

1. Are key personnel expected to be full-time on this project?

Key personnel are not expected to be full-time for the entire term of the project. However, all key personnel should provide a minimum of 20% level of effort over the term of the LWA.

2. Is the work expected to be evenly distributed between the technical sectors, i.e. solar PV, wind, and hydro?

The distribution will be determined by the needs of USAID missions and the counterpart institutions, and may not be evenly distributed.

3. Can non-US organizations bid on this RFA?

Yes, non-US organizations are eligible to submit an application pursuant to this RFA.

4. Is this program expected to fund RE technology installations?

The program may need to install equipment that will be used for training purposes only.

5. I am wondering if the project fulfillment has preferences. Would you kindly address:

[Is] training to be conducted primarily in the US, (ie U.S. Jobs)?

It is up to the applicant to propose where training will be conducted

6. Applicant-educational organization offers concurrent training facilities/services overseas?

The applicant must have access to training facilities at which it can host trainees, and must also be able to conduct training within USAID-assisted countries/institutions (away from its own facilities)

- 7. [Does] “students in America” include people being trained from foreign countries and then taking back their new skills to the subject countries?**

In some cases training may take place outside the USAID-assisted country; the trainees are expected to bring their skills back to their home countries

- 8. Students in America are Americans being trained to work in foreign countries on contracts/visas?**

Applicants may be required to obtain relevant visas for trainees being trained outside their home countries, whether in the US or elsewhere. The objective of the VOC TEC program is to build capacity within USAID partner countries, not within the US.

- 9. However first and foremost I was wondering about eligibility. [Potential applicant] is a public Comprehensive Community College in...and thus I was wondering if we would even be eligible to submit an application or is this only for US based organizations?**

Non-US organizations are eligible to submit an application

- 10. I looked at the full announcement of USAID for Vocational Training and Renewable Energy seems to be missing Biomass mentioned. Biomass for Bioenergy and Biofuels is a renewable energy resource. It can be grown by the people in poverty for an income that will permit them to buy food. [Would USAID] consider adding this renewable energy resource to an amendment to the Request for Proposal?**

Biomass is not one of the technical areas covered by the RFA.

- 11. Can [Applicant], as international organization, directly submit technical proposal without USA partner organization?**

Non-US organizations are eligible to submit an application.

12. Is Biogas energy technology eligible for the grant?

No, the focus of the RFA is solar PV, wind, and micro-hydro.

13. How will funds be distributed for this Cooperative Agreement (reimbursement, quarterly cash distribution, etc.)?

USAID will discuss with apparent winner prior to award.

14. Am I correct to assume that training is to be done in the US and only assessments must be completed abroad?

Training may be conducted within the USAID-assisted country counterpart institution, as well as elsewhere. Applicant training facilities are not required to be located in the US.

15. Are we expected to purchase relevant equipment, or will it suffice to have access to just have access to equipment for the purposes of hands on training?

Applicants must have access to equipped training facilities for hands-on training. In some cases, they may be required to purchase relevant equipment to help counterparts set up their own training facilities.

16. Are there 4 specific countries we must work with or do we decide which ones (Afghanistan and Pakistan are mentioned)?

There is no priority given to any country, and no pre-set number of countries in which VOC TEC will work. Activities under the program could be implemented in any USAID-assisted country.

17. Can you explain how to attain a “Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement” or an “Indirect Rate Agreement”? And what is the “cognizant agency” referred to on page 15 where it talks about NICRA? Is this something that only an agency that has received a USAID grant funding in the past would have?

A Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) or an Indirect Rate Agreement may be obtained by following the procedures outlined in VIII(C)iv., on pages 15-16 of the RFA for this award. USAID’s Overhead and Special Costs and Contract Closeout branch will work with any potential grantee that does not have a NICRA with the federal government to develop a NICRA for work with USAID.

“Cognizant Agency” on page 15 refers to the government agency which has been assigned cognizance for the firm. Usually the cognizant government agency is the agency which has the largest dollar volume of contracts with the firm. Therefore, if an applicant has a NICRA with an agency other than USAID, that NICRA will still apply to USAID awards since a NICRA negotiated by the cognizant agency is binding on the entire government.

18. Can we view past successful applications for Vocational Training and Education for Clean Energy or similar? If so, how do we acquire these?

Because successful applications may contain sensitive financial and organizational information and trade secrets, USAID does not make them available to the public.

19. There were no attachments to this RFA (the zipped file only contained the RFA, with no other attachments. Where would I find the Initial Environment Examination (IEE)?

The zip file is automatically generated by Grants.gov. The Full Announcement PDF file contains all of the relevant information for this award. USAID does not generally post IEEs to Grants.gov., however USAID can make the IEE for this award available if an applicant requests it.

20. Can funds be used for Construction and Renovation?

No construction or renovation activity is anticipated. Equipment installation may be possible with prior USAID Agreement Officer approval and subject to the IEE.

21. Is there a limit on procurement of training equipment?

Procurement of training equipment is only limited by the funding level and terms and conditions for this award, and the approval of the Agreement Officer's Technical Representative and Agreement Officer.