1- Question: In the application for Federal Assistance (SF-424), we are asked to provide a DUNS number, what is this number? Are we required to get it and if so, how can we get before the deadline to file? DUNS are also one of the pre-award certifications, assurances and other statements that are requested by the applicant. What do we submit there? Please clarify this point.

Answer: Yes all vendors are required to obtain a DUNS number.

For contractors located outside the United States, D&B has Information Service offices worldwide. To obtain the location and contact information of the local D&B office, those contractors can also visit **http://www.dnb.com**. See FAR 52.204-6.

Guidance for Obtaining a DUNS Number:

http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/302sao.pdf

2- Question: Also on SF-424, question 19, is application subject to review by State under Executive Order 12372 Process? What do we answer?

Answer: Please follow the below link that provides instructions for the SF 424:
http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/form/SF424.pdf

Executive Order 12372 (E.O. 12372), "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," structures the federal government's system of consultation with state and local governments on its decisions involving grants, other forms of financial assistance, and direct development. Under E.O. 12372, states, in consultation with their local governments, design their own review processes and select those federal financial assistance and direct development activities they wish to review. Since October 1, 1983, most states, including the State of California, have acted to establish a review and comment system in response to E.O. 12372. In such cases, applicants for grants will need to meet the requirements of the intergovernmental consultation process established by a particular state and its local governments before Federal agencies take action on the application.

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance lists the federal programs subject to review. Select yes for "Executive Order 12372" on the Advanced Search page at
https://www.cfda.gov/?s=program&tab=search&mode=list.

3- Question: The RFA puts a limit of thirty pages on the program application. Are there any guidelines on formatting of the document such as line spacing, font size, font type, etc…?

Answer: The application, and its attachments, is preferred to be in MS Office compatible format such as MS Word or Excel, and ideally submitted in single spaced, font Times New Roman and size 11, with pages numbered consecutively.

4- Question: Under the TECHNICAL PROPOSAL FORMAT section of the application, we are requested to submit a budget and an accompanying budget narrative. We are also asked to submit a budget and a budget narrative under the COST/BUSINESS APPLICATION FORAMT Section. are those two sections asking for the same thing? If not, then what is the difference?

Answer: Yes it is the same thing

5- Question: We are having a hard time filling out form SF- 424A. Which section do we fill out? What are the Catalog program title and Catalog number that are requested in Section A line 1 a) and b). In section B- Budget Categories, where do we place the costs for tuition assistance, housing, books, etc… Do we lump everything under one 6h (other)?

Answer: Please find instructions on SF 424on the link below and the document itself attached too: http://idea.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/sf424a.pdf

6- Question: Under the section titles "Other submission requirements for applications submitted in response to this RFA consist of" (page 12 of RFA), you list the following as required:

"Current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) negotiated between the applicant and a Federal agency (if available). If a NICRA is not available, the following is required: 1) Copies of the applicant's financial reports for the previous 3-year period, which have been audited by a certified public accountant or other auditor satisfactory to USAID; 2) Projected budget, cash flow and **organizational chart**; 3) A copy of the organization's accounting manual."

The organizational chart that is talked about is for the accounting department or for the whole university?

Answer: The organizational chart that is talked about is for the Whole University

7- Question: On page 6, 1st paragraph, the RFA states, "The implementing partners will be encouraged to the extent possible to send scholars one full time semester to another leading not-for-profit university based in Lebanon preferably already implementing the University Scholarship Assistance Program". We appreciate clarifying the benefit gained from this step, especially that other universities have similar curricula. We are concerned about the practicality of this exercise as it will impose transportation problems for the students.

Answer: The semester in another university already implementing USP, under its previous phases, is an important step to engage beneficiary students with each others in the different universities. Equally important, this is of importance beyond academia where students will engage with new students, environments and backgrounds. It is up to the implementing partner to devise the methodology to ensure the success of the exchange, including the means to promote the exchange, the message that will be conveyed to promote the exchange benefits, the restrictions that govern the exchange depending on the major, year of study, program requirements and student exchange. Transport should not be a problem since universities under question are all located in Beirut. This is a component that applicants are encouraged to consider.

