmatic framework must be achieved based on a clear charter of delineation of roles and responsibilities between the IP and SARD. Mutual agreement on technical approaches necessary for achieving the illustrative outcomes and expected results would be considered critical for successful implementation of the project. USAID/India envision that relationships and roles will be agreed to during a co-creation meeting that is discussed in Section D and will be incorporated into the final Program Description. This meeting will also discuss the best technical approaches for achieving the broader outputs and activities. The primary intent of this meeting would be to ensure that the technical approaches proposed by the IP are in alignment with the CTA's broad vision of preservation of Tibetan culture, as described below. Further, the IP and CTA will leverage this meeting to clearly identify their respective roles and responsibilities for achieving the overarching goal of the initiative, which is to ensure the continuity of Tibetan culture in the long run.

Since the establishment of the CTA in 1959 as the representative of the Tibetan community worldwide, it has collaborated with multi-stakeholders for integration of the scattered community and preservation of their unique culture and identity. As discussed in the preceding Challenge Section, one of the crucial elements of Tibetan culture which stands threatened today is the sustainability of the ancient Tibetan manuscripts which serves as rare cultural assets and custodian of Tibetan Buddhism. To address this growing concern, CTA envisages digitization of these Tibetan manuscripts based on the application of latest and innovative technologies and hosted on an online platform that will be accessible by the Tibetan and international community. Further, CTA envisions to lead the governance and overall management of the digital platform so as to ensure the continuity of Tibetan culture in the long run. CTA proposes capacity building of the Tibetan community, particularly Tibetan youth on latest international technological

standards with the objective of enhancing their employability in the technical field and building their expertise to fill appropriate roles in the day-to-day management of the proposed digital platform.

In support of the aforementioned vision of the Tibetan administration and leveraging the convening power of the CTA over the Tibetan community, the IP is expected to coordinate and communicate with SARD on the following areas:

a. Close engagement with SARD in ensuring sustainability of the digital platform:

- i. The proposed digital platform hosting the digitized resources is envisioned to be managed and governed by CTA in the long run. To achieve this goal, the IP is expected to collaborate with SARD in the identification of sustainable governance models for the long term continuity of the platform. This includes creation of necessary governance structures, standard protocols and technical processes crucial for the management and sustainability of the digital platform beyond the life of the project.
- ii. Further, the IP will coordinate with SARD to consolidate and integrate the scattered Tibetan manuscripts and texts leveraging the convening power of CTA over the Tibetan libraries. This will contribute towards unifying the scattered culture preservation efforts implemented by various Tibetan entities and create a centralized mechanism that provides access to all the digitized Tibetan manuscripts under a single digital platform.
- iii. Prior to digitization of Tibetan manuscripts, the IP will also engage with the SARD to assess the current state of preservation of these documents and understand the precise needs for consolidation and digitization of these Tibetan cultural resources held in various repositories across India and Nepal.
- iv. Once the preservation needs are identified, the IP will work with SARD and Tibetan libraries to draw a strategic implementation plan. In accordance with this plan, the most relevant and latest technologies will be identified and applied in the digitization of the Tibetan manuscripts and these digitized resources will be made available through a centralized, secured and accessible digital platform.
- v. The IP is also expected to collaborate with SARD in the identification of the effective digital infrastructure required for Tibetan libraries for the continuity of the digitization efforts beyond the life of the project.
- vi. The IP will collaborate with SARD to identify self-sustainable models for the proposed digital platform to facilitate its continuity in the future.

b. Collaborate and coordinate with SARD in facilitating effective dissemination of technical skills and expertise in the Tibetan community:

- i. The IP and SARD will co-design and implement capacity building training programs for young Tibetans on IT skills and international technological standards, which will enhance their employability in the technical field and associated roles related to the regular maintenance of the Tibetan digital platform.

These trainings also are expected to lead to increased technical capacity of Tibetan libraries and other stakeholders in managing an innovative model of the digital platform, through specific capacity building initiatives.

- ii. The IP will also help SARD to explore livelihood opportunities for the Tibetan community based on the technical skills imparted through the training program.

c. Engage with SARD to develop a robust outreach strategy for increased awareness of the digital platform:

- i. The IP will collaborate with SARD to design an effective outreach and communications strategy for awareness raising on the digital platform and promotion of Tibetan Buddhism.
- ii. The IP will further engage with SARD to ensure that the digital platform is easily accessible to all its users, irrespective of the geographic locations.

In addition to the aforementioned approach, strategic partnerships across the region for leveraging synergies and best practices in the digitization spectrum will be considered crucial. The IP is to identify effective partnership models with stakeholders for effective realization of the illustrative outcomes and expected results. This activity will coordinate with other ongoing national digitization initiatives such as the National Manuscripts Mission (NMM) and strategically analyze existing opportunities and the challenges in the field of digitization of manuscripts. Collaboration with specialized Tibetan entities in the field of technological innovations such as the Monlam Tibetan IT Research Institute is recommended for digitization and development of innovative models. This approach is intended to leverage efforts of relevant stakeholders while ensuring complementarity in achieving the overarching objective of Tibetan culture preservation.

A.2.8 Guiding Principles

(a) Gender and Social Inclusion

USAID's gender analysis of the Tibetan community indicates that gender relations in Tibetan exile society differ among settlements and communities depending on their location. In urban areas, women enjoy increasingly equitable roles and status in the household, community, and workplace, with increasing numbers holding leadership positions in the business, non-profit and political spheres. There is near gender parity in Tibetan schools, with slightly more female than male students due to family preference and scholarship prioritization for female students.

Despite gender parity in workforce participation and near parity in education, several sociocultural norms and practices in communities, schools, and monastic life are inequitable. Gender norms restrict women's voices and presence in community leadership and decision-making, women bear the brunt of unpaid household and caregiving responsibilities, and there is a large gender gap between nuns and monks. This proposed activity aims to be inclusive and holistically benefit the Tibetan community including all genders in their diversity, through provision of uniform accessibility of Tibetan cultural resources to Tibetan men and women and equal livelihood opportunities linked with the proposed activity.

As per the USAID's gender strategy 2022, this activity will navigate gender dynamics to 1) promote equal access across all gender to the digital archives, 2) provide capacity building training to CTA officials (both men and women) and other stakeholders, ensuring no disparity in knowledge management and knowledge sharing 3) both Tibetan men and women are able to access livelihood opportunities based on dissemination of soft skills training 4) Increased number of Tibetan men and women build their capacities on digital literacy thereby enhancing their scope of employability. Applicants should also consult USAID ADS 205: *Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle* to learn more about relevant gender considerations and integrating gender equality and female empowerment throughout this activity.

In adherence with the USAID's Disabilities Policy, the activity implementation will incorporate strategic inclusive approaches that benefit people with disabilities including visually and hearing impaired. Hence the activity will align its implementation with USAID's [Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy](#), [Policy Paper on Disability](#), Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2020 Policy ([PRO-IP Policy](#)), and [Youth Policy 2022](#).

(b) Systemic change

Nurturing long term systemic partnerships that involve all stakeholders is critical to achieve the objective of continuity of Tibetan culture through sustainability of the digital platform. There is a need for sustained capacity building of the CTA at all efforts and also facilitating convergence between various approaches and implementation mechanisms adopted by various Tibetan libraries and archives. This will ensure all changes and interventions are taken ownership of by the CTA itself in due course thus ensuring greater sustainability of interventions under this activity.

(c) Innovation

Innovative design will enable the activity to reach out to the Tibetan community and connect them with the unique Tibetan culture. The initiative will support the Tibetan community to access the innovative digital portal which is the gateway for digitized Tibetan manuscripts. This approach will provide visibility to the Tibetan community and integrate and mobilize efforts for the preservation of their culture. Therefore, the activity calls for innovative and creative approaches for the preservation of Tibetan manuscripts that have not been effectively or efficiently implemented before.

(d) Localization

USAID has a renewed commitment to localization with a focus on shifting leadership, decision making, and implementation to the local people and institutions who possess the capability, connectedness, and credibility to drive change in their own countries and communities. The activity design emphasizes on leveraging the expertise of local stakeholders for achieving its

overarching goal and is guided by the objective to benefit the local Tibetan community through its intended outcomes and results.

(e) Sustainability Analysis

USAID defines sustainability as how the project will be supported and can continue without donor funding. A key component of the *Strengthening Preservation of Tibetan Culture* is to create a sustainable model of Tibetan digital platform that would contribute towards enhancing the cultural resilience of the Tibetan community. Analysis indicates that while self-reliance is achievable over time, full sustainability of the activity will be possible only if various stakeholders collaborate with the SARD to demonstrate a robust digital platform that would cater to the cultural needs of the Tibetan diaspora across the world. This activity will therefore attempt to achieve a high degree of impact on the overall goal of community self-reliance. Sustainability of the activity is intended to be ensured through continuity of the desired outcomes beyond the life of the program. Carefully planned sustainable approaches would be incorporated at important stages of the activity, including the physical preservation of the manuscripts, digitization, development of the online platform for accessibility of the resources, linking strategic outreach strategies with the proposed activity, and exploring sustainable governance and financial model for ensuring continuity of the platform.

B. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

The Activity must make best use of the latest principles in monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) in order to set and achieve targets, fulfill objectives, and demonstrate outcomes of development efforts undertaken as part of this award. Complexity-aware monitoring approaches, as well as good practices in collaborating, learning, and adapting (CLA), are vital to ensure adaptive programming that responds to changing circumstances, new knowledge, and new evidence. A learning agenda and plan for dissemination of findings to the appropriate stakeholders will be critical to the success, sustainability and scalability of this activity. The applicant should include in its learning agenda evaluations or studies to assess and inform the roll out of interventions and incorporate reflection opportunities in order to better target and adapt activities.

As part of its learning agenda, the implementing partner must identify key knowledge gaps to articulate learning questions and potential tasks/actions required to answer the learning questions and develop meaningful indicators to measure key results. As appropriate, use of qualitative methods and measurements is encouraged, especially for hard to quantify and/or long-term results, to gauge the Activity's contribution to the results.

B.1 Illustrative indicators

1. Quality of strategic implementation plan developed to address existing gaps and challenges in the digitization of manuscripts.
2. Percentage of Tibetan libraries participating in the digital preservation of Tibetan manuscripts.

3. Number of Tibetan manuscripts physically conserved.
4. Number of technological innovations identified and demonstrated for the digitization of Tibetan manuscripts.
5. Improved partnership models demonstrated for integrated efforts in digitization of manuscripts.
6. Number of self sustainable models identified for the continuity of the digital platform
7. Number of livelihood activities linked with the sustainable governance of the digital platform.
8. Number of users registered to access the digital platform.
9. Number of collaborative events/trainings/workshops/ for capacity building of Tibetan libraries and CTA officials.
10. Number of policies, SoPs and training modules developed for the sustainable governance of the digital platform.
11. Number of hardware and software procured for the infrastructural development of the digital platform.
12. Number of Tibetan youth including women trained on soft skills such as IT and related technological standards for enhancing their scope of employability.
13. Improved outreach and communications strategy demonstrated for enhanced awareness raising of Tibetan Buddhism.
14. Number and percentage of Tibetan and international scholars using the digital platform.

ANNEXURE 1

(A) A few important steps to be undertaken to achieve Outcome 1: **Improved preservation of Tibetan manuscripts and cultural resources leveraging innovative and latest digital technology** are as below.

****Note** - The technical specifications labeled as MANDATORY REQUIREMENT need to be incorporated during program implementation, while those marked as RECOMMENDED are suggested approaches for inclusion.

