

## PROPOSAL SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS (PSI)

Technically eligible submissions are those that: 1) Arrive via Grants.gov ([www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)), or State Award Management System (SAMS)\* by the designated due date and time, 2) contain a complete application package as outlined in the NOFO; and 3) heed all instructions outlined in the NOFO (or solicitation letter) and this PSI document.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure proposals have been submitted and received in advance of the deadline indicated in the NOFO.

U.S. Department of State requires that all DOS awards be *issued* via State Award Management System (SAMS). Successful applicants must secure the ability to manage the award through SAMS, including acceptance/electronic counter-signature within the system.

For assistance with the system, applicants must contact SAMS/ILMS Help Desk at + 888 313 4567 or [SAMSSupport@state.gov](mailto:SAMSSupport@state.gov)

\*Applicants should follow application submission requirements in the NOFO or solicitation letter.

### TECHNICAL FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

**For all application documents, please ensure:**

- A) All pages are numbered, including budgets and attachments
- B) All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper
- C) All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, with one-inch margins
- D) All documents must be submitted in English.

**Complete applications must include the following for proposal submissions:**

**1. Forms:** Completed and signed SF-424, SF-424A, and SF-424B (for non-construction programs).

**2. Table of Contents:** Not to exceed one [1] page in Microsoft Word for the full proposal, including attachments, with page numbers.

**3. Executive Summary:** Not to exceed two [2] pages in Microsoft Word) including:

- a) The target country(ies);
- b) A statement of work or synopsis of the project, including a concise breakdown of the project's objectives, activities, and expected results;
- c) The total amount of funding requested;
- d) A brief statement on how the project is innovative, sustainable, and will have a demonstrated impact
- e) Name and contact information for the project's main point of contact

**4. Proposal Narrative:** Up to 20 pages in Microsoft Word. Please note the page limit does not include the Table of Contents, Executive Summary and Attachments, such as Budget/and Budget Narrative, Audit Report, and NICRA, if applicable.

Applicants are encouraged to submit multiple sections in a single Microsoft Word document (e.g., Table of Contents, Executive Summary, and Proposal Narrative in one file). Budget (in excel), using the

attached budget template, and budget narrative (in Word) should be **separated** from the proposal narrative.

Proposal narrative should include the following components:

- Introduction
- Narrative -- Problem Statement and Rationale
- Planned Activities. Anticipated Outputs and Outcomes
- Sustainability, where applicable

**5. Detailed Line-Item Budget** (in Microsoft Excel): Please follow the attached **budget template**.

A summary budget must be included following the OMB-approved budget categories (as in SF-424A). Costs must be presented in whole U.S. dollars.

**6. Budget Narrative** (in Microsoft Word): **Please follow the attached Budget Guidelines document.**

Budget narrative should include an explanation and **justification** for each budget line item/each cost in the detailed budget, including cost-share, if applicable. For ease of review, we request applicants to ensure that the **budget narrative addresses the costs in the same order as they are listed in the detailed line-item budget.**

The budget narrative should communicate additional information that might not be readily apparent in the budget spreadsheet, and not simply repeat with words what is numerically stated in the budget.

**7. Financial Management Survey:** For first-time applicants to the Department of State/or awarding Bureau only.

**8. Attachments:** (5-10 pages, preferably in Microsoft Word). Three mandatory attachments include the following (see Tab A below for more information):

- a) Roles and Responsibilities along with the names of key personnel
- b) Timelines/Schedule of Activities
- c) Project Monitoring Plan.
- d) Detailed Budget Narrative

**9. NICRA/Indirect Cost Rate:** If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), the most recently approved NICRA must be included as a .pdf file. This document will not be reviewed by the panelists, but rather by the Grants Officer if the proposal is recommended for funding. NICRA inclusion does not count against the page limitations as described above. If your proposal involves implementing partners charging indirect costs, please submit the applicable NICRA also as a .pdf file.

Per 2 CFR 200.414, applicants that do not have a NICRA may elect to charge a de minimis rate of **up to** 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. If your organization has a NICRA rate, you are **not** allowed to apply the 10% de minimis, i.e. to alternate between the NICRA and the 10% de minimis. Whichever methodology is elected, it must be applied consistently to all federal awards. As described in 2 CFR 200.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs and may not be double-charged.