8- Question: On page 6, 5th paragraph, there is the following sentence: "The implementing partners must demonstrate the benefits of such decision in the application". Kindly clarify what "decision" is referred to in this context.

Answer: The decision under question is when the applicant determines, based on concrete and reasonable justification that maintains cost effective strategies that all scholars will be housed in the student dorms irrespective of their housing needs. This decision is subject to scrutiny and review by USAID since common practice reflects that not all students are in need of housing, and may be offered transportation allowance instead as per RFA.

9- Question: On page 7, 5th paragraph, there is a stipulation that up to $3,000 per student shall be dedicated to fund initiatives that provide USP scholars the means to participate in civic engagement and in community projects in their hometowns. We kindly request elaborating what USAID needs. In particular, whether applicants need to run community projects in their hometowns or their regions, or whether you suggest giving the students cash money to do their community project.

Answer: the RFA is clear and states "A very small amount no more than $3,000 per scholar shall be dedicated to fund such initiatives." The funds are intended to support local community projects and not to transfer cash funds to each student. Students should not be handling $3,000 on their own. The $3,000 should be spent on a detailed local community project that has a specific and detailed budget and already approved by USAID as per RFA. Applicable financial management practices should be respected while disbursing funds. The implementing partner manages the funds. Irrespective of the number of students engaged per local community project, the $3,000 is dedicated per student and not per project. Community projects can be part of an established course that is practical, requires field work and the community project constitutes part of the grade evaluation and course completion. All projects must network with a local non-state actor such as a non-governmental organization, local advocacy group, a school, a local dispensary, amongst others.

10- Question: On page 8, 8th paragraph, the RFA suggest that applicants should aim to reduce program cost by such means as creative housing solutions and student employment. Student employment is a good idea but our concern is that the beneficiary scholars might not do too well academically if they are employed as they will have less available time for their studies, knowing that USAID expects at least a 95% graduation rate (as per page 8, 6th paragraph). Appreciate receiving your advice in this regard.

Answer: It is up to the applicant to determine best approaches to ensure costs reduction, and scholars' success. This is subject to technical evaluation.

11- Question: On page 11 of the RFA (Item 2: Full Application for Funding), the RFA states that the average cost of an audit is approximately $10,000. This figure is in compliance with the one provided by our external auditors. Please let us know if we can use $10,000/year as cost sharing in the budget.

Answer: The cost of yearly audit can be cost shared and the cost of $10,000/year can be reflected in the budget as such.

12- Question: Our final question is regarding the management team. We suggest having the same management team of USPII program that is currently implementing USPII to handle USP4 program. The reason for this is two-fold: 1) USPII management team has acquired valuable experience and it will be an added-value to have them for the USP4 program, and 2) This will minimize the cost, which is a requirement under this RFA. We suggest that USPII team stays for USP4, in addition to hiring two assistants (one assistant project coordinator and one assistant academic monitor) for the USP4 program in order to support the management team for the extra work. We kindly seek your confirmation of approving this suggestion.

Answer: It is up to the applicant to determine the best approach to the management team and pro vide

BUDGET INFORMATION - Non-Construction Programs

OMB Approval No. 0348-0044

SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY

Grant Program Function or Activity (a)	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (b)	Estimated Unobligated Funds		New or Revised Budget		
		Federal (c)	Non-Federal (d)	Federal (e)	Non-Federal (f)	Total (g)
1.		$	$	$	$	$ 0.00
2.						0.00
3.						0.00
4.						0.00
5. Totals		$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00