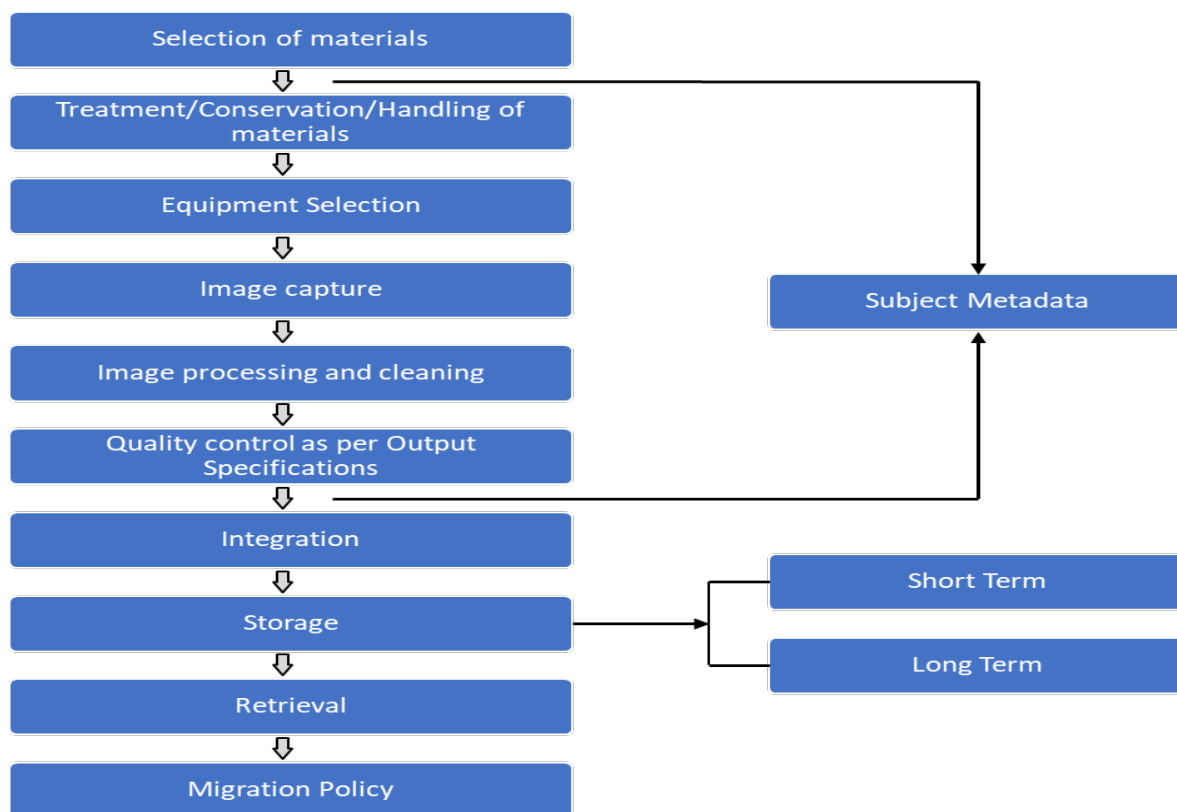
MANDATORY REQUIREMENT

- Conversion of manuscripts into digital form using industry standard scanning or photography technology and protocol should be followed while taking care of intellectual property and copyright requirements.
 - The image capture devices, workflows and digitized images should comply with Federal Agencies Digital Guidelines Initiative (FADGI) 4-Star, ISO 19264, and Metamorfoze-Strict standards.
 - The image capture device shall have minimum 100mp of resolution at 8-bits of color depth, coupled with cultural-heritage LED illumination (high Color Rendering Index (CRI), high Color Quality Scale (CQS), and smooth spectral shape).
- The minimum specifications of the output images shall be Tiff (Uncompressed), 300 dpi (output), and 24-bit depth for Raw Master Image; Tiff (compressed) 300 dpi (output) Group 6 CCITT Spatial Resolution: 8" X 10" at 300 dpi for Clean Master Image; and JPEG/PDF-A Spatial Resolution: 1024 x 768 pixels for Access Image.
- Enhanced access to digitized images must be offered via computer networks to increase the current pace of data shift. Utilization of smaller, more efficient access files may be explored in such conditions. Minimum preferred specification may be binary at moderate resolution (e.g., 200 dpi) or JPEG files with reduced spatial resolution (e.g., 100 or 150 dpi) and/or increased compression (e.g.30:1). Care should be taken that the "printability" of the image is not compromised.
- Appropriate image enhancement algorithms like Contrast stretching, Deskewing etc may be used to improve legibility of the image with little or no adverse effect.
- Creating metadata to describe the content and make it discoverable and for its ingestion into a digital platform is a crucial step in any digital library project.
 - General purpose metadata schema such as Dublin Core, MODS (Metadata Object Description Schema) or any other standard schema may be adopted and customized to capture subject metadata of manuscripts such as Title, Author, Organization, Commentary, Commentator, Language, Script, Subject, Remarks etc.
 - The actual metadata items along with controlled vocabulary and input guidelines shall be finalized in conjunction with other stakeholders and subject matter experts.
 - Technical Metadata describing the features of the digital file and scanning process shall be auto generated and assigned to the image file at the time of creation.

RECOMMENDED

- Define standards that facilitate the transition options such as virtual reality and immersive experience in later phases.

The applicant is expected to suggest a sustainable digitization model for the online Tibetan platform for possible analysis of its merit and challenges. Please see below an example of a successful digitization model followed by the National Manuscripts Mission (NMM), Government of India.



ANNEXURE 2:

(B) The main indicative steps or processes to be undertaken to achieve Outcome 2: Increased accessibility of cultural resources for the Tibetan community, include:

MANDATORY REQUIREMENT

- The digitized manuscripts shall be hosted on a secure and accessible Digital Library Management System (DLMS) that is OASI (Open Archival Information System) and NDSA(National Digital Stewardship Alliance) level 4 aligned.
 - a. The DLMS must be complete with required storage, a digital asset management system, a content management system, and a discovery and delivery system.
- Developing and implementing content access policies and procedures to ensure that users can easily find and access the content, creating a User-centered design (UCD) interface, implementing easy search and discovery tools, and providing training and support to library staff.
- All information and services should be accessible to persons with disabilities. The IT tools and systems, electronic content and all digitally-derived products must be in compliance with [Section 508](#) of the Rehabilitation Act.

RECOMMENDED

- Digital workforce experience: Availability of digital workplace will allow overseas Tibetan community to participate in developmental work and voluntary contributions.

ANNEXURE 3:

(C) The few indicative steps to achieve the Outcome 3: Strengthened capacity of the CTA to govern and manage the digital platform in a sustainable manner, include:

MANDATORY REQUIREMENT

- Develop protocols for regular monitoring and maintenance of the digital platform to ensure its sustainability and accessibility, developing policies for regular backups, updates to software and hardware, and preservation activities to ensure the long-term stability of the digital content.
- For facilitating effective governance of the sustainable digital platform, the activity would lay emphasis on consideration of the following parameters-
 - a. Define composition of the governing body
 - b. Identify tasks-based subgroups for the improved governance (Policies, Data Quality, Privacy amongst others)
 - c. Define Standards for Performance Management
 - d. Define Standards for Change Management

- Regular security assessment plans must be developed and implemented to ensure the following. Based on the type of platform being used, devise policies for access control, business continuity, data breach, remote access, acceptable use and disaster recovery.
 - a. cyber security of the digital platform, firewalls and intrusion detection systems,
 - b. vulnerability scanning, malicious content filtering and audit trails.

RECOMMENDED

- Preparing policies for periodic log data analysis or user study to evaluate the usability, understand the user needs from time to time, develop suitable plans and strategies based on usage patterns.

[END OF SECTION A]

THE REMAINDER OF THIS PAGE LEFT BLANK INTENTIONALLY.

SECTION B – FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

B.1 ESTIMATED 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 \$5,000,000 in total USAID funding over a five-year period for implementation of the award in two Phases. The total estimated amount of award is \$3 million in Phase 1 and \$2 million in Phase 2. The successful applicant will be required to collaborate with SARD to ensure and facilitate close engagement and coordination in achieving the anticipated outcomes and results.

Upon successful ongoing implementation of the program, incremental funding will be provided to the successful Recipient, during the Three (3) years in Phase 1 and Two (2) years in Phase 2 period of performance; as applicable, not to exceed the Total Estimated Amount of \$5,000,000.00. USAID reserves the right to change funding amounts and terms of the resulting Cooperative Agreement as a result of availability of funds and U.S. Government requirements.

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

USAID/India intends for the activity to be subject to rigorous monitoring and evaluation, to (a) ensure the intended results and impact are being generated, and (b) inform the activity management if, and when, course corrections may be necessary – an important consideration, given that this is a new activity and partnership. The recipient should also conduct several periodic analyses to better understand certain aspects and issues within the award's domain.

Performance monitoring and evaluation will be included by the Applicant while designing their technical approach. USAID may conduct additional monitoring and evaluation through external contract(s). A detailed Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) design will be developed upon completion of the design and will include appropriate Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators (F indicators).

USAID/India recognizes that development efforts yield positive change more quickly if they are coordinated and collaborative, test promising new approaches in a continuous search for improvement, and build on what works, while eliminating what does not. The recipient must therefore implement a Collaboration, Learning and Adaptation (CLA) approach to continuously assess the activity's causal pathways, target outcomes, and adjust the interventions and approach as necessary to yield the most effective course of action.

Anticipated Illustrative Indicators for the measuring the progress of the Activity:

1. Quality of strategic implementation plan developed to address existing gaps and challenges in the digitization of manuscripts.
2. Percentage of Tibetan libraries participating in the digital preservation of Tibetan manuscripts.
3. Number of Tibetan manuscripts physically conserved.
4. Number of technological innovations identified and demonstrated for the digitization of Tibetan manuscripts.
5. Improved partnership models demonstrated for integrated efforts in digitization of manuscripts.
6. Number of self-sustainable models identified for the continuity of the digital platform.
7. Number of livelihood activities linked with the sustainable governance of the digital platform.
8. Number of users registered to access the digital platform.
9. Number of collaborative events/trainings/workshops/ for capacity building of Tibetan libraries and CTA officials.
10. Number of policies, SoPs and training modules developed for the sustainable governance of the digital platform.
11. Number of hardware and software procured for the infrastructural development of the digital platform.
12. Number of Tibetan youths including women trained on soft skills such as IT and related technological standards for enhancing their scope of employability.
13. Improved outreach and communications strategy demonstrated for enhanced awareness raising of Tibetan Buddhism.
14. Number and percentage of Tibetan and international scholars using the digital platform.

B.3 START DATE AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance anticipated herein is three (3) years in Phase 1 and two (2) years in Phase 2 for a total of five (5) years. The estimated start date of the award is **September 15, 2023**.

B.4 SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT

In accordance with ADS 303.3.11, USAID will remain substantially involved over the life of the Cooperative Agreement to assist the Recipient in achieving the expected outcomes and results of the program. Examples of potential areas of substantial involvement during performance include the following:

1. USAID will review and approve the recipient's implementation plans annually during performance.

Implementation plans should be aligned with CTA's broader planning and timelines are followed and they contribute towards the overall congressional directive of promoting the cultural resilience of the Tibetan community in India and Nepal.

2. Approval of key personnel to ensure those selected by the partner have the experience and knowledge to lead the implementation of the activity; and
3. Strategic involvement is expected from USAID to ensure effective communication of the recipient and CTA because joint participation with CTA will be necessary to ensure achievement of key objectives during the performance of the activity.

NOTE: This Substantial Involvement section may be subject to change following the Co-Creation Meeting and Submission of Full Application.

B.5 AUTHORIZED GEOGRAPHIC CODE

The authorized geographic code for the procurement of services and commodities is 937. Code 937 is defined as the United States, the recipient countries (India and Nepal).

B.6 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 India Partnership for Early Learning activity which is authorized by Federal statute. The successful Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices. The Recipient will assume responsibility for administering Federal funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, program objectives, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.

[END OF SECTION B]

THE REMAINDER OF THIS PAGE LEFT BLANK INTENTIONALLY.

SECTION C – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligibility for this NOFO is unrestricted, open to all eligible and qualified U.S., local, and international Non-governmental Organizations. An organization may submit only one (1) application under this notice of funding opportunity. However, organizations participating as a member of a consortium may elect to participate in another consortium under a different application.

Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.400(g), it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments such as Cooperative Agreements. While for-profit organizations may participate, pursuant to 2 CFR 700.13(a)(1), Prohibition against Profit, no profit will be paid to any for-profit entity receiving or administering Federal financial assistance as a recipient or subrecipient.

