

U.S. Department of State

Notice Of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Program Office: Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation, Office of the Nonproliferation and Disarmament Fund (ISN/NDF)

Assistance Listing: 19.224

Funding Opportunity Title: **Biological Laboratory Network Mapping Assessment and Optimization in Chile**

Funding Opportunity Number: **DFOP0016575**

Announcement Type: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Award Type: Cooperative Agreement

Deadline for Applications: 7/22/2024

Available Funding: \$5,000,000

ELIGIBILITY

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- Domestic Not for Profit Organizations
- Foreign Not for Profit Organizations
- Public Institutions of Higher Education
- Private Institutions of Higher Education
- Foreign Public Entities (FPEs)/Public International Organizations (PIOs)
- Other: Domestic For-Profit Organizations, US Federal Agencies and Institutions

Cost-Sharing or Matching

This program does not require cost sharing; however, proposals which demonstrate cost sharing are welcomed and encouraged.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, please contact ISN/NDF Project Manager Samantha Anderson, AndersonS1@state.gov.

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of State's Office of the Nonproliferation and Disarmament Fund (ISN/NDF) is pleased to announce an open competition for assistance awards through this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). ISN/NDF invites non-profit/non-governmental organizations, international organizations, educational institutions, US federal agencies and institutions, and for-profit organizations to submit proposals for projects that will advance the mission of NDF's biological threat reduction special project. Proposals may not exceed the total availability of funds under this NOFO. ISN/NDF will only consider proposals that fully address all NDF's lines of effort, which are further described in Section II, in their entirety.

Organizations that submit an application in response to this NOFO announcement acknowledge and accept all the requirements contained herein. The submission in response to this announcement is voluntary and does not obligate the Department of State to fund the proposal or proposal preparation costs. ***Please note: Receipt of this NOFO requesting a full application should not be construed as a guarantee of funding. All awards are subject to the availability of funds and the negotiation and finalization of the approved budget and award package.***

II. BACKGROUND AND PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Office of the Nonproliferation and Disarmament Fund (NDF), part of the Department's Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation (ISN), develops and executes projects in support of U.S. Government disarmament and proliferation threat reduction priorities. ISN/NDF efforts prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), missiles, and advanced or destabilizing conventional weapons to terrorists and other rogue entities; support bilateral and multilateral efforts to halt the proliferation of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons, their delivery systems, related technologies, and other weapons; and secure, remove, or destroy WMD and its delivery systems.

NDF seeks to advance biological threat reduction through the implementation of a pilot project to identify, develop, and implement novel coordination approaches within a laboratory network as a model for replication in other country contexts. NDF will use this project to demonstrate a biological threat reduction approach that helps countries and regions better manage their laboratory networks and identify, detect, mitigate, and control high-consequence pathogens (HCP) using

surge/recovery methodologies as opposed to an approach that builds technical capacity in a single facility or ministry. The selected partner country for this initial line of effort is Chile.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a rapid worldwide increase in laboratory requirements and strained every country's laboratory system. As a result, countries have adapted to a new biological threat reduction operations landscape to include increased, sustained, and broad reliance on laboratory diagnostics. This project will optimize Chile's laboratory network to meet steady-state operational demands and international requirements while maintaining the capacity and agility to surge laboratory operations during a biological event and subsequently scale down as appropriate. The project will increase laboratory security, communications, and transparency within Chile's laboratory network and focus on how the laboratories are connected to and work with each other as a system. This will result in a coordinated laboratory operating system more capable of preventing deliberate or accidental HCP release, responding to biological events quickly, efficiently, and effectively, and preventing malign actors from accessing HCP related materials and sensitive biological facilities.