SECTION B - BUDGET CATEGORIES

6. Object Class Categories	GRANT PROGRAM, FUNCTION OR ACTIVITY				Total
	(1)	(2)	(3)		(5)
a. Personnel	$	$	$	$	$ 0.00
b. Fringe Benefits					0.00
c. Travel					0.00
d. Equipment					0.00
e. Supplies					0.00
f. Contractual					0.00
g. Construction					0.00
h. Other					0.00
i. Total Direct Charges *(sum of 6a-6h)*	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
j. Indirect Charges					0.00
k. TOTALS *(sum of 6i and 6j)*	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00
7. Program Income	$	$	$	$	$ 0.00

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Standard Form 424A (Rev. 7-97)
Prescribed by OMB Circular A-102

Previous Edition Usable

SECTION C - NON-FEDERAL RESOURCES				
(a) Grant Program	(b) Applicant	(c) State	(d) Other Sources	(e) TOTALS
8.	$	$	$	$ 0.00
9.				0.00
10.				0.00
11.				0.00
12. TOTAL *(sum of lines 8-11)*	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00

SECTION D - FORECASTED CASH NEEDS					
	Total for 1st Year	**1st Quarter**	**2nd Quarter**	**3rd Quarter**	**4th Quarter**
13. Federal	$ 0.00	$	$	$	$
14. Non-Federal	0.00				
15. TOTAL *(sum of lines 13 and 14)*	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00

SECTION E - BUDGET ESTIMATES OF FEDERAL FUNDS NEEDED FOR BALANCE OF THE PROJECT				
(a) Grant Program	FUTURE FUNDING PERIODS (Years)			
	(b) First	(c) Second	(d) Third	(e) Fourth
16.	$	$	$	$
17.				
18.				
19.				
20. TOTAL *(sum of lines 16-19)*	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00

SECTION F - OTHER BUDGET INFORMATION	
21. Direct Charges:	22. Indirect Charges:
23. Remarks:	

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SF-424A

General Instructions

This form is designed so that application can be made for funds from one or more grant programs. In preparing the budget, adhere to any existing Federal grantor agency guidelines which prescribe how and whether budgeted amounts should be separately shown for different functions or activities within the program. For some programs, grantor agencies may require budgets to be separately shown by function or activity. For other programs, grantor agencies may require a breakdown by function or activity. Sections A, B, C, and D should include budget estimates for the whole project except when applying for assistance which requires Federal authorization in annual or other funding period increments. In the latter case, Sections A, B, C, and D should provide the budget for the first budget period (usually a year) and Section E should present the need for Federal assistance in the subsequent budget periods. All applications should contain a breakdown by the object class categories shown in Lines a-k of Section B.

Section A. Budget Summary Lines 1-4 Columns (a) and (b)

For applications pertaining to a *single* Federal grant program (Federal Domestic Assistance Catalog number) and *not requiring* a functional or activity breakdown, enter on Line 1 under Column (a) the Catalog program title and the Catalog number in Column (b).

For applications pertaining to a *single* program *requiring* budget amounts by multiple functions or activities, enter the name of each activity or function on each line in Column (a), and enter the Catalog number in Column (b). For applications pertaining to multiple programs where none of the programs require a breakdown by function or activity, enter the Catalog program title on each line in *Column* (a) and the respective Catalog number on each line in Column (b).

For applications pertaining to *multiple* programs where one or more programs *require* a breakdown by function or activity, prepare a separate sheet for each program requiring the breakdown. Additional sheets should be used when one form does not provide adequate space for all breakdown of data required. However, when more than one sheet is used, the first page should provide the summary totals by programs.

Lines 1-4, Columns (c) through (g)

For new applications, leave Column (c) and (d) blank. For each line entry in Columns (a) and (b), enter in Columns (e), (f), and (g) the appropriate amounts of funds needed to support the project for the first funding period (usually a year).

For continuing grant program applications, submit these forms before the end of each funding period as required by the grantor agency. Enter in Columns (c) and (d) the estimated amounts of funds which will remain unobligated at the end of the grant funding period only if the Federal grantor agency instructions provide for this. Otherwise, leave these columns blank. Enter in columns (e) and (f) the amounts of funds needed for the upcoming period. The amount(s) in Column (g) should be the sum of amounts in Columns (e) and (f).