USAID welcomes organizations that have not previously received financial assistance from USAID to submit their applications.

C.2 OTHER

C.2.1. SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (SAM) REGISTRATION

Applicants must have successfully registered in SAM (System for Award Management) prior to submitting a full application. Applicants must also provide a valid UEI number in the SF424 form to be submitted along with a full application. For those who have previously registered in SAM, they must renew and maintain an active SAM registration prior to submitting a full application.

C.2.2. PRE-AWARD RISK ASSESSMENT

The Apparently Successful Applicant (ASA) will be responsible for ensuring achievement of the objectives described in the NOFO. Thus, an ASA must be a responsible entity. Prior to making an award under this NOFO, USAID may perform a pre-award survey for organizations that are new to working with USAID or for organizations with outstanding audit findings. Accounting systems, audit issues and management capability questions may be reviewed as part of this process. Depending on the result of the risk assessment, USAID may determine to execute the award, not execute the award, or award with “specific conditions” (2 CFR 200.207). If notified by USAID that a pre-award survey is necessary, applicants must prepare in advance to provide the required information and documents. A pre-award survey does not commit USAID to make an award to any organization.

The AO will decide on whether to subject the ASA to a pre-award survey, and based on the results, will make a determination if the prospective recipient is a responsible entity, i.e., whether it has the necessary organization, experience, adequate accounting and operational controls, and

technical skills—or ability to obtain them—in order to achieve the objectives of the project and comply with the terms and conditions of the award. The Agreement Officer reserves the right to perform a pre-award survey for any entity and if a pre-award survey is necessary, the AO will establish a formal survey team to conduct the examination.

[END OF SECTION C]

THE REMAINDER OF THIS PAGE LEFT BLANK INTENTIONALLY

SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

D.1 AGENCY POINT OF CONTACT

Name: Cheryl Hodge-Snead
Address: USAID/India Mission Agreement Officer
American Embassy
Shantipath, Chanakyapuri
New Delhi 110021 India
Email: indiarco@usaid.gov

D.2 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

All questions relating to this NOFO must be submitted to the indiarco@usaid.gov mailbox, with a copy to pnanda@usaid.gov no later than the date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended to provide sufficient time to address the questions and incorporate the questions and answers as an amendment to this solicitation. Unless otherwise notified by an amendment to the NOFO, no questions will be accepted after the due date. 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 in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant.

Applicants must not submit questions to any other USAID staff. All the submission of questions application files submitted must be compatible with Microsoft (MS) Office in a MS Windows environment and/or Adobe Acrobat (.pdf). The subject of each e-mail must read as follows: **NOFO# 72038623RFA00004 – Strengthening Preservation of Tibetan Culture Project.**

D.3 GENERAL CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION

Applicants are expected to review, understand and comply with all aspects of this NOFO. Applicants must ensure the necessary documents are complete and received by USAID on time. All submissions received by the stated deadlines in the NOFO will be reviewed in accordance with the review criteria contained in Section E of this NOFO.

Each applicant must furnish the information required by this NOFO. Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions provided under Section D. Any erasures or other changes to the application must be initiated 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. 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.

Submissions must be in electronic format. Applicants' authorized representatives are to sign their names (manually or digitally) on the cover pages of their submissions, as well as in required certifications. For a submission to be considered timely, the electronic transmission must be submitted by email to indiarco@usaid.gov with a copy to pnanda@usaid.gov and received by USAID/India no later than the date and time indicated on the coversheet of the NOFO.

Applicants not selected for the consecutive phase will be notified at the end of phase 1. Depending on the number of applicants, the AO may or may not respond to requests for additional information from unsuccessful applicants.

D.3.1. Overall Selection Process

Under this NOFO, there will be a **three-phased process** that is described below:

Phase 1 - Technical Application

Conditional Acceptance of Technical Application

Applicants will be required to submit a technical application for initial review. All technical applications received in response to this NOFO will be evaluated by a USAID Merit Review Committee (MRC) utilizing the merit review criteria outlined in Section E. After all technical applications are evaluated, only the applicant whose technical application is conditionally accepted will be invited to the co-creation meeting, Phase 2.

The process ends for all applicants whose technical application was not conditionally accepted and no further consideration will be given to their application.

NOTE: No funding will be made to any applicant prior to the award of the Cooperative Agreement. The Applicants are responsible for all costs incurred prior to the award of the Cooperative Agreement, including costs incurred during all the phases - preparation of technical application and co-creation meeting. **Please note that USAID reserves the right to make no award under this NOFO at any stage of the process.**

Phase 2- Co-creation Meeting

Approximately two (2) weeks after notification of conditionally acceptable technical application, the applicant will be invited to attend an in-person co-creation meeting of 2-3 days with USAID and CTA. Specific details will be included in the invitational letter. The purpose of the co-creation meeting is to fine tune the Program Description and to define the relationships of the IP and CTA to ensure a mutually agreeable relationship is incorporated into the award that will help to ensure successful implementation and obtaining the objectives outlined in Section A of the NOFO.

Phase 3 - Full Application (Final Technical and Cost Applications)

At the end of the co-creation meeting, the Apparently Successful Applicant (ASA) will be requested to address and incorporate any feedback received during the meeting and submit a final technical application and cost application. Successful incorporation of solutions discussed during co-creation will result in the final acceptance of the full application. USAID will continue to work with the ASA to strengthen the Full Application, if additional information is required, prior to making an award.

NOTE: No funding will be made to any applicant prior to the award of the Cooperative Agreement. The Applicants are responsible for all costs incurred prior to the award of the Cooperative Agreement, including costs incurred during all the phases - submission of technical application, co-creation meeting and submission of full application. Please note that USAID reserves the right to make no award under this NOFO at any stage of the process.

D.4 APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Each applicant must furnish the information required by this NOFO. This subsection addresses content requirements applying to this NOFO. Full Applications must be submitted by email to indiarco@usaid.gov with a copy to pnanda@usaid.gov no later than the date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended.

It is highly recommended that applicants read the entire NOFO before submitting an application. Failure to do so will be at the Applicant's risk. **Email submissions must include NOFO# 72038623RFA00004 – Strengthening Preservation of Tibetan Culture Project 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, e.g. 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.

There may be a problem with the receipt of *.zip files due to anti-virus software. Therefore, applicants are discouraged from sending files in this format as USAID/India cannot guarantee their acceptance by the internet server.

D.4.1. Application 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;
- Application must be 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 including consecutive page numbers, date of submission, and applicant’s name;
- A 10 point font can be used for graphs and charts. Tables however, must comply with the 12 point Times New Roman requirement;
- Submitted via Microsoft Word or PDF formats, except budget files which must be submitted in Microsoft Excel; and
- 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.

DO NOT SUBMIT: Promotional literature and materials regarding the Applicant or other unsolicited material.

D.4.2. Submission of Technical Application

This section provides the Applicant(s) detail of the Technical Application submission format. The Application must address the comments and instructions provided by USAID in this NOFO.

Applicants should also ensure that their application contains the following aspects:

- List of Acronyms (*does not count towards page limitation*)
- Table of Contents (*does not count towards page limitation*)

The Technical Application can be no more than a maximum of **Thirty (30) pages**, where the applicant provides a detailed response to the NOFO. Applicants must submit a Technical Application by the deadline specified in this NOFO. USAID will review Technical Applications against merit review criteria detailed in Section E of this NOFO. The Technical Application must include a cover page containing the following information:

(a). Technical Application Cover Page (*does not count towards page limitation*):

The Technical application must include a cover page containing the following information:

- Proposed Activity Name/Title;
- Period of Performance (i.e., start date and end date);
- Total Amount of Funding Requested from USAID;
- Applicant Organization Name;

- Applicant Contact Person (name, phone, e-mail);
- Full Address for Applicant Organization;
- Type of Organization [please include certification of incorporation] (e.g., US, non-US, multilateral, private, for-profit, nonprofit, etc) date of incorporation;
- Notice of Funding Opportunity number;
- (if Applicable) Name(s) of Partner(s) Organization(s)

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.

(b). Include major sections and page numbering to easily cross-reference and identify the information below.

D.5. TECHNICAL APPLICATION FORMAT

D.5.1. Technical Approach (25 pages)

The Technical Application is the most important part of consideration in making the award decision. It must demonstrate the ASA's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this activity. It must be specific, complete and presented concisely.

The Technical Application will exclusively elaborate on the technical aspects of the Technical Approach described in the NOFO including Purpose, Goals and Objectives, Activity Overall Strategy, Activity/Program Description, Cross Cutting and Synergistic Practices, Staffing Plan, Expected Impact and Indicators, and how the Applicant will fulfill implementation responsibilities. During this Phase, the Applicant/s will not be expected or required to describe its organizational, technical and administrative capacity. However, Technical Approach must include a detailed management approach and staffing plan including a description of partnership arrangements (if applicable). The Technical Approach must include a final list of Key Personnel and their resumes/CVs.

Technical Approach must address the following:

Technical Approach is to describe your organization's approach for tackling the challenges and objectives, clearly describing how your approach will achieve the three (3) components described in Section A - Program Description. The approach must also address priorities as identified in USAID's policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and Inclusive Development.

- Provide a broad framing and describe the organization's approach to addressing the challenges detailed in Section A of the NOFO.
- Demonstrate how the applicant intends to closely collaborate with CTA in achieving the anticipated outcomes and results of the initiative, while aligning itself with the broad vision of the Tibetan administration on preservation of Tibetan culture.

- Outline a strategy to coordinate with CTA demonstrating an effective partnership model in achieving the anticipated outcomes and illustrative results under the activity.
- Describe the strategic plan to ensure CTA governance management of the digital platform.
- Describe the interventions the applicant will take to meet the stated objectives in Section A of the NOFO and describe the anticipated results and/or impact of the proposed intervention.
- Propose robust technical models to address the digitization of Tibetan manuscripts and texts.
- Propose effective sustainable models for financial sustainability and governance of the digital platform.
- Propose effective outreach strategy for awareness raising and promotion of classical Tibetan Buddhism through the proposed digital platform.
- Provide a high-level narrative Theory of Change (ToC) that describes the logic behind how the proposed interventions will lead to the stated results and articulates underlying assumptions.
- Identify programmatic approaches for integration of gender equality, social inclusion, innovations and systemic change for every outcome and result areas, as feasible.
- Though the final geographic scope will be determined with the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) and USAID, applicants must provide a reasonable justification for the selected intervention locations for consideration.
- Please provide a brief description demonstrating your expertise in identifying effective partnership models including with relevant stakeholders, and ongoing national initiatives in the digitization spectrum.

D.5.2. Organizational Structure and Management: (3 pages)

- Demonstrate an adaptable and flexible management approach based on a sound strategy to work with the CTA and other partners for leveraging synergies.
- Provide a description of the management approach for this activity that shows the relationship within the team and between partner organizations (as applicable).
- Describe how your proposed technical approach will partner with and leverage experience(s) from local Indian organizations.
- Identify four to five positions that would be critical to accomplishing the outcomes outlined in the Technical Approach and describe the qualifications for each role and why the role is critical to successful implementation of the project.
- Describe your organization that will be utilized in implementing works that clearly describe roles and lines of authority.
- Clearly describe your key personnel and other pertinent staff that you believe necessary to successfully implement the activity.

D.5.3. Institutional Capacity and History of Performance: (2 pages)

- Describe the institutional capacity – technical, managerial, and financial – to carry out the proposed intervention.

- Describe your organization's relevant previous experiences, from the past five years, working on projects related to digitization of cultural resources and development of sustainable models for continuity of good practices beyond the life of the project. Please highlight any successful example from your past initiative that demonstrates your expertise in the digitization spectrum.

Note: Name and Signature of authorized individual *(does not count towards page limitation):*

D.6. FULL APPLICATION FORMAT (For Information Purpose Only)

NOTE: ONLY THOSE APPLICANT(S) WHO ARE SUCCESSFUL AT PHASE 2 “CO CREATION” WILL BE REQUESTED TO SUBMIT A FULL APPLICATION THAT WOULD COMPRISE OF FINAL TECHNICAL AND COST APPLICATIONS. ONLY TECHNICAL APPLICATION IS REQUIRED AT THIS TIME.