**10. Audit:** Include a copy of your organization's most recent audit (single or program audit), if applicable, or the annual financial statement audit, please refer to the 2 CFR 200 for requirements). This document will not be reviewed by the review panel and will not be counted against the page limitations. The applicant's proposal may include the cost of an audit that:

- 1) Complies with the requirements of 2 CFR 200 Subpart F “Audit Requirements”
- 2) Complies with the requirements of American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) Statement of Position (SOP) No. 92-9, “Audits of Not-for-Profit Organizations Receiving federal Awards”
- 3) Complies with AICPA Codification of Statements on Auditing Standards AU Section 551, “Reporting on Information Accompanying the Basic Financial Statements in Auditor-Submitted Documents,” where applicable.

A non-federal entity that **expends** \$750,000 or more in all USG federal assistance awards during the non-federal entity's fiscal year is required to conduct a single or program-specific audit for that year in accordance with the provisions of 2 CFR 200 subpart F. For more information, see Audit Services, 2 CFR 200.425.

**NOTE:** DOS retains the right to request additional documentation for items not specified in this PSI.

### **INFORMATION ON STANDARD FORMS**

Please see Tab C for instructions for completion of Standard Forms 424, 424A, and 424B.

### **UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS**

Organizations should also be aware that if recommended for an award, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards set forth in 2 CFR Chapter 200 (Sub-Chapters A through F) and 2 CFR 600 (Department of State specifications) shall apply to all non-federal entities, except for assistance awards to Individuals and Foreign Public Entities.

Please note that as of December 26, 2014, 2 CFR 200 (Sub-Chapters A through E) now applies to foreign organizations, and Sub-Chapters A through D shall apply to all for-profit entities. The applicant/recipient of the award and any sub-recipient under the award must comply with all applicable terms and conditions, in addition to the assurance and certifications made part of the Notice of Award. The Department's Standard Terms and Conditions can be viewed at

[https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/Documents/2016DeptTermsAndConditions\\_FA.pdf](https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/Documents/2016DeptTermsAndConditions_FA.pdf)

### **TAB A: MANDATORY ATTACHMENT GUIDELINES**

#### **a) Roles and Responsibilities:**

Indicate the roles and responsibilities of key project personnel with short biographies that highlight professional experience as it relates to the organization's capacity to implement the award, please add the names of those individuals.

#### **b) Timeline/Schedule of Activities:**

Provide a timeline or schedule of activities for the overall project. Components should include activities, monitoring and evaluation efforts, and project closeout. You may use a table, or another format, that is suitable for indicating the timing of the planned activities and the relationship between or sequencing of the activities. Choose the best tool to demonstrate the timeline for your program plan.

#### **c) Project Monitoring Plan (PMP):**

Bureau will work with recipient organization to implement the appropriate performance monitoring plan that meets both the needs of the Bureau and the implementing partner. Incorporating a well-designed monitoring and evaluation component into a project is one of the most efficient methods of documenting the progress and potential success of a project.

- d) **Detailed Budget & Budget Narrative:** Complete applications must include a detailed line-item budget following attached budget format and budget narrative to clarify and justify individual line-items.

**Applicants are required to use the attached detailed budget template.** Please follow instructions in the Budget Guidelines document.

- **Cost-Effectiveness** - Applicants should demonstrate cost-effectiveness of USG funds by presenting **reasonable budgets based on real estimates**. Budgets that either significantly over-estimate or under-estimate line item amounts will not be viewed as cost-effective.
- **Cost- Share** –Refers to a portion of project or program cost that is not borne by USG. Cost-sharing, if not mandated in the NOFO, is not required and will not be used as a factor in proposal review. If offered voluntarily, cost-share must be itemized, explained, and **justified**. Cost-share follows the same principle as USG funds.

For any cost- share included, applicants are required to provide an explanation of the contributions, whether cash or in-kind. Assign a monetary value in U.S. dollars to each in-kind contribution. If the proposed project is a component of a larger program, identify other funding sources for the proposal and indicate the specific funding amount to be provided by those sources. Recipients must follow cost-sharing or matching policy as stipulated in 2 CFR 200.306. Funds from other USG awards, including other USG agencies, may **not** be used as cost-share.

## **BUDGET CONDITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS**

DOS does not pay for the following (this list is NOT exhaustive):

- Publication of materials for distribution within the United States;
- Administration of a project that will make a profit;
- Expenses incurred before or after the specified dates of award period of performance (unless prior written approval is received);
- Projects designed to advocate policy views or positions of foreign governments or views of a particular political faction;
- Alcoholic beverages;
- Costs of entertainment, including amusement, diversion, and social activities, and any associated costs, are unallowable, except where specific costs that might otherwise be considered entertainment have a programmatic purpose and are authorized either in the approved budget for the federal award or with **prior** written approval of the Grants Officer;
- Land;
- Construction/or renovations.

