

**U.S. Department of State
U.S. Embassy Mogadishu
John Lewis Minority Fellows Program (Phase II)
AF-MOG-ARDF-FY23-01**

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
8 AUG 2023**

*****Due to technical issues, the NOFO deadline has been extended to 14 August 2023.
Applications are due: 9:00 AM EAT, Mogadishu, Somalia on 14 August 2023 / 02:00 AM
Washington, DC on 14 August 2023.**

Question 1: Can DoS make available a list of active private sector and democracy and governance programs currently funded by DoS, USAID, and related US agencies for the purposes of understanding potential synergies that could be developed?

Answer 1: The website <https://so.usembassy.gov/usaids-somalia/> links to U.S. Embassy Mogadishu's websites for USAID Somalia, USAID East Africa, the President's Emergency Fund for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. These sites provide insight to U.S. Embassy Mogadishu's work in Somalia. U.S. Embassy Mogadishu's social media pages also highlight ongoing projects in Somalia.

Question 2: Can DoS share research, reports, briefings, or other performance or descriptive information about the Phase 1 fellowship program referred to in the NOFO?

Answer 2: At present, U.S. Embassy Mogadishu is not yet in receipt of final project reports given that the period of performance has recently ended. U.S. Embassy Mogadishu intends to issue a cooperative agreement and will actively collaborate with the selected applicant.

Question 3: Section A.2 (Goals) states that the project 'builds upon the successes and lessons learned from our ongoing John Lewis Minority Fellows Program (Phase 1)'. Could DoS share the lessons learned and successes of the Phase 1 program?

Answer 3: At present, U.S. Embassy Mogadishu is not yet in receipt of final project reports given that the period of performance has recently ended. U.S. Embassy Mogadishu intends to issue a cooperative agreement and will actively collaborate with the selected applicant to further negotiate the scope of work and ensure that the project will build upon the successes and lessons learned.

Question 4: Section A.3 (Expected Results) of the NOFO seeks as one result the ability of fellows from Phase II to 'feel confident tapping into fellows from the previous program and using them as mentors'. Section A.4 (Main Activities) seeks one activity to 'track fellows' onward experiences after their placements' and 'to provide employment data of fellows'. Does DoS anticipate sharing the information on the Phase 1 fellows so they can be potentially tapped into as mentors? And does DoS seek ongoing tracking employment tracking of both Phase 1 and Phase 2 fellows?

Answer 4: At present, U.S. Embassy Mogadishu is not yet in receipt of final project reports given that the period of performance has recently ended. U.S. Embassy Mogadishu intends to issue a cooperative agreement and will actively collaborate with the selected applicant to further negotiate the scope of work and ensure that the project will build upon the successes and lessons learned including potentially connecting with fellows from Phase I. Ongoing tracking of fellows from Phase I is not required in Phase II and ongoing tracking after the completion of the Phase II project is not within the scope of the project.

Question 5: Does USG have an anticipated or expected duration for the fellows' work placement?

Answer 5: U.S. Embassy Mogadishu intends to issue a cooperative agreement and will actively collaborate with the selected applicant to further negotiate the scope of work; likely, placements will likely last approximately one year.

Question 6: The NOFO requests two cohorts of eight individuals; do these cohorts need to be sequential or can they be simultaneous?

Answer 6: U.S. Embassy Mogadishu intends to issue a cooperative agreement and will actively collaborate with the selected applicant to further negotiate the scope of work; ideally, the two cohorts will run simultaneously, one in Mogadishu and one in the South West State.

Question 7: SOW: The text that is black should be incorporated – We understand incorporated but tailored to our project design, making sure the elements mention in the text in black are reflected. Is this the right interpretation?

Answer 7: Correct. U.S. Embassy Mogadishu intends to issue a cooperative agreement and will actively collaborate with the selected applicant to further negotiate the scope of work. AF-MOG-ARDF-FY23-01 Draft Scope of Work (SOW) already incorporates these indicators and

corresponds with Section A of the NOFO and should be incorporated in the applicant's application.

