NOFO SFOP0009810 Strengthening Sustainable Communities in Panama and Costa Rica – Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs
Questions and Answers , June 20, 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 have three questions:

Response: Per the NOFO, questions and answers will be posted on www.grants.gov. No phone calls.

1.) In regards to section A1 The prime applicant should have experience working with SBDCs and small businesses in Latin America and have capacity and experience to develop project activities that enable small business training. We have a proven track record with the development of small business training curriculum and all delivery aspects, however we have not developed SBDCs methodologies. How can we still consider applying?

If the applicant's organization has experience working with small business training and not Small Business Development Center (SBDC) methodologies it needs to either partner through a consortium to provide that training expertise or find technical experts through subawardees or contracted consultants to provide that the SBDC methodology training; however providing SBDC methodology training is a key component of the notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) that the applicant's proposal must address.

b) In regards to A2. Project Goals and Objectives do we necessarily have to create and develop activities for each of the 7 objectives mentioned in the announcement or can we develop activities that make an across the board impact?

All seven objectives of the NOFO must be addressed in the applicant's proposal. Additionally, if the applicant would like to address additional objectives 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.

c) In regards to how funds will be distributed to a consortium? Will all funds go to the lead applicant, or will separate grant agreements be established with each participating entity?

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. The lead organization is also known as the prime implementing organization if it is selected through this open competition. The prime organization is responsible for managing all funds of the grant and selecting and managing all subawards. If the applicant chooses to setup a consortium proposal, the applicant must select the subawardees and list them in the NOFO proposal narrative and what project objectives and activities that the subawardees will be working on. Additionally, the applicant then must break out the subawardee budgets in subaward detailed line item budgets and budget narratives.