The Government seeks to holistically strengthen Chile's laboratory network by conducting activities such as:

- Assess, map, and optimize to the extent practical the existing laboratory network at the national, provincial, and local levels across ministries, functions, and biosafety levels.
- Provide recommendations to improve biosafety and biosecurity and eliminate storage or handling risks for an accidental release of HCPs, to include the potential upgrade, downgrade, decontamination, or decommissioning of laboratory facilities.
- Highlight critical cybersecurity gaps and provide cyber hardening measures to prevent access to sensitive laboratory data by malign actors.
- Conduct supply chain analysis for equipment, supplies, and consumables and develop a plan and/or standard operating procedure (SOP) to ensure Chile's supply chain access.
- Identify key communication and reporting structures within the country, region, and globe, and develop guidelines for sample consolidation and sharing, and continued laboratory evaluation.

- Assess the risk of potential disinformation relating to the implementation of laboratory upgrades, downgrades, or other actions associated with this project, and develop a proactive communications plan for the partner country to employ as necessary.

At the conclusion of this project, the partner country will be better prepared to prevent, detect, report, and coordinate response to biological threats or events. The Government also anticipates that the project will reduce global biological threats, support USG nonproliferation policy priorities, and serve as a model for likeminded donor countries to deploy elsewhere.

Objective

To strengthen Chile's laboratory network through a holistic and integrated suite of activities.

Scope

Conduct a comprehensive and integrated biological threat reduction and capacity building project with activities addressing Chile's national and provincial bioscience network. Facilities may include those involved in disease diagnostics and/or outbreak response; genetic analysis, sequencing, and/or synthesis; vaccine research and development; and other laboratory activities that require the handling and storage of HCPs, including public or private research facilities. Following laboratory network mapping and subsequent consultations with the Government of Chile to prioritize key sites, tailor the project activities to address key facilities within the laboratory network, pathogen holdings, unique threats and vulnerabilities, and other considerations. Develop, propose, and implement creative solutions to achieve the project objective throughout its lifecycle.

Phase I: Laboratory Network Mapping and Analysis

- 1) In coordination with ISN/NDF, US Embassy Santiago, and the Government of Chile (GoC), conduct a holistic Laboratory Network Mapping effort. This mapping may include, but is not limited to, communications strategies, data sharing practices, sample transport standard procedures, common and divergent biosafety and biosecurity protocols, bioinformatics and other software interoperability, emergency SOPs, and reporting mechanisms.

- 2) Conduct biological-related equipment, software, and consumable supply chain analyses. These reports may include, among other things, tracking the origins and routes of transport of relevant materials, identifying and assessing alternate suppliers, identifying timelines for procurement of materials, and identifying chokepoints or potential threats to required operation.
- 3) Based upon data collected during the project, prioritize and propose to the USG and GoC stakeholders relevant interventions to strengthen key regular and emergency coordination chains and networks for multisectoral reporting within the country, region, and globe. Develop creative strategies to strengthen the biosafety and biosecurity of the network, not limited to interventions suggested in this NOFO.
 - During the Laboratory Network Mapping effort of this Activity, the implementer may identify facilities that are no longer necessary to maintain biosecurity in Chile and that, due to lack of resources, maintenance, or training, or for any other reason, now present a significant risk of accidental or deliberate HCP release. If such facilities are identified, the implementer shall present these findings to the USG and GoC along with recommendations regarding the downgrade, decommission, and/or deconstruction of laboratories and/or their components, and/or pathogen consolidation and decontamination.
- 4) Assess the risk that the implementation of upgrades, downgrades, or other recommendations could lead to the propagation of misinformation or disinformation. Develop a proactive communications plan for GoC and USG partners to employ as necessary.
- 5) Create a final report, to be shared with the USG and GoC, detailing risk and vulnerability assessments, along with all recommendations and plans for implementation. This report should provide a roadmap for strengthening the security of Chile's overall national bioscience network. Submit reports for the Government's review and provide modifications based on Government feedback. Provide a professional translation of final, approved materials into Spanish.
- 6) Organize, facilitate, and present the findings of the reports to the GoC and relevant Chilean, US, and global stakeholders to socialize the status or outcomes and results of the Laboratory Network Mapping activity, to include facilitating international expert-led dialogue and incorporating consultative feedback as appropriate.

