ASHA FY24 RFA (7201P124R00001)
Questions & Answers
Posted 08/16/2024

Question	Answer
RFA	
In previous versions of this RFP, there was a set aside for U.S. organizations (USOs) that had long-standing relationships with Overseas Institutions (OSIs) located in the Middle East. That set aside has been removed from this RFP. Why was that done?	The Middle East Set-Aside was removed because the set-aside goals were achieved. Removing all set-asides enables ASHA to be responsive to dynamic global needs as they evolve.
Would it be possible to send us a copy of a successful application as a reference, as this is our first time applying?	Unfortunately, no, ASHA cannot provide examples of applications.
How many applications do you typically receive during each RFA period?	ASHA has received anywhere from 100 to 220 applications during an RFA cycle.
Is there any government list of what is considered American values? I imagine 20 people might answer this question in 20 different ways.	No, there is no definitive list of American values, ideas, and/or best practices (ABPs). The ABPs selected by the Applicant must be defined and justified by the Applicant in the Phase 1 application. Applicants are encouraged to make a case for ABPs that they believe are of value and promoted. ABPs are values, ideas, or best practices that are broadly held dear by the people of the U.S., and are oftentimes shared by both the target audience and the people of the U.S. ABPs may include, but are not limited to, the following: inclusion, tolerance, diversity, democratic participation, gender equality, meritocracy, technologies, pedagogies, approaches, resilient construction, various risk reductions, sustainable energy, and environmental resilience.
Is an OSI's eligibility or favorability for award impacted by whether they have previously received an award from ASHA?	No, having previously received an award has no effect on whether an organization will receive an award under another RFA. All applications are evaluated against the merit review criteria listed in Section E.2 of the RFA.

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The RFA indicates that ASHA is willing to cover up to $30,000 of M&E costs; could this include compensation/salaries for staff engaged in M&E activities? Would you provide additional examples of what M&E costs could and could not be covered by ASHA?	M&E funds provided by ASHA can not be used for salaries (full-time or consultant). Examples of M&E costs include before/after surveys and public diplomacy outreach activities.
The RFA mentions "other non-expendable items" in a list of durable commodities ASHA is willing to finance and says that "specialized medical and research technology" are allowed (p. 31-32). Would Electronic Medical Records systems be an example of allowable non-expendable items that are a kind of medical technology?	Yes, Electronic Medical Records systems could be considered durable commodities if they have a lifespan of three years or longer.
With the understanding that only one USO and one OSI can be identified in the application. Is ASHA open to considering initiatives designed to also bring broader impacts for additional partners? For example, in a hospital center context, if a pilot program (perhaps related to telehealth or electronic records) with one hospital (the designated OSI) was also designed to impact other partner hospitals through knowledge or resource sharing during the course of the project?	ASHA will consider projects that intend to positively impact multiple organizations. The ASHA program aims to ensure the outreach of American Best Practices (ABPs). A successful project can share "lessons learned" or help build capacity with others in-country. Please note that the OSI and any direct recipients of ASHA-funded durable commodities/construction activities must be free of the non-U.S. government control.
Footnote 5 indicates that "hospital centers are institutions where medical education and research occur…" What is and what is not considered "research" in that context (as a question of eligibility)?	Medical research is research aimed at understanding or treating a disease or health condition with the ultimate aim of improvement of human health or quality of life. Performing medical research is not a requirement for eligibility as a hospital center.
Application Requirements	
Consecutive page numbering – Does this need to be done throughout the application or is it okay to number each attachment within itself (Example: M2/Page 1 of 20 and Technical Application/Page 1 of 13)?	The consecutive page numbering should be done within each file/attachment, similar to the example you provided.
If we download the SF-424 forms from Grants.gov and complete as a form, is that considered a "searchable PDF?" Is that format acceptable or do you want us to convert it to a searchable PDF?	All PDFs should be in a searchable format. Here is a link with more information on making a PDF searchable: https://www.adobe.com/acrobat/hub/make-a-pdf-searchable.html
What file names should we use for the Technical Application and Budget?	Please name files with the type of document and your organization name, e.g., "Phase 1 Technical Application - ABC Nonprofit."

