

**NOFO SFOP0009810 Strengthening Sustainable Communities in Panama and Costa Rica –  
Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs  
Questions and Answers, June 22, 2023**

**Question:** We would like to convey X Organization's interest in participating in the Strengthening Sustainable Communities in Panama and Costa Rica funding call and we have four questions:

**Question #1 Is it mandatory that one of the sub-recipients be a local NGO?**

Local based NGO's are encouraged but not required. However, a strong proposal will have local stakeholders to engage on SBDC training, small business development in the sustainable tourism development industries and the proposal should have at least two subrecipients please see page 3 for the eligibility category and please also see page 27 for the budget guidance that says for SBDC Centers or NGOS working on small business development are recommended for the subrecipient working on SBDC development.

**Response:** Please see page 3 of the NOFO for eligibility requirements

Eligibility Category: U.S. Non-profit/non-governmental organizations (NGOs) having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS; Overseas non-profit NGOs; U.S. small business development centers (SBDCs); U.S. and overseas, both public and private Institutions of higher education to include both colleges and universities; Public international organizations (PIOs).

Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.400, it is a U.S. Department of State policy not to award profit under federal assistance instruments. **For-profit and commercial firms are not eligible to apply in response to this NOFO.** No exceptions.

Please see page 27 of the Notice of funding opportunity for budget requirements of subrecipients:

“ An allowable project must include the following budget items: Of the total \$4,740,000.00, WHA suggests the applicant budgets for two subawards. The first subaward should be with an SBDC center or a local NGO focused on small business development in the Central America region at approximately \$1,200,000; and the second subaward should be with a sustainable tourism development organization at approximately \$800,000 to ensure that both subaward's project activities are implemented for the entire 48-month period of performance of the cooperative agreement. The applicant needs to include sub award budgets in their application submission. The applicant can modify these suggested amounts according to their project design submitted in their application.”

**Question #2 The sub-recipients or at least one must have presence with offices in both countries, or it is sufficient in one country?**

**Response:** Please defer to the previous response on eligibility criteria for the subrecipients. Neither the prime nor the subrecipients need to have offices in both countries. However, they

need to have local stakeholders engaged or have the ability engage with local stakeholders (i.e. local SBDC centers in Centers in Costa Rica and Panama).

**Question #3 Can an organization, which is a private company (firm), participate as Co-Executor (or subcontracted by one of sub-recipients) of the project?**

**Response:** Please see eligibility category mentioning that “for-profit companies cannot be recipients or subrecipients. A private “for-profit” firm can be monitoring and evaluation contractor or can be included as a contracted consultant at a consultant rate but cannot be a subawardee.

**Question #4 In addition to the 2 main sub-recipients, is it necessary to provide the unique entity Identifier (UEI) with the proposal for future subcontracting of local organizations that can support the implementation? In other words, those local organizations must have the UEI before the proposal submission deadline of July 5<sup>th</sup>?**

**GO:**

**Response:** Per the NOFO, if an organization plans to sub-contract or sub-award any of the funds under an award, those sub-recipient organizations must also have a unique entity identifier (UEI number). [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov) registration is not required.

**Question #5: How will funds be distributed to a consortium? Will all funds be disbursed directly to the lead applicant, or will separate grant agreements be established with each participating entity?**

**Response:** In regard to your question about consortium please see page 4 of the NOFO that states the following:

“Note: Organizations may form consortia and submit a combined proposal. However, only one organization may be designated as the lead applicant. The lead applicant must meet the eligibility criteria listed in this NOFO.”

If X Organization submits a consortium as the lead organization it must be designated as the lead applicant and meet the eligibility criteria of the NOFO. In regard to the subrecipient, entities either X Organization can list the subrecipients beforehand in the proposal if it knows, which local based organizations it would like to work with in Panama and Cost Rica and or leave it open if it is going to choose after being selected. However, the budget needs to list the breakdown of all subrecipients in the budget narrative and detailed line-item budget even if the organization is not known the detailed line-item budget and budget narrative must reflect the planned subrecipient budget.”

**Question #6: Please confirm that projects are required to address the 7 objectives and associated activities included in the NOFO.**

**Response:** All seven objectives of the NOFO must be addressed in the applicant's proposal. Additionally, if the applicant would like to address additional objectives and project activities that they think would best support the NOFO's overall goal in addition to the seven mandatory objectives they also do this as well. However, at a minimum the seven objectives listed in the NOFO must be included in the applicant's proposal and the applicant must create project activities for each and every one of the seven objectives.

**Question #7: Please confirm that projects are able to add additional objectives to the 7 included in the NOFO.**

**Response:** Please see answer above and here. All seven objectives of the NOFO must be addressed in the applicant's proposal. Additionally, if the applicant would like to address additional objectives and project activities that they think would best support the NOFO's overall goal in addition to the seven mandatory objectives they also do this as well. However, at a minimum the seven objectives listed in the NOFO must be included in the applicant's proposal and the applicant must create project activities for each and every one of the seven objectives.

**Question#8 Would activities providing direct assistance to beneficiaries in the form of Cash-based interventions be considered?**

**Response:** No. The applicant should focus on providing training to the project beneficiaries.