The ASA will develop its Final Technical Application, which will be the Program Description of the resulting Cooperative Agreement in collaboration with USAID.

The Full Application must have the following separate parts:

- a. Final Technical Application; and
- b. Cost/Business Application

The Full Application is to be specific, complete, and presented concisely. The application must demonstrate the applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this project. It should be written from a comprehensive viewpoint that shows innovations and approaches proposed by the Applicant and describes how the Applicant is uniquely capable of achieving the results set forth in the Program Description.

The Full Application must demonstrate an understanding of the activity and introduce the applicant's strategy and methodology, including its strategic approach and realistic and innovative interventions. The application is to consider the requirements of the program and merit review criteria found in this NOFO.

Our preference is that the full application along with all supporting documents be submitted as single email attachments, e.g. that you consolidate the various parts of an application into a single document before sending them. If this is not possible, please provide instructions on how to collate the attachments. USAID will not be responsible for errors in compiling electronic applications if no instructions are provided or are unclear.

Any erasures or other changes to the full application must be initiated by the person signing. An application 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.

The following information will be required at Phase 3 “Full Application” from the ASA:

- Gantt Chart of Program Activities
- Rapid Start-Up Plan
- Updated Program Organizational Chart
- Curriculum Vitae of Key Personnel and other pertinent staff (management and technical personnel) named in the Organizational Chart
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan
- Draft Branding Strategy and Marking Plan
- Draft Gender Analysis Plan

D.6.1 COST/BUSINESS APPLICATION

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

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:

- (1) “Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient” ADS 303mav document found at <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf>
- (2) Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
- (3) Certificate of Compliance: Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA).

d) Budget and Budget Narrative

The Budget must be submitted as one unprotected Excel file (MS Office 2000 or later versions) with visible formulas and references and must be broken out by project year, including itemization of the federal and non-federal (cost share) amount. Files must not contain any hidden or otherwise inaccessible cells. Budgets with hidden cells lengthen the cost analysis time required to make an 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.
- 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:

Category	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	TOTAL
Personnel						
Fringe Benefits						
Travel						
Equipment						
Supplies						
Contractual (sub-grants)						
Other Direct Costs						
Indirect Costs						
Total Activity Amount						

More specifically, the budget and budget narrative must contain the following information (in this order):

Detailed breakdown should include the following:

- **Personnel** – Must be proposed consistent with 2 CFR 200.430 Compensation - Personal Services. Direct salaries, wages and allowances must include position title, salary rate, level of effort, and salary escalation factors. Specify the budget for the portion of the Activity to be passed through to any subrecipients. See 2 CFR 200.330 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. The name, daily and annual salary, expected level of effort of each person charged to the program; the same information should be provided for Consultants.
- **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 must propose a rate and explain how the Applicant determined the rate. In this case, the Budget Narrative must include a detailed breakdown 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.

- **Allowances** – Allowances must be broken down by specific type and by person and must be in accordance with the Applicant's policies. All salaries, benefits and allowances must be based on written compensation policies of the organization. Allowances should be in accordance with the applicant's policies and the applicable regulations and policies. Explain assumptions in the Budget Narrative. If the organization has standing policies across all projects for annual salary escalations that exceed current inflation rates, those policies and the effective date of those policies must be provided with the application. The Applicant must also confirm that the policy applies to all staff across all projects.
- **Travel and Transportation** – Travel, per diem and other transportation expenses must be detailed in the financial plan to include the number of international trips, from where to where, number of per diem days and rates. Per diem and other travel allowances must be based on written travel policies of the employer organization (Applicant may choose to refer to the Federal Standardized Travel Regulations for cost estimates).
- **Equipment** – Detail all equipment to be purchased, including the type of equipment, the manufacturer, the unit cost, the number of units to be purchased and the expected geographic source. The Budget Narrative must include the purpose of the equipment and supplies and the basis for the estimates.
- **Supplies** – Detail all materials and supplies expected to be purchased, including type, unit cost, and number of units. The budget narrative must include the purpose of supplies and the basis for the estimates.
- **Contractual** – Detail of all contractual, sub-recipients and sub-grants. Separate budget breakdown (using the same line-item breakdown of the prime Applicant) for each sub-recipient/sub-award.
- **Branding and Marking Costs** – ADS 320.3.6.3 states that costs of branding and marking are eligible for financing if the costs are reasonable, allocable, and allowable in accordance with applicable cost principles. Such costs must be included in the total estimated cost of the Applicant's budget.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation Costs** – Per ADS 203.3.5, include costs of data collection, analysis, and reporting as a separate line item to ensure that adequate resources are available. The budget line item must include costs for data collection, analysis, and reporting. This line item will be tracked during implementation of the activity. The applicant must propose the most cost-efficient and effective way to address this requirement.

- **Other Direct Cost** – 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 Activity 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 Activity, along with estimates of costs. Otherwise, the narrative should be minimal.
- For commercial organizations, no profit or fee shall be included in the budget. All reasonable and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the program and are in accordance with applicable cost principles under 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700.
- **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 - 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.

e) Budget Narrative

The budget narrative should explain all budget assumptions and how the costs are derived. It will provide information regarding the basis of estimates for each line item, including reference to source used to estimate the costs (i.e., organization's policy, payroll document, vendor quotes, etc.)

f) 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.

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

h) Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and SAM Requirements

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifiers (earlier known as 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 UEI number for the applicant and all proposed sub-recipients;
2. **Be registered in SAM before submitting the Full 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.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 SAM registration process may take several 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.

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

SAM registration: www.sam.gov

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

i) Branding Strategy and Marking Plan

The apparently successful applicant will be required to submit a Branding Strategy and Marking (B&M) Plan to be reviewed and approved by the Agreement Officer prior to the award.

All USAID-funded foreign assistance (including programs, projects, activities, public communications, or commodities) must be communicated, promoted, and marked as coming from the American people through USAID. Specific communications and promotion measures must be described in the “Branding Strategy” and “Branding Implementation Plan,” and specific marking will be described in the “Marking Plan” for this award. Branding and marking under this award must comply with the USAID Automated Directive System (ADS) Chapter 320 Branding and Marking (ADS320).

ADS320 requires that, after the evaluation of the applications, the USAID Agreement Officer requests the Apparently Successful Applicant to submit a branding strategy and marking plan that describes how the activity is named and positioned, how it is promoted and communicated to beneficiaries and cooperating country citizens and identifies the donor and explains how they will be acknowledged. USAID will not competitively evaluate the proposed Branding Strategy. ADS 320 may be found at the following website: <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/320.pdf>.

In preparation of the branding strategy and the marking plan, the apparently successful Applicant will follow the guidance provided in this NOFO. Additional guidance is available at

<http://www.usaid.gov/branding>. The cost application must incorporate the estimated cost of the proposed branding strategy and marking plans implementation.

j) Draft Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan

Prior to a final Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan that must be completed within 60 days of the Award (with the submission of the first work plan) USAID requires a draft MEL Plan. This draft should expand upon the simple Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning approach given in the Oral Presentation. This document should include Performance Indicators for the first year.

k) 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 (AO).

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.

l) Consortium arrangements

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

m) Negotiation

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

- Bylaws, constitution, and articles of incorporation, if applicable.

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

n) 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.

The Pre-award Terms for Conflict of Interest can be found at
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mba.pdf>

[END OF SECTION D]

SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

E.1 CRITERIA

All applications will be reviewed in accordance with the review criteria set forth below. The purpose of the merit process is to identify an applicant with the best approach to achieve the Strengthening Preservation of Tibetan Culture objectives, as described in the Section A of this NOFO.

The criteria below have been tailored to the requirements of the NOFO. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: a) identify significant matters that the Applicant should address in their application, and b) set the standards against which the applications will be evaluated.

The criteria listed below are presented so that the Applicants will know which areas require emphasis in the preparation of their applications during the appropriate phase.

E.2 REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Under this NOFO, there will be a three-phased process that is described below:

Phase 1 - Technical Application

Conditional Acceptance of Technical Application:

Applicants will be required to submit a technical application for initial review. All technical applications received in response to this NOFO will be evaluated by a USAID Merit Review Committee (MRC) utilizing the merit review criteria outlined in Section E. After all technical applications are evaluated, only the applicant whose technical application is conditionally accepted will be invited to the co-creation meeting, Phase 2.

The process ends for all applicants whose Technical Application was not conditionally accepted and no further consideration will be given to their application.

NOTE: No funding will be made to any applicant prior to the award of the Cooperative Agreement. The Applicants are responsible for all costs incurred prior to the award of the Cooperative Agreement, including costs incurred during all the phases - Submission of Technical Application, co-creation Meeting and Final Technical and Cost Application . Please note that USAID reserves the right to make no award under this NOFO at any stage of the process.

Phase 2- Co-creation Meeting:

Approximately two (2) weeks after notification of conditionally acceptable technical application, the applicant will be invited to attend an in-person co-creation meeting of 2-3 days with USAID and CTA. Specific details will be included in the invitational letter. The purpose of the co-creation meeting is to fine tune the Program Description and to define the relationships of the IP

and CTA to ensure a mutually agreeable relationship is incorporated into the award that will help to ensure successful implementation and obtaining the objectives outlined in Section A of the NOFO.

Phase 3 - Full Application (Final Technical and Cost Applications)

At the end of the co-creation meeting, the ASA will be requested to address and incorporate any feedback received during the meeting and submit a final technical application and cost application. Successful incorporation of solutions discussed during co-creation will result in the final acceptance of the full application. USAID will continue to work with the ASA to strengthen the Full Application, if additional information is required, prior to making an award.

NOTE: No funding will be made to any applicant prior to the award of the Cooperative Agreement. The Applicants are responsible for all costs incurred prior to the award of the Cooperative Agreement, including costs incurred during all the phases - submission of technical application, co-creation meeting and submission of full application. Please note that USAID reserves the right to make no award under this NOFO at any stage of the process.

E.2.1 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 following criteria, and the technical approach will be weighted more heavily, while the other factors will be weighted equally.

MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA	DEFINITION
Technical (50%) Approach	Applicants will be evaluated subject to compliance with the criteria mentioned below: A. Relevance: The proposed approaches should demonstrate a clear contextual understanding of the Tibetan community. Suggest technically strong and innovative solutions to address the three anticipated outcomes set forth in Section A, in close alignment with the technical specifications outlined under the three outcomes. Elucidate the relevance of the proposed technical approaches to the CTA's vision for preservation of Tibetan culture, particularly in the context of digitization of Tibetan manuscripts and development of an online platform for accessibility of these digitized resources across the globe.

	B. Impact: Define the intended outcomes, results, outputs, and activities including a theory of change, indicators and proposed targets. Explain how the proposed technical approaches are going to impact the continuity of Tibetan culture, with particular reference to the physical and digital conservation of Tibetan manuscripts and sustained management of the digital platform beyond project period. Propose effective sustainable models for financial sustainability and governance of the digital platform. C. Innovation: The proposal should suggest innovative and best applicable frontier technology for the digital preservation of Tibetan manuscripts. Clear articulation of an innovative and sustainable approach to achieve the overall goal of the proposed activity. D. Diversity lens: Demonstrate clear understanding and integration of gender and inclusive development approaches in achieving the anticipated outcomes and result of the activity in a realistic fashion.
Partnerships/Collaboration (20%)	A. The proposal should demonstrate its expertise in identifying close, impactful and results oriented partnership plans with CTA in achieving the anticipated outcomes and results. B. The proposal should also identify strategic plans to collaborate with other relevant stakeholders and national initiatives in the digitization spectrum for achieving the objective of this activity.
Organizational Structure and Management (20%)	Applicants will be evaluated subject to compliance with the criteria mentioned below: A. Propose well-articulated staffing plans that demonstrate an adequate mix of skills to successfully implement the technical approach and accomplish the activity objectives.