Question 8: Standard foreign assistance indicators measure both the outputs directly attributable to the U.S. government as well as outcomes to which the U.S. government contributes: Where can we find them and how many should be included in the application. Please note these are not mentioned anywhere in the NOFO nor the MEL template.

Answer 8: Please refer to the NOFO, **Section A.5 Performance Indicators** is inclusive of F indicators for the required activities. AF-MOG-ARDF-FY23-01 Draft Scope of Work (SOW) already incorporates these indicators and corresponds with Section A of the NOFO and should be incorporated in the applicant's application.

Question 9: Section A5 in the NOFO lists the proposed indicators to measure progress of the Action. Indicator 4 reads as follows: Number of fellows placed into placement positions in the Federal Parliament of Somalia and/or executive bodies, line ministries. We would like to know if we can apply changes to the wording of the suggested indicators. Concretely, in this case, we would like to know if we could include international and local NGOs, in line with Objective 1 of the project:

Answer 9: All applicants will be required to address A. Project Description in the AF-MOG-ARDF-FY23-01 Draft Scope of Work (SOW) attachment (see Section D.2.1.6). Please refer to **AF-MOG-ARDF-FY23-01 Draft Scope of Work (SOW)** which indicates that the Applicant should update the document to include the applicant's unique proposal (including, but not limited to, Objectives, Activities, Expected Results, Performance Indicators and so on.)

Question 10: We are planning to apply as the lead applicant. We are registered in SAM and have an EIN and NCAGE number. We would like to know if this is also necessary for the subgrantee/partners we will include in our application, especially considering some are very small grassroot organisations.

Answer 10: Please refer to the NOFO **Section D.3** (page 15) "The 2 CFR 200 requires that sub-grantees obtain a UEI number. Please note the UEI for sub-grantees is not required at the time of application but will be required before an award is processed and/or directed to a sub-grantee."

Question 11: In the template for Scope of Work (SOW) Red text indicates content the Applicant must enter or update and Blue text indicates drafting guidance and instructions. However, what does the text in black indicate, under sections such as activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators? Are those examples of what the program could include to be incorporated and tailored to our proposal; or contrarily text we should leave as it is and fully incorporate as elements in our design?

Answer 11: AF-MOG-ARDF-FY23-01 Draft Scope of Work (SOW) (black text) corresponds with Section A of the NOFO and should be incorporated in the applicant's application.

Question 12: In the SOW template you mention the F indicators. Could you explain what are those and where can we find them?

Answer 12: Standard foreign assistance indicators measure both the outputs directly attributable to the U.S. government as well as outcomes to which the U.S. government contributes. **AF-MOG-ARDF-FY23-01 Draft Scope of Work (SOW)** already incorporates these indicators and corresponds with Section A of the NOFO and should be incorporated in the applicant's application.

Question 13: X are currently in the process of registering with sam.gov to obtain a UEI number. We have a reference number for sam.gov. Can we continue developing our response to the NOFO and upload the application with evidence that our registration is under review, if the registration process continues beyond the proposal deadline?

Answer 13: Per NOFO, D.3 Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov), All prime organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and an active registration with SAM.gov before submitting an application. U.S. Embassy Mogadishu may not review applications from or make awards to applicants that have not completed all applicable UEI and SAM.gov requirements. A UEI is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards...

Organizations requesting exemption from UEI or SAM.gov requirements must email the point of contact listed in the NOFO in Section G at least two weeks prior to the deadline stated in the NOFO and provide a justification for their request. UEI/SAM.gov Exemption must be approved by a warranted Grants Officer before the application can be deemed eligible for review. **NOTE: Due to technical issues, organizations can submit exemption requests through the application deadline.**

Question 14: The NOFO uses terms such as “minority” and “marginalized communities” (p. 1). Our research shows that there often multiple conceptualizations of these terms and that some of them are contested. What is your working definition of minority and marginalized communities?