For supplemental grants and changes to existing grants, do not use Columns (c) and (d). Enter in Column (e) the amount of the increase or decrease of Federal funds and enter in Column (f) the amount of the increase or decrease of non-Federal funds. In Column (g) enter the new total budgeted amount (Federal and non-Federal) which includes the total previous authorized budgeted amounts plus or minus, as appropriate, the amounts shown in Columns (e) and (f). The amount(s) in Column (g) should not equal the sum of amounts in Columns (e) and (f).

Line 5 - Show the totals for all columns used.

Section B Budget Categories

In the column headings (1) through (4), enter the titles of the same programs, functions, and activities shown on Lines 1-4, Column (a), Section A. When additional sheets are prepared for Section A, provide similar column headings on each sheet. For each program, function or activity, fill in the total requirements for funds (both Federal and non-Federal) by object class categories.

Line 6a-i - Show the totals of Lines 6a to 6h in each column.

Line 6j - Show the amount of indirect cost.

Line 6k - Enter the total of amounts on Lines 6i and 6j. For all applications for new grants and continuation grants the total amount in column (5), Line 6k, should be the same as the total amount shown in Section A, Column (g), Line 5. For supplemental grants and changes to grants, the total amount of the increase or decrease as shown in Columns (1)-(4), Line 6k should be the same as the sum of the amounts in Section A, Columns (e) and (f) on Line 5.

Line 7 - Enter the estimated amount of income, if any, expected to be generated from this project. Do not add or subtract this amount from the total project amount, Show under the program

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SF-424A (continued)

narrative statement the nature and source of income. The estimated amount of program income may be considered by the Federal grantor agency in determining the total amount of the grant.

Section C. Non-Federal Resources

Lines 8-11 Enter amounts of non-Federal resources that will be used on the grant. If in-kind contributions are included, provide a brief explanation on a separate sheet.

Column (a) - Enter the program titles identical to Column (a), Section A. A breakdown by function or activity is not necessary.

Column (b) - Enter the contribution to be made by the applicant.

Column (c) - Enter the amount of the State's cash and in-kind contribution if the applicant is not a State or State agency. Applicants which are a State or State agencies should leave this column blank.

Column (d) - Enter the amount of cash and in-kind contributions to be made from all other sources.

Column (e) - Enter totals of Columns (b), (c), and (d).

Line 12 - Enter the total for each of Columns (b)-(e). The amount in Column (e) should be equal to the amount on Line 5, Column (f), Section A.

Section D. Forecasted Cash Needs

Line 13 - Enter the amount of cash needed by quarter from the grantor agency during the first year.

Line 14 - Enter the amount of cash from all other sources needed by quarter during the first year.

Line 15 - Enter the totals of amounts on Lines 13 and 14.

Section E. Budget Estimates of Federal Funds Needed for Balance of the Project

Lines 16-19 - Enter in Column (a) the same grant program titles shown in Column (a), Section A. A breakdown by function or activity is not necessary. For new applications and continuation grant applications, enter in the proper columns amounts of Federal funds which will be needed to complete the program or project over the succeeding funding periods (usually in years). This section need not be completed for revisions (amendments, changes, or supplements) to funds for the current year of existing grants.

If more than four lines are needed to list the program titles, submit additional schedules as necessary.

Line 20 - Enter the total for each of the Columns (b)-(e). When additional schedules are prepared for this Section, annotate accordingly and show the overall totals on this line.

Section F. Other Budget Information

Line 21 - Use this space to explain amounts for individual direct object class cost categories that may appear to be out of the ordinary or to explain the details as required by the Federal grantor agency.

Line 22 - Enter the type of indirect rate (provisional, predetermined, final or fixed) that will be in effect during the funding period, the estimated amount of the base to which the rate is applied, and the total indirect expense.

Line 23 - Provide any other explanations or comments deemed necessary.