	B. Demonstrate an adaptable and flexible management and organizational approach based on a sound strategy to work with CTA and other partners for leveraging synergies.
Institutional Capacity and History of Performance (10%)	Applicants will be evaluated subject to compliance with the criteria mentioned below: A. Institutional capacity and relevant technical and management experience, based on past performance, to successfully plan, implement, and monitor complex activities that require coordination with the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) and other stakeholders. B. Institutional ability to manage sub-awards and coordinate with sub-awardees to implement the proposed interventions adaptively and successfully. C. Provide an example of a successful initiative implemented in the past that demonstrates applicant's expertise in the digitization spectrum.

Evaluation of applications based on the aforementioned technical merit review criteria may result in one of the two possible outcomes, as discussed below.

● **CONDITIONALLY ACCEPTABLE** - Application is evaluated against the merit review criteria and the applicant is found to propose a reasonable approach. USAID has **Good Confidence** that the applicant understands the requirement and will be successful in producing the desired deliverables. The applicant will be required to participate in a co-creation meeting with USAID and the CTA where the proposed technical approach of the applicant will be discussed and aligned with the priorities and vision of the CTA for culture preservation of the Tibetan community.

● **UNACCEPTABLE**: Application is **UNACCEPTABLE** when evaluated against the merit review criteria and is found to propose an unsound approach. USAID has **Low Confidence** that the applicant understands the requirements. The applicant(s) will be unsuccessful in implementing the program. If **UNACCEPTABLE**, USAID declines the application. Due to the number of applications received, USAID is not able to provide details on why the application was not selected. Only applications that are acceptable and meet the strategic objectives outlined in Section A of the NOFO will move forward to the co-creation meeting.

- **ACCEPTABLE:** Application is ACCEPTABLE when the applicant proposes a sound approach and USAID has **Strong Confidence** that the applicant understands the requirements and will be successful in performing with **no** government intervention.

[END OF SECTION E]

THE REMAINDER OF THIS PAGE LEFT BLANK INTENTIONALLY

SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

F.1 Federal Award Notices

Notice of award signed by the Agreement Officer is the authorized document, which will be transmitted to the successful Applicant following the selection. This will be sent to the authorized agent of the successful Applicant electronically. The notice may be determined by the Agreement Officer, identify clarifying questions and request for a revised application by a specified date prior to finalization of the Cooperative Agreement. USAID reserves the right to award without requesting clarification or additional detail on the application. Once all outstanding issues have been resolved, the Agreement Officer will send the draft Cooperative Agreement to the Apparent recipient for review, comments and or acceptance to be followed by full execution of the Cooperative Agreement.

Award of the agreement contemplated under this NOFO cannot be made until funds are 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 of the award. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. Applicants are advised that costs incurred prior to receipt of either a fully executed Agreement (in electronic or print form) or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer are not allowable and therefore are ineligible for reimbursement under the Agreement.

The Agreement Officer will also provide written notification electronically to the unsuccessful Applicants' Points of Contact. Requests for additional information from unsuccessful Applicants will not be considered.

F.2 Administrative & National Policy Requirements

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

For U.S. Non-governmental organizations

- 2 CFR 700 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=531ffcc47b660d86ca8bbc5a64eed128&mc=true&node=pt2.1.700&rgn=div5>)
- 2 CFR 200 (https://ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl)
- ADS 303maa, Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-governmental Organizations (<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303maa.pdf>)

For Non-U.S. Non-governmental organizations

- ADS 303mab, Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations
(<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mab.pdf>)

For Public International Organizations (PIOs)

- ADS 303mab, Standard Provisions for Cost-Type Awards to PIOs
(<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/308mab.pdf>)

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

USAID/India Regional Office of Acquisition and Assistance (ROAA) will administer this award. The Agreement Officer (AO) will designate an Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) to review, concur and/or approve on items outlined in Substantial Involvement (Section B.3 of this NOFO).

F.3 Reporting Requirements

The Recipient will adhere to all reporting requirements listed below; further, US Non-governmental organizations need to be in compliance with 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700 (specifically 2 CFR 200.327-329).

The Recipient will submit all reports by the due date for approval from the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR). The Recipient will consult with the AOR on the format and content prior to submission. In addition to the reports below, the AOR may request additional information to contribute to the internal USAID project reviews.

(a) Program Reporting

The Recipient must submit a copy of each report required by this Agreement to the Agreement Officer, the AOR, and the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC). Submission to the DEC must be through the public-facing and searchable DEC Website (<http://dec.usaid.gov>).

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

(1) Annual Implementation Plan

The Recipient must work with USAID to develop and submit an initial annual implementation work plan within 45 calendar days of the effective date of the award. Subsequent annual implementation plans will be submitted within 30 days before the start of the succeeding fiscal year. The AOR will review and approve the plan within 15 calendar days after receipt of the draft implementation plan.

The implementation plan must include, at a minimum:

- Proposed accomplishments and expected progress towards achieving program results and performance measures tied to the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan
- Timeline for implementation of the year's proposed interventions, including target completion dates
- Information on how interventions will be put in place
- Gender Action Plan that will define how gender will be integrated in the activity cycle
- Environmental Risk Mitigation Plan which will describe how environmental compliance and climate risk management will be integrated into activity interventions
- Personnel requirements to achieve expected outcomes
- Details of collaboration with other major partners
- Annual budget with estimates of projected monthly expenditures

(2) Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan

The MEL Plan must describe the agreed upon framework of goals, outcomes, and outputs for the program, along with performance indicators, baselines and targets defined for each, and sex-disaggregated where appropriate. The MEL Plan must describe the evaluative work that the implementing partner will conduct for its own management decision-making, institutional learning, and accountability purposes (see [ADS 203.3.1](#), as revised, for more detailed guidance).

During the first sixty (60) days after the award is made, the Recipient will work closely with the USAID AOR to finalize its MEL Plan. The plan must identify specific indicators for measuring the following aspects of the recipient's performance:

- progress toward meeting program objectives and sub-objectives;
- time frame for achieving these objectives and sub-objectives;

The Recipient will collaborate with the USAID AOR to review/update its MEL Plan, and to monitor and report to USAID.

Both quantitative and qualitative indicators need to be developed and special attention paid to data sources, collection methods, and data quality assessment.

Program monitoring and evaluation comprises an essential component of this cooperative agreement for the following reasons:

- informs USAID of progress;
- enables detailed and on-going design of activities and sub-activities;

- builds counterparts' capacity to collect and analyze the data for sound decision-making and

At a minimum, the MEL Plan must include the following:

- Automated and other methods used to gather, store, manipulate, summarize, analyze, and/or report performance data.
- Procedures for regular communication with USAID regarding the status of monitoring activities, including a means for early notification of problems.
- Means of addressing a discovered lack of progress or success. Procedures will focus on learning from mistakes, analyzing them, and ascertaining the reason for missteps.
- A learning and research agenda and how this agenda will help achieve activity level results and contribute to national and international knowledge and learning.
- Information about all activities to be monitored under the MEL Plan. The list of activities must be provided in a logical framework which:
 - Links activities to Agreement results—both those dictated by USAID in the program description and lower level or complementary results contained in the Recipient's approach.
 - Describes assumptions being made about the relationship of the activity to the Agreement result.
 - Identifies the indicators against which progress is to be measured. Includes methods to be used for monitoring
 - Provides an illustrative schedule for discrete monitoring activities tied to the overall program implementation plan.
- **Gender Consideration:**

To the greatest extent possible, the Recipient should seek to include both men and women in all aspects of this program including participation and leadership in e.g., meetings, training, etc. The Recipient must collect, analyze and submit to USAID sex-disaggregated data and proposed actions that will address any identified gender-related issues.

In order to ensure that USAID assistance makes the maximum optimal contribution to gender equality, performance management systems and evaluations must include gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data when the technical analyses supporting the Agreement demonstrates that:

- The different roles and status of women and men affect the activities to be undertaken, and
- The anticipated results of the work would affect women and men differently.

(3) Quarterly Performance Reports

The Recipient will submit quarterly reports that give insight into the progress of planned activities. Such reports follow USAID fiscal quarters, i.e., Quarter 1 covers October-December; Quarter 2 covers January-March; Quarter 3 covers April-June; Quarter 4 covers July-September. The quarterly report is due within 30 days after the fiscal quarter's end. In lieu of

the fourth quarter report, the Recipient will submit an Annual Progress Report (see Section F.4(4)4 below).

The narrative report will include qualitative and quantitative information describing activities carried out and specific results achieved during the quarter. In addition, the narrative report will indicate key implementation challenges encountered and how they were, or are planned to be, resolved. To the extent where the MEL Plan includes quarterly targets, this should be reflected in the narrative report.

(4) Annual Progress Reports

The Recipient must submit an annual progress report within 30 days after the end of the fiscal year to cover annual performance from the fiscal year. At a minimum, both quarterly and annual progress reports will contain:

- Progress (interventions completed, benchmarks achieved, and performance standards completed) made since the last report by region and province as applicable
- Problems encountered and whether they were solved or are still outstanding
- Proposed solutions to new or ongoing problems
- Success stories
- Security concerns
- Information on new opportunities for program expansion
- Qualitative data on program achievement and results
- Updated/filled MEL Plan, as an attachment
- Documentation of the best practices that can be taken to scale
- Progress to date on sustainability, gender and environmental mitigation plans
- Update on monthly expenditures for the quarter vis-à-vis annual budget

(5) Close-out Plan

No later than six (6) months prior to the completion date of the agreement, the Recipient will submit a close-out plan for the Agreement Officer (AO) approval. The close-out plan shall include:

- Draft property disposition plan
- Plan for the phase-out of in-country operations
- Delivery schedule for all reports or other deliverables required under the agreement
- Timetable for completing all required actions in the close-out plan, including submission date of the final property disposition plan to the AO.

(6) Final Report

The Recipient must submit, within ninety (90) days following the expiration of this cooperative agreement, a detailed final report. The final report will cover the entire period of the award and will include, but is not limited to:

- (i) executive summary;
- (ii) overall description of the activities and methods of assistance used under the Program during the period of this Cooperative Agreement, and the significance of these activities;
- (iii) brief description of the cumulative results towards achieving the program objectives and the performance indicators, as well as an analysis of how the indicators illustrate the program's impact on the accomplishment of the program's overall objectives;
- (iv) an assessment of impact of the program in assisting USAID in meeting targets, as well as any unmet targets and the reasons for them;
- (v) section reporting on gender, sustainability and institutionalization, environmental compliance and climate risk mitigation;
- (v) success stories;
- (vi) discussion on the issues and problems that emerged during program implementation and how they were overcome;
- (vii) cost-effectiveness;
- (viii) lessons learned; and
- (ix) recommendations for USAID's future interventions.

The final/completion report shall also contain an index of all reports and information products produced under this agreement.

(b) Financial Reporting:

(1) Quarterly Financial Report

The Recipient must submit the Federal Financial Form (SF-425) quarterly, no later than 30 days after the end of the quarter, 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 SF-425 at the same time to the Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) and the Controller.

Electronic copies of SF-425 and instructions for using it can be found at:
http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/standard_forms/ff_report.pdf
<http://www.forms.gov/bgfPortal/docDetails.do?dId=15149>
http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/standard_forms/ffr_instructions.pdf

(2) Final Financial Report

Within 90 days following the estimated completion date of this award, the Recipient must submit to the: (a) USAID/Washington, M/CFO/CMP-LOC Unit; (b) Agreement Officer (manila-roaa-admin@usaid.gov); (c) Controller (aidmnlrfsc@usaid.gov); and (c) Agreement Officer Representative (AOR), the final Federal Financial Form (SF-425).

(3) Foreign Tax Reports

Reporting of foreign taxes under this agreement shall follow the standard provision entitled “Reporting Host Government Taxes (December 2014)” of this award document.

Host government taxes are not allowable where the Agreement Officer provides the necessary means to the recipient to obtain an exemption or refund of such taxes, and the recipient fails to take reasonable steps to obtain such exemption or refund. Otherwise, taxes are allowable in accordance with the Standard Provision, “Applicability of 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700 (December 2014),” and must be reported as required in this provision.

The Recipient must include this reporting requirement in all applicable sub-agreements, including subawards and contracts.