Phase II: Implementation of Recommendations

- 1) *Biosafety and Biosecurity Upgrades*: Provide biosafety and biosecurity upgrades to the partner country at site(s) approved by the NDF that strengthen the overall laboratory system. This may include the procurement, installation, and, as necessary, certification of equipment (e.g., biosafety cabinets, physical protection systems, etc.) and/or software to enhance biosafety and biosecurity. This may also include follow up assessments of the implementation and effectiveness of an upgrade on a facility.
- 2) *Cybersecurity Upgrades*: Provide cybersecurity upgrades as deemed necessary according to the site visits, vulnerability assessments, and regional cyber intrusion threats analysis undertaken in Phase I. The goal of the cybersecurity upgrades is to strengthen the overall laboratory system by ensuring effective and accurate data exchange between laboratories and providing cyber hardening measures to prevent illicit or unauthorized access to laboratory data. The cybersecurity activities should extend beyond basic cyber hygiene awareness and can include topics or activities such as software upgrades, providing patches to the existing system, or developing SOPs for cybersecurity maintenance.
- 3) *Supply Chain Improvements*: The goal of supply chain improvements is to ensure continuity of operations in times of increased demand by proactively identifying alternative sources for laboratory supplies, PPE, consumables, and other required goods. Supply chain improvements should support proactive planning for situations in which biological events necessitate increased laboratory operations. These improvements could include identifying alternative procurement sources, optimizing resupply schedules, establishing supply exchanges between laboratories, engaging the budgetary process of the GoC or other sources, and developing SOPs for how laboratories should order supplies and how to identify and onboard alternate suppliers during outbreaks (which items are high priority, which have longer lead times, which can be made or sourced locally, etc.). Capacity building may include, but is not limited to, workshops, technical exchanges, and/or red teaming.
- 4) *Operations Maintenance and Sustainment*: Provide operations maintenance and sustainment recommendations for the partner country to ensure the sustainment of all upgrades made during Phase II (e.g., biosafety, biosecurity, cybersecurity, supply chain improvements). Train

partner country key personnel on equipment and/or software operations and maintenance relating to these upgrades.

Project Management Expectations

- A. Organize and undertake a pre-project implementation meeting within 30 days of award and before any work is performed for the award.
- B. Provide oversight, strategic direction, and project management over all activities, to include ensuring a strong liaison approach in coordinating with the Government of Chile (GoC) and Chilean stakeholders. If necessary, NDF will facilitate connections with key personnel within the GoC, after which the implementer will maintain primary responsibility for routine communications with GoC personnel, with NDF providing continuing oversight and acting as the formal lead on submitting deliverables to the GoC.
- C. Provide Spanish translation on documentation and in communication with Chilean stakeholders and leverage fluent Spanish speakers with technical knowledge on the project subject matter to the greatest extent possible.
- D. Undertake limited-scope research and provide short, concise, actionable analysis on discrete questions tasked by the NDF.
- E. Undertake regular update meetings to be conducted via web conference. The periodicity for regular meetings shall be determined at the pre-project implementation meeting but shall occur no less frequently than once per month. Each meeting should be followed by an email summary of the meeting.
- F. Undertake ad hoc virtual or in-person meetings with NDF.
- G. For any events or engagements undertaken for this award, the implementer shall be responsible for all logistical organization and costs involved in Chilean engagements that are not explicitly exempted by the NDF in writing in advance. This includes, but is not limited to, identification and procurement of a venue, selection of and coordination with participants, travel, lodging, visa processing and issuance, travel and per diem of course participants, IT support, duplication of materials, event catering, interpretation, and translation costs.
 - a. For any trainings or large engagements, approval by NDF is required 45-days prior to the event to avoid cancellation or postponement. The NDF reserves the right to remove participants from the project at any time, or to extend the timeline for participant information on a

case-by-case basis. This approval request should include identified participants, stakeholders, or consultative experts, initial agendas, prospective locations, and projected travel and logistics requirements. NDF may waive this requirement at its discretion.