## **TAB B: GUIDELINES FOR STANDARD FORMS**

**SF-424 – Complete all fields except fields noted as “Leave Blank” below.**

1. Type of Submission: Application
2. Type of Application: New

3. Date Received: Leave blank. This will automatically be assigned
4. Applicant Identifier: Leave blank
5. (5a) Federal Entity Identifier: Leave blank  
(5b) Federal Award Identifier: Leave blank
6. Date Received by State: Leave blank. This will automatically be assigned
7. State Application Identified: Leave blank. This will automatically be assigned
8. (8a) Enter the legal name of the applicant organization.  
(8b) Employer/Taxpayer ID Number: Enter applicant-specific number.  
(8c) Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS)  
(8d) Enter the full legal address of the applicant organization  
(8e) Enter the name of the primary organizational unit that will undertake the assistance activity, if applicable  
(8f) Enter the name, title, organization, and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application
9. Select an applicant type (type of organization)
10. Enter: Bureau (specify)
11. Enter Bureau's CFDA number or DOS CFDA -- 19.700
12. Enter the Funding Opportunity Number and title as it appears Grants.gov. This number will already be entered on electronic applications
13. Enter the Competition Identification Number and title. This number will already be entered on electronic applications
14. Areas Affected by Project: List the country or countries where project activities will take place in alphabetical order
15. Enter the title of the proposed project (if necessary, delete pre-printed wording)
16. (16a) Enter Congressional district of Applicant (if foreign applicant, enter 90)  
(16b) Enter: 00
17. Enter tentative projected start date and end date (month and year)
18. (18a) Enter the amount requested for the project under "Federal"  
(18b) Enter any cost-share under "Applicant" otherwise use zeros
19. Enter "c"
20. Select the appropriate box. If you answer "yes" to this question you will be required to provide an explanation
21. Enter the name, title, and contact information of the individual authorized to sign for the application

**SF-424A – Please review the detailed instructions below before completing this form online.**

***Section A - Budget Summary - Complete Row 1***

- 1a. Enter: Bureau (specify) Grants
- 1b. Enter CFDA number
- 1c. Leave this field blank
- 1d. Leave this field blank
- 1e. Enter the amount of federal funds you are requesting for this project
- 1f. Enter the amount of any other funds you will receive towards this project
- 1g. Enter the total cost of this project

**Rows 2, 3, and 4 may be left blank.**

***Section B - Budget Categories – Enter total project costs in each category in Column 1 as described below. In Column 5, the form should automatically show the sum. Columns 2, 3, and 4 should be left blank.***

- 6a-h. Enter the amount for each object class category (Include cost share).  
6i. Enter the sum of 6a-6h  
6j. Enter any indirect charges  
6k. Enter the sum of 6i and 6j  
7. Enter any program income that will be earned as a result of the project. If there is none leave this section blank. Interest earned is **not** program income.

**Section C - Non-Federal Resources** *(Only complete this section if your project includes an applicant cost share or funds from other sources)*

- 8a. Under Grant Program enter: Bureau (specify)  
8b. Enter your cost share amount  
8c. Enter the amount of any other funding sources for this project  
8d. Leave blank  
8e. Enter the total amount for all non-federal resources (the form should automatically show this sum)

**Rows 9, 10, and 11 should be left blank.**

**Section D - Forecasted Cash Needs**

13. In the first column enter the amount of federal funds you expect to expend in the project's first year. Forecasted cash 'needs by quarter' are not required.  
14. In the first column enter the amount of non-federal funds you expect to expend in the project's first year. Forecasted cash needs by quarter are not required.  
15. In the first column enter the sum of 13 and 14 (the form should automatically show this sum). Forecasted cash needs by quarter are not required.

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

- 16a. Under Grant Program enter: Bureau (specify)  
16b-e. Enter the amount of federal funds you expect to expend in each subsequent year of the project.

**Rows 17, 18, 19 should be left blank.**

20. Enter the total amount for each year (The form should automatically show this sum.)

**Section F - Other Budget Information**

21. Enter: Direct Charges – **Leave Blank**  
22. Enter: Indirect Charges – If Indirect Charges are shown in Section B 6, enter the type of Indirect Rate used (Provisional, Predetermined, Final, or Fixed)  
23. Enter any other explanations or comments deemed necessary.

**SF-424B**

Fill in the appropriate fields. Complete applicant organization and title of authorized official sections. The Authorized Official is generally the grant signatory at the organization or institution.