F.4 Program Income

If the successful applicant is a non-profit organization, any program income generated under the award will be added to USAID funding (and any cost-sharing that may be provided, if applicable), and used for program purposes. However, pursuant to 2 CFR 200.307 Program Income, if the successful Applicant is a for-profit or commercial organization, any program income generated under the award will be deducted from the U.S. Government share of this award to determine the amount of USAID funding.

Program income will be subject to 2 CFR 200.307 for U.S. NGOs or the standard provision entitled Program Income for non-U.S. NGOs. If the successful Applicant is/are a PIO, any program income generated under the award will be added to USAID funding (and any non-USAID funding that may be provided) and used for program purposes.

F.5 Environmental Compliance

1a). 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. Offeror environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs of this NOFO.

1b). In addition, the recipient must comply with host country environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. In case of conflict between host country and USAID regulations, the latter shall govern.

1c). No activity funded under this CA will be implemented unless an environmental threshold determination, as defined by 22 CFR 216, has been reached for that activity, as documented in

a Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE), Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), or Environmental Assessment (EA) duly signed by the Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO). (Hereinafter, such documents are described as “approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.”)

2a) As part of its initial Work Plan, and all Annual Work Plans thereafter, the *recipient*, in collaboration with the USAID Assistance Office Representation (AOR) and Mission Environmental Officer or Bureau Environmental Officer, as appropriate, shall review all ongoing and planned activities under this *CA* to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.

2b) If the *recipient* plans any new activities outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, it shall prepare an amendment to the documentation for USAID review and approval. No such new activities shall be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments.

2c) Any ongoing activities found to be outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation shall be halted until an amendment to the documentation is submitted and written approval is received from USAID.

F.6 Branding & Marking

It is a federal statutory and regulatory requirement that all USAID programs, projects, activities, public communications, and commodities that USAID partially or fully funded under a USAID grant or cooperative agreement or other assistance award or sub-award, must be marked appropriately overseas with the USAID identity. See Section 641, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended and 2 CFR 700.16.

Under the regulation, USAID requires the submission of a Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan by the Apparently Successful Applicant, as defined in the regulation. A Branding Implementation Strategy and Marking Plan must be in accordance with USAID Branding and Marking Plan as required per ADS 320 at the following link:

<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/320.pdf>

The Branding and Marking Plan may include a request for a waiver or exceptions to marking requirements established in 2 CFR 700.16. The Agreement Officer is responsible for evaluating and approving the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan (including any request for exceptions and waiver) of the ASA, consistent with the provisions “Branding Strategy”, “Marking Plan”, and “Marking of USAID-funded Assistance Awards” contained in AAPD 05-11 and in 2 CFR 700.16. Please note that in contrast to “exception” to marking requirements, waivers based on circumstances in the host country must be approved by the Mission Director or other USAID Principal Officers, see 1 CFR 700.16(j).

F.7 ADS 303.3.35.2 Covered Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Equipment or Services (Effective Date: 08/18/2020)

Effective August 13, 2020, a recipient may not procure covered telecommunication equipment or services for the implementation of their program using award funds. 2 CFR 200.216, applicable to US organizations, and the standard provision “Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment” applicable to non-US NGOs, implement Section 889(b) of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2019 (Pub. L. 115-232) that prohibits the use of award funds, including direct and indirect costs, cost share and program income, to procure covered telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment. The statute covers certain telecommunications equipment and services produced or provided by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation, Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, or Dahua Technology Company (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities).

Such covered telecommunication equipment or services must not be reimbursed to the recipient as a direct or indirect cost or accepted as part of cost share. Additionally, the recipient must not use any program income generated under the award to purchase covered telecommunication equipment or services.

F.8 Procurement of “Covered Material”

1. Except as provided in paragraph 2 below, and notwithstanding anything in this award to the contrary, no funds under this award may be used for the procurement of “Covered Material” as listed below without the prior written consent of the Agreement Officer. For purposes of this provision, “Covered Material” shall consist of the following:

- Surgical N95 Filtering Facepiece Respirators, including devices that are disposable half-face-piece non-powered air-purifying particulate respirators intended for use to cover the nose and mouth of the wearer to help reduce wearer exposure to pathogenic biological airborne particulates;
- PPE surgical masks, including masks that cover the user’s nose and mouth and provide a physical barrier to fluids and particulate materials;
- PPE nitrile gloves, including those defined at 21 CFR 880.6250 (exam gloves) and 878.4460 (surgical gloves) and such nitrile gloves intended for the same purposes; and
- Level 3 and 4 Surgical Gowns and Surgical Isolation Gowns that meet all of the requirements in ANSI/AAMI PB70 and ASTM F2407-06 and are classified by Surgical Gown Barrier Performance based on AAMI PB70.

For clarity, non-medical grade masks, including cloth masks, are not included in the list of Covered Material above. Further, USAID may modify the list of Covered Material from time-to-time, in writing; any such changes to the list shall apply prospectively.

2. The restrictions set forth in paragraph 1 above shall not apply to the procurement of Covered Material:

- a. for the protection of and use by the [recipient's or sub-[recipient's staff; or
- b. for the safe and effective continuity of USAID-funded programs, including for the protection of beneficiaries, provided that such items are manufactured locally or in the same geographical region as the country in which USAID is providing assistance, as defined by the U.S. Department of State's regional system ([Africa](#), [East Asia and the Pacific](#), [Europe and Eurasia](#), [Near East](#), [South and Central Asia](#), and [Western Hemisphere](#)), and provided that such items are not, and could not reasonably be expected to be, meant for the United States market.

The Agreement Officer (AO) may change the exemptions set forth in this paragraph in writing; any such changes shall apply prospectively.

- 3. "Staff" for the purposes of the Exception in 2(a) is defined as any individuals receiving financial compensation from the recipient or contractor or sub-recipient or subcontractor.
- 4. For each purchase of Covered Material under Exception 2(b), the recipient or contractor must provide the AO with contemporaneously dated documentation that the order of Covered Material is not meant for, and could not reasonably be meant for, the U.S. market. The AO will then upload the statement into ASIST. This documentation can take the form of a simple email verification from a vendor or a brief, contemporaneously dated, written statement or e-mail from the recipient or contractor confirming its conversation with the vendor.

[END OF SECTION F]

SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

G.1 AGENCY POINT OF CONTACT(POC) FOR QUESTIONS

Agency Point of Contact

Name: Mr. Prateek Nanda

Title: Acquisition and Assistance Specialist

Above is the Point of contact (POC) for questions while the funding opportunity is open.

Any prospective Applicant desiring an explanation or interpretation of this NOFO must request it in writing by the due date and time specified on the cover page of this NOFO in order to allow a reply to reach all prospective Applicants before the submission of their Initial Technical Application. Oral explanations or instructions given before the award will not be binding. Any information given to a prospective Applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective Applicants as an amendment of this NOFO if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective Applicants.

Any questions concerning this NFO must be submitted in writing to indiarco@usaid.gov with a copy to pnanda@usaid.gov. In the subject line please indicate “Questions Regarding the NOFO# 72038623RFA00004 “Strengthening Preservation of Tibetan Culture”. Applicants will retain for their records one copy of all enclosures which accompany their application.

G. 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.”

Additional information available to Applicants includes:

1. ADS 201.3.15.3; USAID’s Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy (http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pdact200.pdf)
2. USAID India’s Country Development Cooperation Strategy <https://www.usaid.gov/india/cdcs>
3. USAID’s Climate Change and Development Strategy 2012-2018 (2012). (<http://www.usaid.gov/climate/strategy>)
 - a. USAID’s Adaptation to Climate Variability and Change: A Guidance Manual for Development Planning (2007). Basic introduction to how to think about integrating climate change into development programs, using a six-step process to engage stakeholders and analyze vulnerabilities and adaptation options. (<http://www.usaid.gov/climate/adaptation/resources>).
4. USAID’s Global Climate Change Initiative. (<http://www.usaid.gov/climate/us-gcci>).
5. USAID Standard Provisions:

(i) ADS 303mab, Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations.

<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mab.pdf>

(ii) ADS 303mab, Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-governmental Organizations.

<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303maa.pdf>

6. Certifications, Assurances, Other Statement of the Recipient

(1) “Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient” ADS 303mav document found at <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mav.pdf>

(2) Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)

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

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Annex 1: Preliminary Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Analysis.

[END OF SECTION H]

Annex 1: Preliminary Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Analysis

Strengthening Preservation of Tibetan Culture

FY2023 – FY 2028

Gender Analysis Plan

Introduction

Pursuant to ADS 205.3.1 and in alignment with the USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, individual Operating Units (OU) are responsible for conducting gender analysis at the design stage of a new activity and for ensuring that the policy is implemented throughout each stage of the Program Cycle. This Gender Analysis pertains to the design of USAID/India's planned activity to support the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) to protect, restore and preserve the culture of old Tibetan manuscripts and cultural artifacts in an online digital platform through the introduction of the latest technological innovations for the digitization of these valuable cultural resources. This activity will run from FY2023 - FY2028 and will be managed by USAID/India's General Development Office (GDO).

Background

In 1959, H.H the Dalai Lama established the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), the Tibetan government in Exile which represents the Tibetan Government for the exiled community. The CTA functions as a democratic parliamentary institution and represents all Tibetan exiles spread in India, Nepal, Bhutan, and across 40 countries in the rest of the world (RoW). It has a representative governance structure with a political office headed by the Sikyong and seven departments, an elected Tibetan Parliament in Exile and Tibetan Judiciary known as the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission. The CTA is based in Dharamshala covering India, Nepal and Bhutan and representative Offices of Tibet in 12 countries. Though CTA is beset by the critical constraint of the lack of an organized institutional setting without a territory or revenue model, it nevertheless strives to administer the exiled Tibetan community addressing their needs and challenges like any other regular government.

Tibetans in exile have made remarkable strides in establishing systems and networks to maintain cultural resilience and social connectivity in a diaspora dispersed across the subcontinent and across the world. In a matter of 63 years in exile, the community has achieved transformations in education; and created settlements in India, Nepal, and Bhutan. It founded a democratic government, reestablished world heritage religious institutions; and had taken up citizenship in more than 42 countries. These achievements are due in large measure to the cohering force and vision of the spiritual leader His Holiness the fourteenth Dalai Lama, while also reflecting the adaptability and resilience of the Tibetan government in exile—the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA)—and Tibetans themselves.

Issues

Since the beginning of the cultural revolution in Tibet during the 1960s, the protection, preservation and sustainability of Tibetan culture has remained under massive threat, which continues to be a major challenge even today. A direct consequence of the popular Tibetan movement led to the destruction of rare Tibetan cultural resources including the ancient and rare manuscripts, art and artifacts which were passed on across several generations. The vision of HH Dalai Lama which is to keep the Tibetan culture and traditions alive is driving the Tibetan community to consider different strategies to preserve the unique identity of their community while living in exile based on protection and restoration of these valuable cultural artifacts.

Gender relations in Tibetan exile society differ among settlements and communities depending on their location. In Dharamsala and urban communities such as Bangalore, Delhi, Dehradun, and Kathmandu, women enjoy increasingly equitable roles and status in the household, community, and workplace, with increasing numbers holding leadership positions in the business, non-profit and political spheres. As measured by access to education, health care, livelihood opportunities, and responsibilities in the community and home, gender equity is better in these communities than rural communities where Tibetans practice subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry. However, even in these communities, women's participation in household decision making, access to education and health services, and control over household resources generally meet high standards of equity in comparison with other South Asia communities. Tibetan women in rural settlements are just as likely as men to make decisions about household health practices, including when and who seeks health services, and gender differences are not likely to cause unequal access to emergency or other health care, or unequal exposure to public health information. There is near gender parity in Tibetan schools, with slightly more female than male students due to family preference and scholarship prioritization for female students.

Despite gender parity in workforce participation and near parity in education, several sociocultural norms and practices in communities, schools, and monastic life are inequitable. Gender norms restrict women's voices and presence in community leadership and decision-making, women bear the brunt of unpaid household and caregiving responsibilities, and there is a large gender gap between nuns and monks. It may also be noted that GBV is pervasive in Tibetan communities, takes many forms, and goes unreported due to social norms, lack of awareness and implementation of CTA policies, and limited GBV response services. CTA structures are not well equipped to provide adequate and appropriate GBV services—health, legal, judicial, shelter, psychosocial—complicated by policies and bureaucratic processes between the CTA and the Nepali and Indian governments., the CTA women empowerment policy is not implemented and largely unknown among community members, and the CTA women empowerment desk is understaffed and disempowered.