Question	Answer
The RFA states that “One USO may not receive more than two awards.” Can we submit more than two applications?	No, USOs may submit a maximum of two applications.
What Is required to apply for this grant?	Please review the RFA in its entirety and the annexes for the requirements to apply for a grant.
Is there a word limit to responses on the Application Form?	Page limits for documents are listed in Annex 5 - Required Application Documents. There is no word limit to the responses in the Google Form fields, but please keep responses concise.
U.S. Organization (USO) and Overseas Institution (OSI)	
Can schools or hospitals that are not American benefit from this project? I am writing from outside of the United States.	The overseas institution (OSI) must be located outside the United States. When the U.S. organization (USO) and OSI are separate entities, then the OSI headquarters must be located outside the United States. The project to be implemented by the OSI should aim to benefit the local population through the implementation of American Best Practices.
I am collecting information to present to [an OSI I am a part of] and I am interested in the…[ASHA FY 24 RFA], and since it is located outside of the US, are we eligible to apply for the aforementioned opportunity?	Applicants must be a U.S. not-for-profit non-governmental organization (USO) that is partnered with an overseas institution (OSI), for at least two years, who is located in the country of implementation. Please see “Section C: Eligibility Information” for eligibility requirements.
The RFA states that “OSIs must be founded or sponsored by U.S. citizens.” If the OSI was not founded by citizens but receives funding from USG agencies, are they eligible?	Sponsored by U.S. citizens means a continuing relationship with the USO that includes significant financial support from the USO; and may include technical support, joint ventures, exchange programs, volunteer placement programs, faculty exchanges, fundraising, and in-kind contributions. Partnerships and mutual collaborations alone are insufficient.
If the OSI is a US non-profit entity but entirely operates in another country, would they be eligible for inclusion in a proposal?	The OSI must be a school, hospital center, library, or center of excellence located outside the United States.
Can you quantify what “sponsored by U.S. citizens” means?	“Sponsored” means a continuing relationship that MUST include significant financial support from the USO; and may include technical support, joint ventures, exchange programs, volunteer placement programs, faculty exchanges, fundraising, and in-kind contributions. Partnerships and mutual collaborations alone are insufficient.

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Does a percentage of the annual budget need to come from U.S. entities?	If you are referring to the project budget, leveraged funds are not required and they can come from any source.
Would funds/grants coming from US donors and/or philanthropic organizations count as "sponsored"?	"Sponsored by U.S. citizens" means a continuing relationship with the USO that includes significant financial support from the USO; and may include technical support, joint ventures, exchange programs, volunteer placement programs, faculty exchanges, fundraising, and in-kind contributions. Partnerships and mutual collaborations alone are insufficient. Receiving a one-time grant from a donor without continued support does not constitute a continuing relationship.
Can the USO and OSI be legally separate entities? Can they NOT have the same parent organization?	The USO and OSI may be legally separate entities or they may be the same legal entity.
We are a non profit organization officially registered in the United States. However, we have been a non-state actor in official relations with the World Health Organization since 1980, but registered in different countries. These legal entities are officially closed. We represent the USO and have our OSI partner. Our question is regarding the bullet "USO and OSIs must submit independently audited financial statements performed by an accredited independent audit firm for a recent operating year from 2022 or later). As our budget has been less than the required amount, we do not have an independent audit. Is this required? If so, are we allowed to use a partner NonProfit with independent audit as our fiduciary?	Applicants must submit a Single Audit (if it applies to the organization) and/or independently audited financial statements of the USO, as required by a state's or country's laws, with the accompanying letter of audit findings and management letter on internal controls.
Our OSI partner is incorporated in S. Africa. Are they also required to submit an independent audit?	Applicants must include an attachment containing independently audited financial statements of the OSI from 2022 or more recent.
Would it be beneficial if USO/OSI demonstrate their close ties with US universities?	Having ties with U.S. universities and other U.S. institutions outside of your relationship with your USO can support the implementation of American Best Practices (ABPs). However, all applications are evaluated against the merit review criteria listed in Section E.2 of the RFA.

Question	Answer
Does the OSI also need UEI registration and registration on SAM? Or does this apply only to the USO?	Both USOs and OSIs are required to obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), but subrecipients – in this case, OSIs – are not required to register in SAM.gov.
We are a US-based NGO serving as the USO applicant, seeking funding for construction and commodities for a hospital center where we operate medical education programs. Our local office in-country manages the facility and the medical education programs. Can you provide guidance on similar situations where US-based NGOs operate and sponsor facilities abroad? Specifically, should the facility itself be considered the OSI, or would our in-country implementing office be the OSI given that all the staff at the facility are paid by our local office.	The USO and OSI can be the same legal entity, but the OSI must be located outside the U.S. If the USO and OSI are separate entities, the OSI headquarters must be located outside the U.S.
If our USO, via its local office, sponsors and operates a long-term medical education program in one hospital and a simulation lab in another hospital, would this be considered two OSIs or one OSI, given that the same entity is operating both?	If both locations are owned and operated by the same entity, they can be considered one OSI.
We have been in partnership since 2022 on a Librarian Exchange Program. The [American organization] has sponsored the travel for the [local organization] Librarian to learn about preservation and digitization technique to utilize for the [local organization] sponsored by a combination of…funding. The [local organization] Librarian is planning to come to [the U.S.] for the second round of training and CSEAS is also looking to plan an exchange trip for [American organization] Librarians to teach about preservation and digitization in [country]. Funding for the ASHA grant would be directed towards renovations of the Library to serve as a better repository of older, rare research documents as the library is currently open-air. Does the partnership between the [American organization] and the [local organization] meet the eligibility requirements for the 7201P124R00001?	The Applicant must determine if the relationship between the US organization and the overseas institution meets the eligibility requirements.