- H. For every site of upgrade or improvement under Phase II, the implementer shall develop a short assessment evaluating effectiveness of the upgrade(s) and any associated training, the personnel reaction to the upgrade(s), likelihood of successful operation and maintenance by the partner country, and recommendations for future refinements and additional needs.
- I. For every individual training/engagement conducted under Phase II, the implementer shall develop a short assessment survey for participants evaluating knowledge retention, the participants' reaction to the training, and recommendations for future refinements, continuing education, and additional needs. The implementer shall assess and analyze the results of the survey, and report on the results in the after-action report.
- J. Any required After-Action Reports shall be delivered to NDF within 10 business days after the event. The implementer shall deliver a report describing the event and including information such as:
 - a. The implementer's assessment of the relative success or failure of the event or outreach.
 - b. Complete list of contacts involved in the event, consulted as experts, or supporting analysis contained in the report and their information.
 - c. Any relevant photos.
 - d. Key outcomes of the event, including successes, challenges, and lessons learned.
 - e. Any comments or questions received by foreign government officials or other important stakeholders.
 - f. The results of any additional related assessments or surveys.
 - g. Recommendations for proposed follow-on work.
 - h. Other requirements determined by NDF and relayed to the implementer no later than the final day of any engagement.
- K. Final Report to include a summary of work under the award, an assessment of the successes, challenges, and lessons learned, and recommendations for proposed follow-on work.
- L. All training materials and reports developed under this award shall be the intellectual property of the Government and shall only be used by the Contractor at the direction of the Government.

M. The implementer shall not make any public announcements relating to the implementation of this award without the prior explicit written authorization of the GOR.

Proposal Consideration

All proposals must make a clear and compelling case for how the applicant will reduce biological threats stemming from a non-optimized laboratory system, how they will address partner-specific political, technical, and/or logistical realities, and how they will support the objectives of the NOFO and complement existing U.S. Government initiatives in this area. Sustainability is paramount to ISN/NDF's long-term biological threat reduction objectives. ISN/NDF will view the following attributes favorably in the proposal consideration process:

- Comprehensive proposals that fully address all phases of the biological threat reduction objectives above in their entirety;
- Outcomes that go beyond individual laboratory biological safety and security upgrades and training and address optimizing the entire laboratory network within Chile;
- Creative solutions that go beyond what is listed in the NOFO;
- Effective mechanisms for long-term sustainment post-engagement, including follow-up activities as part of other biological threat reduction programs;
- Nonproliferation or biological threat reduction benefit clearly evidenced by data-driven analysis and approaches;
- Proposals that demonstrate existing relationships with government or biological private sector entities in Chile;
- Proposals that demonstrate experience in the downgrade, decommission, and/or deconstruction of laboratories and/or their components, pathogen consolidation and decontamination;
- Proposals that build indigenous capacity within a partner country, and establish relationships between provincial partners;
- Multi-phased proposals to scope vulnerabilities and develop provincial and country-wide solutions;
- Proposals that emphasize cultural competency and Spanish language proficiency;
- Proposals tailored to fit local technical capabilities as well as resource environments;

- Proposals that consider effects stemming from changing climate and consider environmental sustainability in their recommendations;
- Past performance in systems engineering;
- Proposals that highlight efforts to encourage the inclusion of more women and other historically under-represented groups in implementer, subject matter expert, and participant roles.

III. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- *Not-for-profit organizations*
- *Public and private educational institutions*
- *Domestic For-profit organizations*
- *Public international organizations*
- *US federal agencies and institutions*

Applicants are not required to include funding from other donors. However, applications that include additional in-kind and/or cash contributions from non-U.S. Government sources will be more competitive, since cost sharing demonstrates a strong commitment to the planned activities and will be considered to show greater cost effectiveness.

When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability purposes, you must maintain written records to support all costs that are claimed as your contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's Circular 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. **In the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ISN/NDF contribution will be reduced in like proportion.**

All potential applicants should be knowledgeable of existing programs in the proposed countries/regions, including those funded by other Department of State

and U.S. Government interagency programs, in order to avoid duplication of effort.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Award Period: 24 to 36 months, though longer periods of performance may be considered on a case-by-case basis, up to 48 months.

