Responses to Questions from FY19 ASHA RFA
72ASHA19RFA00001 - 8.23.19

<table>
<tr><th>Organization</th><th>Questions</th><th>ASHA Response</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Organization 1</td><td>Q1a: USO/OSI Partnership Context--
Our overseas institution is a university abroad. The president of the OSI is a US citizen and a member of the USO, the US affiliate of an international religious order
The director of the USO is a US citizen and serves on the Board of Directors of the University, the OSI, as well as the leadership council of the international religious order
The USO is the US/North American affiliate of an international religious order
The head of the international religious order is a US citizen and is also the president of the religious order's fundraising nonprofit located in Italy
The head of the international religious order is also a founder of the University, the OSI
The international religious order's nonprofit has raised over $6 million USD over the last two years for the OSI abroad
Funds raised by the nonprofit can be considered on behalf of the international religious order.
The USO is part of the international religious order
Would this connection described above, the USO as a US/North American affiliate of the international religious order, that has raised significant funding over the last two years through the religious order's international nonprofit, meet the eligibility requirements set out in C.1. in general and in particular, C.1.5, "a continuing relationship MUST include significant financial support ... "</td><td>Yes.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Q1b: Additionally, what dollar amount would USAID ASHA consider as significant financial support?</td><td>We have not set a dollar amount. We want to see evidence of collaboration and transactions demonstrating ability to move money from USO to OSI.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Organization 2</td><td>Q1: Think you might still need to add the referenced link (at Q3) to Oct. 2018 ASHA workshop materials on PD. I'm seeing this on the website, but not in the RFA itself. Would suggest either adding the link to the RFA or, if easier, changing the PC reference to direct applicants to the website.</td><td>Thank you, the RFA has been updated accordingly under the Phase I Merit Review Criterion.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Q2: Something also missing I think from the RFA discussion on past experience. PD discussion (at Q4) spot on and very helpful, but not yet reflected as far as I can tell in the RFA itself (at 27), which has a much narrower and in my experience less relevant focus. Would be best to add language along lines of the PC response (e.g., on bona fides objective, and especially applicants having latitude to “find different ways to substantiate past impact by providing any type of information that acts as evidence of this claim.” Will also be important, of course, for evaluators to apply this broader metric, rather than the restrictive one suggested at 27. If amending the RFA itself would be a problem, this point might be made in a further explicit Q&A.</td><td>The past impact language has been revised on p.28 to address this issue allowing the applicant to identify and substantiate past impact in different ways. This language allows applicant to use institutional indicators (not just donor indicators).Information provided should be verifiable and indicators used should track impact.</td></tr>
</table>

Responses to Questions from FY19 ASHA RFA
72ASHA19RFA00001 - 8.23.19

Organization	Questions	ASHA Response
Organization 3	**Q1a:** Regarding the Past Program Impact Statement for applicants from the Middle East-- By "donor-funded projects" (p.27), do you mean USAID-ASHA funded projects?	Projects funded by ANY DONOR. USAID does not restrict applicants to USG funded projects.
	Q1b: By "2016, 2017 and 2018" do you mean USAID-ASHA (or other donor-funded) *program awards from those years* OR the *performance of any previously funded USAID-ASHA (or other donor) funded programs during the past three years*?	Projects funded by ANY DONOR.
	Q1c: What constitutes "donor approved indicators?"	'Donor approved' reference has been removed and replaced with verifiable impact indicators tracked by the institution.
Organization 4	**Q1:** If an OSI is asking for funds from ASHA for commodities only, but is also using leveraged funds for construction to house the commodities, does that indicate the likelihood that the funds will be awarded under a cooperative agreement instead of a commodities only grant mechanism?	If USAID funds any construction/renovation OR procurement of commodities that require structural assessment to be installed, the award will be a cooperative agreement in accordance with USAID's official construction definition which is clearly defined in the RFA.
Organization 5	**Q1:** Phase I Technical Application Format, page 15 -- Each applicant must submit a Phase 1 Technical Application (Phase 1) using the Template from Annex 2. Shouldn't it be Annex I? Annex I presents the Technical Application Template.	Yes, thank you; the RFA has been updated accordingly.
	Q2: The point (d) in this same section states-- "(d) Summary of the project description in 100 words or less, which includes a statement of whether the project is for construction/renovation and/or commodities; and whether the OSI is a school, hospital center, library, or center of excellence. Applicants may wish to include a photo or sketch related to the project. (1 page)" With 1-page cover page, 3 pages of Eligibility, this 1 page and the 3-page response to the phase I merit review criterion (PD), the total number of pages becomes 8. Meanwhile, the ANNEX 1 on page 37 leads to 7 pages only (the page under point (d) is not listed in there and is expected to be part of the cover page. It would be helpful to clearly state that the Phase 1 technical application limit is 7 pages, similar to the statement on page 16 -- "The Phase 2 Technical Application (excluding attachments) must not exceed 20 pages".	Thank you. The RFA has been updated accordingly. There is now "III. Activity Summary (1 page)" section in the template.
	Q3: If the Phase 2 Technical Application is 20 pages, then with Business (Cost) application the total application pages may be 25, for instance. Is this understanding	Yes. Business Cost Application does not count again the 20 pages for Phase 2 Technical Application.