Question	Answer
Considering that the [local organization] is a member of [federation of research centers] would the application be for "Centers of Excellence" category?	The Applicant must determine which category the OSI belongs in.
If a USO has previously committed to supporting a specific commodity or construction project with their partner OSI but neither party has incurred costs, could ASHA cover costs that the USO has previously committed to the OSI (as long as it did not violate past contract and no costs were incurred before the start of the award)?	We cannot make a determination with the provided information.
Projects	
Since [OSI] is affiliated with [USO], could we apply via [USO], and use the grants monies to expand [OSI's] library collection and scholarly resources?	Yes, you can apply. ASHA provides assistance to overseas schools, libraries, hospital centers, and centers of excellence to highlight American ideas and practices, to provide concrete illustrations of the generosity of the American people, to further USG public diplomacy, and to catalyze collaboration between U.S. citizens and citizens of other countries.
Am I able to use this grant to open a Private School in Mexico?	The overseas institution (OSI) must have a continuing and successful supportive formal relationship with its partner USO of at least two years.
My passion and Interests are in Education and specifically in Skills Development. As I set up a non-governmental organization to advocate, inspire, and promote this cause, I came up with this funding opportunity. Therefore, I am writing to enquire if ASHA's range of funding can consider funding Projects such as this in the Education Sector.	Yes, ASHA can fund projects in the education sector.
Budget	
Could you please let us know if a company can include in the budget and report leveraged funds received prior to the award effective date?	Leveraged funds are intended to support the proposed project beyond the funding that ASHA provides to ensure viability of the entire project. Funds received prior to the award effective date can be considered leveraged funds if their associated activities occur during the award period of performance.

Question	Answer
When adding leveraged funds to the budget, can these funds be included on budget lines that are not being proposed for ASHA support, or do they need to constitute a portion of a budget line that is also being proposed for ASHA support? For example, if we already have leveraged funds for the procurement of specific budget commodity lines and do not need USG support for these lines, but they are part of the overall proposed project, is it acceptable to include these as separate lines, fully supported by leverage?	Leveraged funds must cover costs that contribute to the success of the project; they do not need to constitute a portion of a line item also covered by ASHA funds.
Additionally, does the leverage presented need to follow the same requirements (as listed in section D.5) as the eligible expenditures being proposed for ASHA funding? For instance, can funds for staff salaries for the OSI be presented as leverage, even though staff salaries are not considered an eligible expense for ASHA funding?	Costs covered by leveraged funds do not need to follow regulations for ASHA funds. Leveraged funds can cover salaries, travel costs, research costs, technical assistance, administrative overhead, training costs, profit, vehicle purchase, vehicle rental, etc.
Commodities	
Does the equipment acquired through this grant need to be solely US brands?	For awards in which the total procurement element in the award budget is greater than $250,000, the authorized geographic code for the procurement of commodities and services is 937. This code authorizes procurement of goods with source and nationality in the U.S., the cooperating country, and developing countries other than advanced developing countries, but excluding any country that is a prohibited source. Links for a list of prohibited sources and of advanced developing countries are available in USAID’s ADS 310: https://www.usaid.gov/about-us/agency-policy/series-300/310
Does "durable commodities" allow for the purchase of software packages and educational software platforms and services? Some may be preloaded into the technology and hardware, and others may need to be loaded after purchase of the technology. Does it include learning materials and teaching resources that are subscription based?	Software could be considered durable commodities if they have a lifespan of three years or longer.

Question	Answer
Awards	
Is there a specific installment schedule for the grant?	There is no specific schedule for payments.
Monitoring and Evaluation	
Regarding F Indicator STIR 12: Can the institution develop peer reviewed scientific papers on the public diplomacy outreach activities that we conduct as part of the ASHA program?	"STIR 12: Number of peer-reviewed scientific publications resulting from USG support to research and implementation programs." This indicator should be research on a topic of science. Public Diplomacy outreach should be a separate activity to the STIR research.
Can scientific papers and/or conference abstracts for peer review be drafted and or submitted before the project end of 2 years for commodity projects. Given the time it takes between submission, acceptance and publication, do the papers also have to be published before the 2-year project ends?	In order to comply with the requirements of the awards, all program indicator outcomes must be completed before the end term of the award. If a Recipient has a justifiable delay, the award end date can be extended.
What type of involvement does the government typically engage with the cooperative agreement? (Should we be invited to Phase II it would be good to know what to expect.)	Substantial Involvement in ASHA's cooperative agreements includes: 1. Review and approval of the Recipient's Implementation Plan 2. Approval of Key Personnel 3. Agency and Recipient Collaboration or Joint Participation 4. Agency Authority to Immediately Halt a Construction Activity Please see Section B.3 of the RFA for more information on Substantial Involvement.