Award Amount: ISN/NDF anticipates making a single award up to \$5,000,000.

Application Submission Process: Applicants must submit applications via [MyGrants](#). This website is available to all applicants. If you have difficulty registering on [MyGrants](#) or accessing the NOFO, please contact the Helpdesk at 1-888-313-ILMS (4567) or via the Self Service Portal at <https://afsitsm.servicenowservices.com/ilms/home.do> for technical assistance.

Bidding Conference: On June 18, 2024, 9:30am-10:30am ET, NDF will hold a bidding conference to answer questions from all potential applicants. Any programmatic questions are encouraged to be sent to ISN/NDF Project Manager Samantha Anderson, AndersonS1@state.gov, on or before June 12, 2024, 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) to ensure questions are robustly answered during the bidding conference. Prospective applicants may use the following WebEx link to join the Bidding Conference:
<https://statedept.webex.com/statedept/j.php?MTID=m471aea0b6204e5df9ddaa8178ce04a0a>

Application Deadline: All applications must be submitted on or before July 22, 2024, 11:59 p.m. EST. Applications submitted after 11:59 p.m. will be ineligible for consideration.

Begin the application process early, as this will allow time to address any technical difficulties that may arise in advance of the deadline. There will be no exceptions to this application deadline.

Required Registrations:

All organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and an active registration with the SAM.gov. A UEI is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards.

Note: As of April 2022, a DUNS number is no longer required for federal assistance applications.

The 2 CFR 200 requires that sub-grantees obtain a UEI number. Please note the UEI for sub-grantees is not required at the time of application but will be required before an award is processed and/or directed to a sub-grantee.

Note: The process of obtaining or renewing a SAM.gov registration may take anywhere from 4-8 weeks. Please begin your registration as early as possible.

- Organizations **based in the United States** or that pay employees within the United States will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov.
- Organizations **based outside of the United States** and that do not pay employees within the United States do not need an EIN from the IRS but do need a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov.
- **Please note that as of November 2022 and February 2023 respectively, organizations based outside of the United States that do not intend to apply for U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) awards are no longer required to have a NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) code or CAGE code to apply for non-DoD foreign assistance funding opportunities.** If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove a CAGE or NCAGE code from their SAM.gov registration, the applicant should submit a help desk ticket (“incident”) with the Federal Service Desk (FSD) online at www.fsd.gov using the following language: “I do not intend to seek financial assistance from the Department of Defense. I do not wish to obtain a CAGE or NCAGE code. I understand that I will need to submit my registration after this incident is resolved in order to have my registration activated.”

Organizations based outside of the United States and that DO NOT plan to do business with the DoD should follow the below instructions:

Step 1: Proceed to SAM.gov to obtain a UEI and complete the SAM.gov registration process. SAM.gov registration must be renewed annually.

Organizations based outside of the United States and that DO plan to do business with the DoD in addition to Department of State should follow the below instructions:

Step 1: Apply for an NCAGE code by following the instructions on the NSPA NATO website linked below:

NCAGE Homepage:

<https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/sc/CageList.aspx>

NCAGE Code Request Tool (NCRT):

Exemptions

An exemption from the UEI and sam.gov registration requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if:

- An applicant's identity must be protected due to potential endangerment of their mission, their organization's status, their employees, or individuals being served by the applicant.
- For an applicant, if the Federal awarding agency makes a determination that there are exigent circumstances that prohibit the applicant from receiving a unique entity identifier and completing SAM registration prior to receiving a Federal award. In these instances, Federal awarding agencies must require the recipient to obtain a unique entity identifier and complete SAM registration within 30 days of the Federal award date.

Organizations requesting exemption from UEI or SAM.gov requirements must email the point of contact listed in the NOFO at least two weeks prior to the deadline in the NOFO providing a justification of their request. Approval for a SAM.gov exemption must come from the warranted Grants Officer before the application can be deemed eligible for review.