Responses to Questions from FY19 ASHA RFA
72ASHA19RFA00001 - 8.23.19

Organization	Questions	ASHA Response
	correct?	
	Q4: Page 13. "Application submissions must include the RFA number and applicant's name in the subject line heading." For full completeness, wouldn't it be necessary to also list "Phase I or Phase II Technical Application" or "Business (Cost) Application" after applicant's name?	Yes. See Section "4. Application Submission Procedures".
	Q5: Mandatory attachments' list does not include the SF-424 series, required Certifications and Assurances, Certificate of Compliance, Summary Budget Table, and Detailed Budget table as listed on page 17-18. Shouldn't these required attachments be included in the list of mandatory attachments? If yes, should a standardized naming/numbering be considered?	SF-424 series and required Certifications and Assurances, Certificate of Compliance will be submitted with the Business Application. Please see Section D,6 for details.
	Q6: The Mandatory as applicable attachments' list does not include Detailed Budget of Durable Commodities.	The Budget of Durable Commodities is included both in the Business Cost Application see Section D,6 for details.
	Q7: Page 17. "The Business Cost Application must contain the following sections (which are further elaborated below this listing with the letters for each requirement):" Again, we assume, the narrative in section SF-424 Forms will have to refer to SF-424 forms as a separate attachment.	Yes the SF-424 will be a separate attachment.
Organization 6	**Q1:** If an organization submitted a Phase 1 application which responded "No" to question #9, indicating that the USO and OSI would not have audited financial statements in time for the full application deadline, would the organization simply receive a response from USAID/ASHA stating that they are ineligible for the grant, or would the organization still receive feedback on the application/concept paper?	If it is clear that the Applicant will not be able to meet the audit requirement per question #9, the Applicant would be ineligible to be considered for funding in the current funding cycle and thus would not receive feedback on the Phase 1 application.
Organization 7	**Q1:** P 15, section 5.1 Technical Application Format-- "Each applicant must submit a Phase 1 Technical Application (Phase 1) using the Template from Annex 2. Phase 1 submissions will be reviewed by a Selection Committee (SC) according to the criteria outlined in Section E. Applicant submissions for the set-aside will be reviewed separately. The Phase 1 submission format is as follows; (See Annex 1 for Phase 1 Technical Application Template)." We believe you meant by the first sentence using the template from Annex 1, not Annex 2 as stated in the RFA, correct?	Correct. This has been addressed in the RFA.
	Q2: P18-19, section 6.d.d Detailed Budget of Durable Commodities (If applicable)-- "If the proposed project includes durable commodities, the durable commodities must be clearly broken out in the detailed budget above and included in a separate tab within the Budget Excel Document titled "Durable Commodities." The Durable Commodities budget must match the Detailed Budget section for Commodities. Applicants seeking funding for the purchase of commodities that fail to include this information as a separate attachment will be deemed ineligible."	Detailed Durable commodities table (if applicable) should be included as a separate tab in the detailed budget excel document. Please note that either a condensed version of the durable commodities cost or the detailed durable commodities cost must be included in the Detailed Budget tab.