IV. ANALYSIS OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY TECHNICAL COMPONENT

Table 1 provides an overview of the activities that will be implemented under ‘Strengthened Preservation of Tibetan Culture’ interrelated components. For those activities where gender issues have been identified, the table presents recommended actions that will be taken by the General Development Office (GDO) and the implementing partner to ensure gender equity remains at the forefront of the activities’ design, implementation, and M&E.

Table 1. Strengthened Preservation of Tibetan Culture - Technical Components/Activities, Identified Potential Gender Issues and recommendations.

Components and Results	Potential Gender Issues and Relevance to the Activity	Recommendations, Specific Actions, General Considerations
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AWARD		
Outcome 1: Improved preservation of Tibetan manuscripts and cultural resources leveraging innovative and latest digital technology Results - landscape assessment conducted to understand the extent of digitization of Tibetan manuscripts, the stakeholders involved and strategic analysis of existing opportunities and challenges. - a strategic implementation plan developed to address gaps for ensuring quality digitization of all resources based on the outcomes of the assessment. - physical conservation of Tibetan manuscripts and texts facilitated. - modern technological innovations adopted to preserve Tibetan culture in a sustainable fashion. - digitization training designed and implemented for young Tibetan youth to ensure current work and future sustainability. - avenues for livelihood opportunities explored based on the dissemination of skills	- Tibetan society is patriarchal which might impact the information gathering exercise by introducing and promoting gender biases and stereotypes. - Women typically work in the textiles industry, which can impact human resource availability for the library. - Women may not be well educated, impacting the level of local technical expertise present for creation of a sustainable digital platform.	- Involving women leaders in the stakeholder mapping and information gathering processes and bringing historical women leaders in the forefront - Inducting an equal number of women and men interested in working with the Tibetan library. - Enhancing digital literacy among women through awareness programs. - Through creation of livelihood options, men and women including Tibetan youth will have increased access to job opportunities. This will directly contribute towards addressing the outward migration of Tibetans in search of better livelihood opportunities.

for preservation and digitization of Tibetan manuscripts. .		
Outcome 2: Increased accessibility of cultural resources for the Tibetan community Results: ● increased awareness and dissemination of the knowledge of classical Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan cultural heritage worldwide. ● improved accessibility to rare Tibetan manuscripts and cultural resources supports monastic education and scholarly/research pursuits of the Tibetan community. ● a digital platform developed that acts as a resource center on unique Tibetan culture and heritage.	● Lack of awareness and literacy among the women community can inhibit the use of the digital library. ● Gender biases during content curation exercises may leave library's content less relevant for women in the first place. ● Virtual library may not be conducive accessible by people with disability, especially visually impaired	● Hire expertise in the area of digitization e.g. IT experts etc. (both men and women) ● Develop campaigns, posters, awareness camps with the support of men and women for raising awareness of the digital platform. ● Educate both men and women about the resource centre to make them understand about the Tibetan academic. ● Include more women who are sitting at home about the awareness campaign so that young talent does not have to seek better opportunities outside. ● Train more men and women for working in the digital space as it will help access employment opportunities leading to equitable participation in the labor force. ● Create a platform after understanding the different needs of people with disabilities.
Outcome 3: Strengthened capacity of the CTA to govern and manage the digital platform in a sustainable manner Results ● enhanced technical capacity of CTA officials and other stakeholders to operate an innovative model of digital platform.	● Poor gender ratio among the CTA might impact overall involvement of women in the governance of the digital platform ● High training needs of women and people with disabilities	● Build confidence and elevate women staff in the library to directly deal with the CTA. ● Facilitate exchange programs for young men and women with technical expertise who are engaged in digitization. Exchange programs for youth with disabilities should be designed to understand their needs, build their skills, and

• Tibetan community including youth trained, in collaboration with the CTA, on IT skills and international standards for enhancing their employability in the technical field and roles associated with the proposed Tibetan digital platform. • improved instructional materials, policies, strategies and standard operating processes adopted and practiced for establishing and smooth functioning of digital platform. • identified self-sustaining models to ensure continuity of the digital platform.	running this program due to lack of previous expertise and knowledge	apply it in managing the library. • Establish an enabling environment for a regular coordination meeting with stakeholders for the smooth governance of this resource so that both men and women could work in this environment. • Assist the group who is engaging in the mobilization of these activities. • Supporting exchange programs amongst libraries engaged in the digitization space for the transfer of technical know-how irrespective of gender
SARD ACTIVITY AWARD		
Outcome 1: Strengthened technical expertise and capacity building of Tibetan libraries for long term sustainability of the digital platform • Increased technical capacity of Tibetan libraries and other stakeholders in managing an innovative model of the digital platform, through training and capacity building initiatives. • digitization training program designed and implemented in collaboration with the technical prime for young Tibetan youth to ensure current work and future sustainability. • livelihood opportunities explored in collaboration with the technical prime based on the dissemination of skills for preservation and digitization of Tibetan manuscripts. • standard policies, protocols and guidelines developed in	• Absence of an integrated body to coordinate and standardize the digitization efforts of the Tibetan platform. • Lack of technical expertise in the Tibetan community on IT and soft skills. • Limited employment opportunities in the Tibetan community • Absence of sustainable approaches and mechanisms for the continuity of Tibetan culture and identity	• Support an enabling environment where the Tibetan women are adequately represented in the consortium of Tibetan libraries and archives. • Ensure adequate participation of Tibetan women and girls in the IT and soft skills trainings for capacity building • Representation of Tibetan women and girls in the technical job roles filled from the Tibetan community • The voices and opinions are adequately factored in during policy making and formation of sustainable governance structures for the continuity of Tibetan platform

collaboration with the technical prime for smooth operation of the digital platform. • Sustainable governance models jointly developed with the technical prime for ensuring long term continuity of the Tibetan digital platform.		
Outcome 2: Enhanced visibility and promotion of Tibetan Buddhism through the digital platform • Tibetan diaspora and international community have improved accessibility to Tibetan digitized resources through the digital platform • Improved dissemination of Tibetan culture and representation across borders leads to strengthening of cultural ties in the diaspora community scattered across the world. • Digital platform portrayed as a unique interactive forum for Tibetan youth facilitating regular exchange of cultural know-how.	• The scattered nature of the Tibetan diaspora across different continents poses challenges for the preservation of Tibetan culture and identity. • The channels of direct communication of the diaspora community with the Tibetan administration and the resident community in India is very limited, which impacts efforts for a unified culture.	• Tibetan women and girls to assume an important role in the dissemination of Tibetan culture through the digital platform • Tibetan women and girls have greater awareness and exposure with the diaspora and the international community as a result of sustained interaction through the digital platform.

As per USAID's gender strategy 2023, the above mentioned activities will navigate gender dynamics to promote equal access to the digital archives, provide training to CTA staff (both men and women) and other stakeholders, ensuring no disparity in knowledge management and knowledge sharing.

[END OF ANNEX 1]

Annex 2: Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient

Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient

NOTE: When these Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of Recipient are used for cooperative agreements, the term “Grant” means “Cooperative Agreement.”

Part I – Certifications and Assurances

1. Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Non-Discrimination in Federally Assisted Programs

Note: This certification applies to Non-U.S. organizations if any part of the program will be undertaken in the United States.

(a) The recipient hereby assures that no person in the United States will, on the bases set forth below, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under, any program or activity receiving financial assistance from USAID, and that with respect to the assistance award for which application is being made, it will comply with the requirements of:

(1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Pub. L. 88-352, 42 U.S.C. 2000-d), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin, in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance;

(2) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance;

(3) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (Pub. L. 95-478), which prohibits discrimination based on age in the delivery of services and benefits supported with Federal funds;

(4) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681, et seq.), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance (whether or not the programs or activities are offered or sponsored by an educational institution); and

(5) USAID regulations implementing the above nondiscrimination laws, set forth in Chapter II of Title 22 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) If the recipient is an institution of higher education, the Assurances given herein extend to admission practices and to all other practices relating to the treatment of students or clients of the institution, or relating to the opportunity to participate in the provision of services or other benefits to such individuals, and must be applicable to the entire institution unless the recipient establishes to the satisfaction of the USAID Administrator that the institution's practices in designated parts or programs of the institution will in no way affect its practices in the program of the institution for which financial assistance is sought, or the beneficiaries of, or participants in, such programs.

2. Certification Regarding Lobbying (22 CFR 227)

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal Cooperative Agreement, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned must complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned must require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including contracts, subawards, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients must certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, United States Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification will be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

"The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that: If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned must complete and submit Standard Form-

LLL, “Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying,” in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement will be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.”

3. Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for Covered Countries and Individuals (ADS 206)

USAID reserves the right to terminate this Agreement, to demand a refund or take other appropriate measures if the Grantee is found to have been convicted of a narcotics offense or to have been engaged in drug trafficking as defined in 22 CFR Part 140. The undersigned must review USAID ADS 206 to determine if any certifications are required for Key Individuals (see Part II below) or Covered Participants (see Part III below).

If there are COVERED PARTICIPANTS: USAID reserves the right to terminate assistance to or take other appropriate measures with respect to, any participant approved by USAID who is found to have been convicted of a narcotics offense or to have been engaged in drug trafficking as defined in 22 CFR Part 140.

4. Certification Regarding Support to Terrorists

(1) The undersigned represents, to the best of its knowledge, that:

Except as otherwise disclosed to the Agreement Officer in writing and included with this application, the applicant did not, within the previous three years, knowingly engage in transactions with, or provide material support or resources to, any individual or entity who was, at the time, subject to sanctions administered by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) within the U.S. Department of Treasury pursuant to the Global Terrorism Sanctions Regulations (31 CFR Part 594), and the Foreign Terrorist Organizations Sanctions Regulations (31 CFR Part 597), or sanctions established by the United Nations Security Council, collectively, “U.S. or U.N. sanctions.” Note: USAID intends to retain the information disclosed to the Agreement Officer pursuant to this paragraph in any award file and use it in determining whether to provide the applicant with an assistance award. USAID will not make such information available publicly unless required by law.

(2) The representation in paragraph (1) does not apply to:

(a) Transactions entered into or material support and resources provided pursuant to an OFAC license;

(b) The furnishing of USAID funds, or USAID-financed commodities or other assistance, to the ultimate beneficiaries of USAID-funded humanitarian or development assistance, such as the recipients of food, non-food items, medical care, micro-enterprise loans or shelter, unless the applicant knew or had reason to believe that one or more of these beneficiaries was subject to U.S. or U.N. terrorism-related sanctions; or

(c) The procurement of goods and/or services by the Recipient acquired in the ordinary course of business through contract or purchase, such as utilities, rents, office supplies, or gasoline, unless the applicant knew, or had reason to believe, that a vendor or supplier of such goods and services was subject to U.S. or U.N. sanctions.

This certification includes express terms and conditions of the award, and any violation of it will be grounds for unilateral termination of the agreement by USAID. This certification does not preclude any other remedy available to USAID.

(3) For purpose of this certification:

(a) "Material support and resources" means currency or monetary instruments or financial securities, financial services, lodging, training, expert advice or assistance, safehouses, false documentation or identification, communications equipment, facilities, weapons, lethal substances, explosives, personnel, transportation, and other physical assets, except medicine or religious materials.

(i) "Training" means instruction or teaching designed to impart a specific skill, as opposed to general knowledge.

(ii) "Expert advice or assistance" means advice or assistance derived from scientific, technical, or other specialized knowledge.

(b) "Entity" means a partnership, association, corporation, or other organization, group, or subgroup.

5. Certification Regarding Trafficking in Persons, Implementing Title XVII of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013

Note: This certification must be completed prior to receiving an award if the estimated value of services required to be performed under the award outside the United States exceeds \$500,000. This certification must also be submitted annually to the Agreement Officer during the term of the award.