Application Content: Applicants must follow the NOFO instructions and conditions contained herein and supply all information required. **Failure to furnish all information or comply with stated requirements will result in disqualification from the competition.** Applicants must set forth full, accurate, and complete information as required by this NOFO. The penalty for making false statements in proposals to the U.S. government is prescribed on 18 U.S.C.1001.

The completed submission must consist of the following four parts:

Section 1 - Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424):

This form is completed in the MyGrants portal. Completion instructions can be found on-line at: <https://www.grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-family>.

Section 2 – Project Proposal(s):

Using the provided template, the applicant must provide a completed project proposal no longer than 14 pages. The font must be Calibri with a font size no smaller than 11pt with 1-inch margins. A recommended breakdown of pages is listed below. The proposal form must be completed in its entirety and clearly specify the proposed scope, deliverables, and timeline. Applicants must specify a point of contact for each project that is proposed.

| Project Proposal Recommended Breakdown | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Cover Page | not counted in page limit |
| Table of Contents | not counted in page limit |
| Project Proposal | 10-pages |
| Organizational Capability | 2-pages |
| Past Performance Information | 2-pages |

Section 3 - Budget:

Applicants must provide a detailed budget for each project. The budget must identify the total amount of funding requested, with a breakdown of amounts to be spent in the following budget categories:

- Personnel
- Fringe benefits;
- Travel;
- Equipment

- Supplies;
- Contractual services;
- Construction;
- Other direct costs; and
- Indirect costs.
 - If the applicant organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) with the U.S. Federal Government, it must submit a copy of it as part of its application.

Section 4 – Budget Narrative:

Applicants must provide a full and detailed budget narrative for each project. The budget narrative should include details on how figures/numbers were calculated if not clearly shown in the detailed budget as well as a narrative description of each line item in the budget.

Section 5 – Key Personnel Resumes:

Applicants must provide a one-page (or less) resume for each of the four key personnel listed in Section 5 and may provide up to two other one-page resumes for consideration as key personnel. These resumes must be consolidated into a single document for submission.

Section 6 – Schedule/Timeline:

Applicants must provide a schedule or timeline for each phase and sub-activity using the provided template.

Applicants must adhere to the requirements of the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR), including Fly America Act requirements, when proposing and conducting travel. For further information and current foreign per diem rates, please visit: https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp

V. AWARD SELECTION CRITERIA

Applicants should note that the following criteria serve as a standard against which all project proposals will be evaluated and identify significant considerations that should be addressed in all proposals. ISN/NDF will award a cooperative agreement to the applicant(s) whose offer represents the best overall value to the government from both a technical and cost perspective.

ISN/NDF will evaluate proposals against the stated criteria.

- **Technical Understanding:** The applicant should include an informed analysis of the problem the proposed project seeks to address and appraise the potential results that the project seeks to achieve. Furthermore, the applicant should demonstrate knowledge of the cultural context, conditions, needs, other sensitivities, and opportunities within the respective country/region that may impact successful implementation of the proposed activities. ISN/NDF will evaluate the project proposal in terms of its comprehension of the problem set, analysis of programmatic risks and mitigation measures, and identification of meaningful end states by project completion. (15% weighting)
- **Technical Approach and Implementation Plan:** Applications should be responsive to the program framework and policy objectives identified in the solicitation, appropriate in the country/regional and organizational context, and should clearly describe what they propose to do and how they will do it. The proposed project(s) should directly relate to meeting all specified objectives and applicants should include specific information on how these objectives will advance ISN/NDF's mission. ISN/NDF will evaluate the project proposal in terms of how well it addresses the biological threat reduction issues at hand, relevance and feasibility of the proposed activities, the timeline for completion, and the extent to which the impact of the project will continue beyond the conclusion of the period of performance. (30% weighting)
- **Organizational Capability:** Applicants must demonstrate how their resources, capabilities, and experience will enable them to achieve the stated goals and objectives in an international technical context. In sum, the applicant must demonstrate experience and competency in:
 1. analyzing complex networks and/or supply chains to understand how the network operates, map interaction between nodes, and identify vulnerabilities and opportunities for improvement within the network,

2. providing education on effective methods of preventing and responding to biological events, particularly due to accidental, intentional, or natural release of High Consequence Pathogens (HCPs),
3. identifying cybersecurity vulnerabilities and implementing cyber hardening measures,
4. conducting projects and building relationships in Chile or other countries in South America or Central America, and
5. full professional written and oral proficiency in conversational and relevant technical Spanish equivalent to an Interagency Language Roundtable or Common European Framework of Reference to Languages level C1 or C2.