Responses to Questions from FY19 ASHA RFA
72ASHA19RFA00001 - 8.23.19

Organization	Questions	ASHA Response
	Should this budget be included as a separate tab in the detailed budget excel sheet, or should it be included as a separate attachment? The RFA guidance seems to require both as stated above. Please advise.	
Organization 8	**Q1:** Does a screenshot of active status in SAM need to be included as part of the eligibility criteria in the Phase 1 Technical Application? If so, would this affect the page count for the Phase 1 Technical Application?	Yes the screenshot of active SAM status needs to be included with the eligibility criteria in Phase I. No, this does not count against the page count for Phase 1 Technical Application. Submit the appropriate Annex for the SAM screen shot.
Organization 9	**Q1:** Please confirm our understanding that the only criteria to be eligible for the Middle East set aside is the following-- ● Applicant's work is primarily focused on the Middle East (Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, West Bank & Gaza, Israel and Yemen). ● Applicants must also have ten or more years of experience in the Middle East region, and have had the same local partner for at least the past ten years.	That is correct. The past impact language has been updated to reflect the 10 years.
	Q2: As per page 9 of the RFA "Section C: Eligibility Information", *Applicants that incorrectly self-identify will not receive consideration for funding under this RFA.* Does this mean that the organization that meets the eligibility criteria for the set aside cannot apply for the general pool of funds?	This means that applicants who elect to apply for the set aside will be ranked according to those criteria. Please refer to the revised RFA. However, applicants that ranked at least Satisfactory will be ranked with the global pool of applicants for funding consideration.
Organization 10	**Q1:** If our request is for commodities, should we submit operational expenses as "leveraged funds"	Yes. ASHA does not fund operational costs.
	Q2: Phase 1 Application Template states: "All requested information should be submitted in the space provided below." There are stated limits such as "In no more than 100 words" or "4 lines," and items III and IV are not to exceed 3 pages. Is it permissible to use a Word version of the template as long as we stay within parameters listed?	Yes. The templates are now also is provided separately in word.
Organization 11	**Q1:** First, we remain concerned that the 30% partial set-aside established for applicants whose work is primarily focused on the Middle East may be misconstrued as a cap on grants to applicants from this region. In response to public comments on the draft RFA, the ASHA office has clearly stated that "the set aside is not a 'cap' on grants for institutions in the Middle East region," but instead "establishes a floor for grants to be awarded in the Middle East" and that this is now clarified in the RFA. However, clarifying language added to the RFA remains ambiguous – stating only that "approximately, but not less than 30% of the total estimated amount allocated to this RFA will be set-aside for applicants whose work is primarily focused on the Middle	We have inserted the language as suggested on page 5, 7 and 25 to read: The 30% set-aside establishes a floor and not a cap for grants to be awarded in the Middle East. On page 25 and 26 we have modified the language to read: "set-aside applicants" ranked satisfactory or higher will also be ranked against the general pool for funding consideration if the set-