By signing below, the applicant or recipient, as applicable, through its duly designated representative, after having conducted due diligence, hereby certifies the following:

1. The applicant/recipient has implemented a compliance plan to prevent the prohibited activities identified in section (a) of the Mandatory Provision "Trafficking in Persons" and is in compliance with that plan;
2. The application/recipient has implemented procedures to prevent any activities described in section (a) of the Mandatory Provision "Trafficking in Persons" and to monitor, detect, and terminate any contractor, subawardee, employee, or other agent of the applicant/recipient engaging in any activities described in such section; and

3. To the best of the representative's knowledge, neither the applicant/recipient, nor any employee, contractor, or subawardee of the applicant/recipient, nor any agent of the applicant/recipient or of such a contractor or subawardee, is engaged in any of the activities described in section (a) the Mandatory Provision "Trafficking in Persons."

6. Certification of Recipient

By signing below the recipient provides certifications and assurances for (1) the Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Non-Discrimination in Federally Assisted Programs, (2) the Certification Regarding Lobbying, (3) the Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for Covered Countries and Individuals (ADS 206), (4) the Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing Implementing Executive Order 13224, and (5) the Certification Regarding Trafficking in Persons above.

These certifications and assurances are given in consideration of and for the purpose of obtaining any and all Federal grants, loans, contracts, property, discounts, or other Federal financial assistance extended after the date hereof to the recipient by the Agency, including installment payments after such date on account of applications for Federal financial assistance which was approved before such date. The recipient recognizes and agrees that such Federal financial assistance will be extended in reliance on the representations and agreements made in these assurances, and that the United States will have the right to seek judicial enforcement of these assurances. These assurances are binding on the recipient, its successors, transferees, and assignees, and the person or persons whose signatures appear below are authorized to sign these assurances on behalf of the recipient.

Request for Application or

Annual Program Statement No. _____

Application No. _____

Date of Application _____

Name of Recipient _____

Typed Name and Title _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Part II – Key Individual Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking

I hereby certify that within the last ten years:

1. I have not been convicted of a violation of, or a conspiracy to violate, any law or regulation of the United States or any other country concerning narcotic or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances.
2. I am not and have not been an illicit trafficker in any such drug or controlled substance.
3. I am not and have not been a knowing assistor, abettor, conspirator, or colluder with others in the illicit trafficking in any such drug or substance.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Title/Position: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

NOTICE:

1. You are required to sign this Certification under the provisions of 22 CFR Part 140, Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers. These regulations were issued by the Department of State and require that certain key individuals of organizations must sign this Certification.
2. If you make a false Certification you are subject to U.S. criminal prosecution under 18 U.S.C. 1001.

Part III – Participant Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking

1. I hereby certify that within the last ten years:

- a. I have not been convicted of a violation of, or a conspiracy to violate, any law or regulation of the United States or any other country concerning narcotic or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances.

- b. I am not and have not been an illicit trafficker in any such drug or controlled substance.
- c. I am not or have not been a knowing assistor, abettor, conspirator, or colluder with others in the illicit trafficking in any such drug or substance.
2. I understand that USAID may terminate my training if it is determined that I engaged in the above conduct during the last ten years or during my USAID training.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

NOTICE:

1. You are required to sign this Certification under the provisions of 22 CFR Part 140, Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers. These regulations were issued by the Department of State and require that certain participants must sign this Certification.
2. If you make a false Certification you are subject to U.S. criminal prosecution under 18 U.S.C. 1001.

Part IV – Representation by Organization Regarding a Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Criminal Conviction

- (a) As required by sections 744 and 745 of Division E of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Pub. L. 113-235), and similar provisions, if contained in subsequent appropriations acts, none of the funds made available by that Act may be used to enter into an assistance award with any organization that –
- (1) “Was convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency has direct knowledge of the conviction, unless the agency has considered, in accordance with its procedures, that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government”; or

- (2) “Has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, where the awarding agency has direct knowledge of the unpaid tax liability, unless the Federal agency has considered, in accordance with its procedures, that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government”.

It is USAID’s policy that no award may be made to any organization covered by (1) or (2) above, unless the M/MPBP Compliance Division has made a determination that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.

(b) Applicant Representation:

1. The Applicant represents that it is [] is not [] an organization that was convicted of a felony criminal violation under a Federal law within the preceding 24 months.
2. The Applicant represents that it is [] is not [] an organization that has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability.

Part V – Prohibition on Providing Federal Assistance to Entities that Require Certain Internal Confidentiality Agreements – Representation (May 2017)

(a) Definitions.

“Contract” has the meaning given in 2 CFR Part 200.

“Contractor” means an entity that receives a contract as defined in 2 CFR Part 200.

“Internal confidentiality agreement or statement” means a confidentiality agreement or any other written statement that the recipient requires any of its employees or subrecipients to sign regarding nondisclosure of recipient information, except that it does not include confidentiality agreements arising out of civil litigation or confidentiality agreements that recipient employees or subrecipients sign at the behest of a Federal agency.

“Subaward” has the meaning given in 2 CFR Part 200.

“Subrecipient” has the meaning given in 2 CFR Part 200.

(b) In accordance with section 743 of Division E, Title VII, of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Pub. L. 113-235) and its successor provisions in subsequent appropriations acts (and as extended in continuing resolutions), Government agencies are not permitted to use funds appropriated (or otherwise made available) for federal assistance to a non-Federal entity that requires its employees, subrecipients, or contractors

seeking to report waste, fraud, or abuse to sign internal confidentiality agreements or statements that prohibit or otherwise restrict its employees, subrecipients, or contractors from lawfully reporting such waste, fraud, or abuse to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information.

(c) The prohibition in paragraph (b) of this provision does not contravene requirements applicable to Standard Form 312, (Classified Information Nondisclosure Agreement), Form 4414 (Sensitive Compartmented Information Nondisclosure Agreement), or any other form issued by a Federal department or agency governing the nondisclosure of classified information.

(d) Representation. By submission of its application, the prospective recipient represents that it will not require its employees, subrecipients, or contractors to sign or comply with internal confidentiality agreements or statements prohibiting or otherwise restricting its employees, subrecipients, or contractors from lawfully reporting waste, fraud, or abuse related to the performance of a Federal award to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information (for example, the Agency Office of the Inspector General).

Part VI – Other Statements of Recipient

1. Authorized Individuals

The recipient represents that the following persons are authorized to negotiate on its behalf with the Government and to bind the recipient in connection with this application or grant:

Name	Title	Telephone No.	Facsimile No.
------	-------	---------------	---------------

2. Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)

If the recipient is a U.S. organization, or a foreign organization which has income effectively connected with the conduct of activities in the U.S. or has an office or a place of business or a fiscal paying agent in the U.S., please indicate the recipient's TIN:

TIN: _____

3. Unique Entity Identifier/SAM (2 CFR 25) – Applicants must register in the System for Award Management (SAM) in order to obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), required for eligibility to receive Federal assistance, such as grants and cooperative agreements. A UEI is a unique, alpha-numeric 12-character identifier issued and maintained by SAM.gov that verifies the existence of a business entity globally. The UEI is the official government-wide identifier used for Federal awards. Applicants must register in SAM prior to submitting an application for award for USAID's consideration. Recipients must maintain an active SAM registration while they have an active award.

The requirements of 2 CFR 25 do not apply to certain categories of awards. In addition, the Agency may exempt certain awards from the requirements of 2 CFR 25 (see the solicitation for applicable statements regarding exemptions).

UEI: _____

4. Letter of Credit (LOC) Number

If the recipient has an existing Letter of Credit (LOC) with USAID, please indicate the LOC number:

LOC: _____

5. Procurement Information

(a) **Applicability.** This applies to the procurement of goods and services planned by the recipient (i.e., contracts, purchase orders, etc.) from a supplier of goods or services for the direct use or benefit of the recipient in conducting the program supported by the grant, and not to assistance provided by the recipient (i.e., a subgrant or subagreement) to a subgrantee or subrecipient in support of the subgrantee's or subrecipient's program. Provision by the recipient of the requested information does not, in and of itself, constitute USAID approval.

(b) **Amount of Procurement.** Please indicate the total estimated dollar amount of goods and services which the recipient plans to purchase under the grant:

\$ _____

(c) Nonexpendable Property. If the recipient plans to purchase nonexpendable equipment which would require the approval of the Agreement Officer, indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types, quantities of each, and estimated unit costs. Nonexpendable equipment for which the Agreement Officer's approval to purchase is required is any article of nonexpendable tangible personal property charged directly to the grant, having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION (Generic)	_____
QUANTITY	_____
ESTIMATED UNIT COST	_____

(d) Source If the recipient plans to purchase any goods/commodities which are not in accordance with the Standard Provision "USAID Eligibility Rules for Procurement of Commodities and Services," indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types and quantities of each, estimated unit costs of each, and probable source. "Source" means the country from which a commodity is shipped to the cooperating country or the cooperating country itself if the commodity is located in the cooperating country at the time of purchase. However, where a commodity is shipped from a free port or bonded warehouse in the form in which received, "source" means the country from which the commodity was shipped to the free port or bonded warehouse. Additionally, "available for purchase" includes "offered for sale at the time of purchase" if the commodity is listed in a vendor's catalog or other statement of inventory, kept as part of the vendor's customary business practices and regularly offered for sale, even if the commodities are not physically on the vendors' shelves or even in the source country at the time of the order. In such cases, the recipient must document that the commodity was listed in the vendor's catalog or other statement of inventory; that the vendor has a regular and customary business practice of selling the commodity through "just in time" or other similar inventory practices; and the recipient did not engage the vendor to list the commodity in its catalog or other statement of inventory just to fulfill the recipient's request for the commodity.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION	_____
QUANTITY	_____
ESTIMATED GOODS	_____
PROBABLE GOODS	_____

PROBABLE (Generic) _____

UNIT COST _____

SOURCE _____

(e) Restricted Goods. If the recipient plans to purchase any restricted goods, indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types and quantities of each, estimated unit costs of each, intended use, and probable source. Restricted goods are Agricultural Commodities, Motor Vehicles, Pharmaceuticals, Pesticides, Used Equipment, U.S. Government-Owned Excess Property, and Fertilizer.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION _____

QUANTITY _____

ESTIMATED _____

PROBABLE _____

INTENDED USE (Generic) _____

UNIT COST _____

SOURCE _____

(f) Supplier Nationality. If the recipient plans to purchase any goods or services from suppliers of goods and services whose nationality is not in accordance with the Standard Provision “USAID Eligibility Rules for Procurement of Commodities and Services,” indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types and quantities of each good or service, estimated costs of each, probable nationality of each non-U.S. supplier of each good or service, and the rationale for purchasing from a non-U.S. supplier.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION _____

QUANTITY _____

ESTIMATED _____

PROBABLE SUPPLIER _____

NATIONALITY _____

RATIONALE (Generic) _____

UNIT COST (Non-US Only) _____

FOR NON-US

6. Past Performance References

On a continuation page, please provide past performance information requested in the RFA.

7. Type of Organization

The recipient, by checking the applicable box, represents that -

(a) If the recipient is a U.S. entity, it operates as ☐ a corporation incorporated under the laws of the State of, ☐ an individual, ☐ a partnership, ☐ a nongovernmental nonprofit organization, ☐ a state or local governmental organization, ☐ a private college or university, ☐ a public college or university,

☐ an international organization, or ☐ a joint venture; or

(b) If the recipient is a non-U.S. entity, it operates as ☐ a corporation organized under the laws of _____ (country), ☐ an individual, ☐ a partnership, ☐ a nongovernmental nonprofit organization, ☐ a nongovernmental educational institution, ☐ a governmental organization, ☐ an international organization, or ☐ a joint venture.

8. Estimated Costs of Communications Products

The following are the estimate(s) of the cost of each separate communications product (i.e., any printed material [other than non-color photocopy material], photographic services, or video production services) which is anticipated under the grant. Each estimate must include all the costs associated with preparation and execution of the product. Use a continuation page as necessary.

[END OF ANNEX 2]

[END OF NOFO# 72038623RFA00004]