Answer 14: U.S. Embassy Mogadishu intends to issue a cooperative agreement and will actively collaborate with the selected applicant to further negotiate the scope of work to include recruitment of fellows from Somalia’s marginalized and minority communities.

Question 15: Can we access reports from the previous iteration of the program at this stage of the application? We assume there may be documents for public consumption.

Answer 15: At present, U.S. Embassy Mogadishu is not yet in receipt of final project reports given that the period of performance has recently ended. U.S. Embassy Mogadishu intends to issue a cooperative agreement and will actively collaborate with the selected applicant to further negotiate the scope of work.

Question 16: Aside from gender and membership of a minority or marginalized community, what may be other qualifying criteria e.g., age range for applicants or an accredited high-school diploma? We are assuming that the minimum age should be 18 years old.

Question 16: Per the NOFO, U.S. Embassy Mogadishu anticipates awarding a cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements involve “substantial involvement” or greater U.S. Government participation in the project. U.S. Embassy Mogadishu will undertake reasonable and programmatically necessary substantial involvement. In addition, please refer to AF-MOG-ARDF-FY23-01 Draft Scope of Work (SOW) which indicates that the Applicant should update the document to include the applicant’s unique proposal (including, but not limited to, Objectives, Activities, Expected Results, Performance Indicators and so on.)

Question 17: X deep understanding of the Somali context makes us aware that minority and marginalized communities often face barriers accessing official documents (e.g., national IDs, birth certificate, educational degrees). Could inability to submit official documents disqualify candidates?

Answer 17: Per the NOFO, U.S. Embassy Mogadishu anticipates awarding a cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements involve “substantial involvement” or greater U.S. Government participation in the project. U.S. Embassy Mogadishu will undertake reasonable and programmatically necessary substantial involvement.

Question 18: Can you provide guidance on how to handle cases whereby fellows are compelled to drop out of the program due to an emergency or unforeseen personal circumstances?

Answer 18: Per the NOFO, U.S. Embassy Mogadishu anticipates awarding a cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements involve “substantial involvement” or greater U.S. Government participation in the project. U.S. Embassy Mogadishu will undertake reasonable and programmatically necessary substantial involvement.

Question 19: What may be included in fellows’ stipends e.g., clothing allowance, transportation, daily meal?

Answer 19: Per the NOFO, U.S. Embassy Mogadishu anticipates awarding a cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements involve “substantial involvement” or greater U.S. Government participation in the project. U.S. Embassy Mogadishu will undertake reasonable and programmatically necessary substantial involvement. In addition, please review Section D2.1.10 Detailed Budget and Budget Guidance and Template for New Awards (FY2023)

Question 20: Are we correct in assuming that all fellows will be recruited at once, one cohort in Mogadishu and another cohort in South West State?

Answer 20:

U.S. Embassy Mogadishu intends to issue a cooperative agreement and will actively collaborate with the selected applicant to further negotiate the scope of work; ideally, the two cohorts will run simultaneously, one in Mogadishu and one in the South West State.

Question 21: I am interested in applying for the grant mentioned in the subject line and wanted to bring to your attention that four of the PDF files [(SF424A-V1.0) (SF424B-V1.1) (SF424_4_0-V4.0) (SFLLL_2_0-V2.0)] provided for the grant application are not accessible. As an applicant, I am unable to access the content within these files, which hinders my ability to complete the application accurately. I kindly request your assistance in resolving this issue to ensure equal opportunity for all applicants. I have tried opening the files on multiple computers with updated adobe systems to no avail.

Answer 21: Please review the version of Adobe Acrobat that your organization is currently using. If that version is outdated, your organization may be unable to open pdfs. Grants.gov is the official repository for all SF forms, and links are provided as follows:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html> and
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>