Responses to Questions from FY19 ASHA RFA
72ASHA19RFA00001 - 8.23.19

Organization	Questions	ASHA Response
	East." We assume that the percentage reference refers to the amount of funds allocated for the set-aside channel only and not to funding available more generally to applicant institutions from the Middle East, but this should be more clearly stated. Ambiguity on this point would be eliminated by stating more explicitly in the RFA that the 30% set-aside establishes a floor and not a cap for grants to be awarded in the Middle East. Further, guidance elsewhere in the RFA (e.g., at 23) that "set-aside applicants" ranked satisfactory or higher "may" be ranked against the general pool for funding consideration if the set-aside funds have been exhausted should use the non-discretionary term "will" to ensure that the 30% set-aside does not inadvertently become a soft cap.	aside funds have been exhausted."
	Q2: Second, further clarification is also needed regarding the scope and intent of the new "past project impact statement." In response to public comments on the draft RFA, the ASHA office has stated that "the 'past impact' statement is an applicant's opportunity to address how the institution is positioned to address public diplomacy objectives" and that "applicants will find different ways to substantiate past impact by providing any type of information that acts as evidence for this claim." This welcome elaboration is not reflected in the RFA, which appears to limit applicant statements to "verifiable current data" for "donor-funded projects" over the past three years for which demonstrable "strategic impacts" can be "easily attributed" to the donor funding. This is a very restrictive standard, with limited relevance in an ASHA public diplomacy context (beyond traditional risk assessment) or to the broader purpose of the new impact statement as we understand it. We are further concerned that, absent clarifying guidance, applicants will be left to choose between the narrow RFA formulation and broader standard elaborated in the ASHA Office response to public comments – at potentially catastrophic risk to an applicant institution's prospects should it make the wrong choice. We recommend adding to the RFA the referenced text from the ASHA Office response, which offers a very succinct and helpful guide to prospective applicants, or otherwise confirming that applicants may rely on the standard elaborated in the ASHA Office response to public comments.	The concerns were understood and the RFA language was modified to allow more flexibility in the types of data provided.
	Q3: Several Coalition members have also requested further clarification regarding the directive to use Annex 1 for Phase 1 Technical Applications – more specifically, whether in submitting an application they must replicate Annex 1 verbatim or may address specific points in their own fashion as in past cycles. While the RFA guidance (at 15) is ambiguous, preamble language in the Annex itself (at 37) appears to require	The RFA template is provided for all Applicants to follow and to avoid any misinterpretation by Application reviewers. Please use and follow the template as provided, verbatim.

Responses to Questions from FY19 ASHA RFA
72ASHA19RFA00001 - 8.23.19

Organization	Questions	ASHA Response
	that an applicant replicate the cover page and eligibility sections without change. We recommend a more flexible approach, allowing individual applicants to present required information in a manner appropriate to their respective circumstances. Please also advise whether, if replication is required, this should include a full replication of the listed questions as well.	
Organization 12	**Q1:** Will ASHA reimburse the USO for an American Hospital Abroad that is already in place in the foreign country, is being financed and monthly payments are ongoing through current fundraising?	ASHA does not reimburse past work. We can support part of an ongoing project but USO must clearly designate what that project is and how it expects to make changes.
	Q2: Are ASHA grant dollars eligible to be used for maintenance of capital equipment and/or replacement?	No. The USO will be expected to provide for how the operations and maintenance will be financed into the future.
	Q3: How are ASHA payments made: one-lump sum or multiple payments?	Depending on the USO, ASHA will reimburse the USO via letter of credit or if the situation merits it, an advance/reimbursement system can be used (not preferred option).
	Q4: Our USO has a formal relationship with another USO, which is a current prime contractor with USAID, and has well over ten years of formal experience with OSIs in the Middle East. May we submit an application for an ASHA grant in partnership with that USO?	To be clear, the USO that will be considered for the award needs to be the one with the 10+ years experience with an OSI (a local entity) in the Middle East (e.g. OSI). ASHA funds go from USO to OSI, not USO to USO.
	Q5: Will our USO score higher if we partner with an NGO with considerable experience in the target country?	No. We review applications ONLY based on merit review criteria identified in the RFA.
	Q6: Does having "Cost Sharing Funds" make our USO a better candidate?	No..
	Q7: Which Middle Eastern country has the highest priority for USAID - Jordan or Morocco?	Neither has higher priority. At this point in time, the Jordan mission is not providing mission concurrence for projects in Jordan. ASHA strongly recommends USO/OSI partnership approach the mission directly to explore whether the mission will consider providing mission concurrence for the activity.
	Q8: Does Israel have a preference on which country is a top priority in the Middle East?	No.
	Q9: What are the top three African countries where USAID wants to foster mutual understanding?	ASHA's mission is worldwide. It is up to applicant to make the case.