The proposal(s) must provide biographical details/resumes for key personnel and identify all partners and organizations that will be involved in implementation of this project. The proposal should identify key personnel to include, at minimum:

1. a project manager,
2. a deputy project manager,
3. a lead biological subject matter expert,
4. a systems engineer.

Organizations should also demonstrate their commitment to provide adequate security of their information systems and adherence to cyber security best practices. Finally, proposals should demonstrate how the applicant will manage all specified objectives within the project. (25% weighting)

- **Budget:** Proposed costs will be evaluated for realism, fiscal control practices, and efficiency. ISN/NDF must be able to determine that proposed costs are reasonable, allowable, and allocable to the proposed project activities. ISN/NDF will evaluate the budget to determine if the overall costs are realistic for the work to be performed, if the costs reflect the applicant's understanding of the allowable cost principles established by OMB Circulars A-122 and/or A-21, and if the costs are consistent with the project narrative. (20% weighting)

- **Past Performance:** In reviewing proposals, ISN/NDF will evaluate the organization's past performance on other federal and non-federal grants and cooperative agreements. This will include a review of whether objectives for past awards were met; whether the organization complied with the terms of conditions of past awards, including reporting and financial management requirements; and the timeliness of project implementation. (10% weighting)

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Award Notices: The award shall be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The Grants Officer is the government official delegated the authority by the U.S. Department of State Procurement Executive to write, award, and administer grants and cooperative agreements. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the Recipient through either mail or facsimile transmission. Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified in writing.

Anticipated Time to Award: Applicants should generally expect to be notified of the *recommended* concepts within 90 days after the submission deadline. Following this initial notification, **selected applicants will be expected to submit a full application within 30 days.** ISN/NDF staff will provide information at the point of notification about the requirements for the full application, which may include revisions to the activities. The full applications will not be subject to further competition, but must incorporate any suggested changes made by ISN/NDF.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government, nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the Government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

Project Implementation Meeting: The Recipient will have a pre-project implementation meeting with ISN/NDF within 30 days after the cooperative agreement is awarded and before any work is performed for the award.

Project Work Plan: The Recipient shall submit to ISN/NDF within 30 days of award a draft project work plan (PWP), aligned with project management best practices,

that includes a description of the project goal, discrete objectives, and planned activities; projected timeframes for accomplishing them; and performance indicators/metrics of success toward intended outcomes. ISN/NDF will review the plan in consultation with appropriate stakeholders and provide feedback to the Recipient detailing necessary revisions/adjustments to the plan to be made within 15 days of receipt.

Reporting Requirements: Applicants should pay special attention to the following reporting and deliverable requirements:

- The Recipient shall submit quarterly progress reports to the designated Grants Officer Representative (GOR) detailing:
 - Assistance activities conducted during the reporting period;
 - Milestones and successes achieved to date;
 - Key assistance activities remaining to be implemented with a projected timetable;
 - Attachments of any reports or deliverables submitted during the quarter;
 - Details of any issues encountered with proposed solutions; and
 - Any other pertinent information requested by ISN/NDF.
- The Recipient shall provide the GOR with copies of all materials developed under this award.
- In addition to regular quarterly reports, the Recipient shall furnish the GOR with ad hoc reports as requested from time to time.

In addition to the above, the Recipient shall submit quarterly financial reports throughout the project period. Financial reports are due 30 days after the reporting period. Final programmatic and financial reports are due 120 days after the close of the project period.

VII. DISCLAIMER

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with the award. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the total discretion of the Department of State.