Questions received via SanJoseCARSIESF@state.gov by February 20, 2024

1. We have been notified that a new NOFA was announced last December 2023. Our organization is interested in submitting a new project proposal this year. However, this one will have a new approach from the one previously submitted, and we are confident it aligns well with program ideas and objectives. Still, we wanted to check with your team that we are presenting it accordingly with the program ideas and objectives so we align in the best way the project outcomes indicator and targets, as well as the participants and audiences.
   Thank you for your interest in the CARSI program. Unfortunately, we cannot meet with applicants before the process is completed. Thank you for your understanding.

2. Estamos interesados en participar del proceso de Fondos CARSI, por lo cual, nuestra consulta es la siguiente, ¿Qué tipo de documentación hay que llenar y en que plazo hay que presentarla?
   Muchas gracias por su consulta y el interés en el programa. Adjunto podrá encontrar el Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) donde se encuentran todas la instrucciones y pasos a seguir.

3. Mi consulta es en relación a la posibilidad de acceder a los fondos CARSI. Soy miembro de una asociación ambientalista sin fines de lucro de base comunitaria y nos interesa en gran medida presentar un proyecto en relación al ecoturismo y el tema de vigilancia y leyendo los objetivos de ustedes está en el gobernanza ambiental desde la sociedad civil. Es posible presentar la propuesta y cuáles con los pasos a seguir?
   Muchas gracias por su consulta y el interés en el programa. Adjunto podrá encontrar el Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) donde se encuentran todas la instrucciones y pasos a seguir.

4. It is stated in the NOFO that ¨Funding awarded under this NOFO cannot be used for law enforcement, to train members of law enforcement, or to provide social services¨. Our question is, would facilitating a stronger park ranger's presence in our area be considered ¨ law enforcement¨ and hence not be accepted?
   Please note that CARSI-ESF funding cannot be used to hire public servants. Additionally, park rangers are law enforcement officers that cannot receive funding or training from these projects.

5. Similarly, but separately, are subgrants allowed for government agencies, such as MINAE, Inder, MEP, Municipalities, or others to cover transportation costs, food and lodging expenses for government officials, etc.?
   Government agencies cannot be sub-awardees, although these agencies' staff may receive economic support to cover their transportation costs, refreshments and lodging expenses but these should be covered by an eligible entity under this Notice of Funding Opportunity.

6. In regard to project monitoring, it is explained in the NOFO that external evaluation should be incorporated into the project implementation plan. Could you please explain in more detail, who would be adequate for such a job?
   The Notice of Funding Opportunity stipulates that the applicant should include an external evaluation that should be delimited and explained by the applicant, otherwise, the applicant should indicate how the project will be systematically assessed in the absence of one. In summary, the applicant should delineate how it will assess the project's impact.

7. The NOFO also indicates to incorporate the costs of an audit in the budget. We imagine you may not recommend specific auditors, but do you have a generic list with appropriate auditors here in Costa Rica, whom we may possibly work with?
   We do not provide this type of support.

8. Community members in our area have indicated the necessity of placing surveillance cameras at strategic places in their communities to discourage criminality. We kindly ask you to indicate if surveillance cameras would be allowed under these circumstances or not. There is a restriction listed in the NOFO about cameras but we are not sure if this restriction would apply to our purposes. The Text says ¨ Guidance for Grants and Agreements in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR), as updated in the Federal Register's 85 FR 49506 on August 13, 2020, particularly on: … o Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment in alignment with section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115 —232) (2 CFR part 200.216).¨
   Purchase of surveillance cameras is not allowed under the Notice of Funding Opportunity Number SCS-800-23-GR-002-WHA-120623.

9. The project proposal can't be used only to develop employability and skills for jobs workshops for youth and adults that due to underlying social and economic barriers have little to no preparation for successful readiness to enter the workplace. A proposal of this kind would be out of the scope of this NOFO, correct?
   This Notice of Funding Opportunity seeks to strengthen governance through civil society engagement, allowable activities are clearly delineated in the Notice of Funding Opportunity. We cannot comment on specific proposals at this point.

10. Could Department of State San Jose clarify if the geographic prioritization in Puntarenas and Limon (on pages 2, 7, and 9) applies to the entirety of the NOFO or just to Objective 3 (Capable governance in Puntarenas and Limon that promotes social inclusion)?
    The geographic prioritization under objective 3 applies only to this specific objective. Although we prioritize vulnerable communities outside the Greater Metropolitan Area (GAM) for the entire Notice of Funding Opportunity.

11. Is it possible to make a sub-sub grant? That is, to provide resources to an allied organization, and then, as part of the project strategy, have the allied organization transfer resources to a third organization?
    Only sub-grants are allowed under this Notice of Funding Opportunity.

12. Are all of the Required Outcome Indicators on page 10 of the NOFO required, meaning all four must be included in the proposal of indicators?
    Correct, all four required indicators must be included in the proposal.

13. In which cases does this situation that appears in section B1 of the NOFO apply?: "The Department of State may consider continuing the program funded under this award beyond the initial period of performance on a non-competitive basis subject to availability of funds,

satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Government (USG)."

We cannot provide further comments on this topic, as stated in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, this possibility is subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Government (USG).