

**Supplemental Information for Applicants: DFOP0014012"DRL Applied Research and Evaluation Innovation Fund: MEL360 Accompaniment in Democratizing DRG Evaluation."**

Below are clarifying points to address fourteen (14) questions submitted to DRL by May 28, 2024.

1. The call specifies that it expects engagement with community-led CSOs to apply participatory MEL and lists as deliverable among other things evaluations of DRG programming across three thematic areas. It is further indicated that the programmatic themes and CSOs are to be identified in collaboration with DRL. With regards to that, I would like to ask whether it is possible to include MEL accompaniment to existing DRL projects of the applicant in the proposal?

**DRL Response:** Applicants may propose MEL accompaniment to existing DRL funded awards, although applicants are not required to. Identifying which programmatic themes and CSOs / DRG implementers are included in the MEL 360 Accompaniment award will be done in collaboration with DRL, as noted in the NOFO.

2. On Page 3, under Scope it states, "Proposal budgets should include compensation for project implementers to engage in advanced participatory MEL practices in their respective projects, and account for the costs of organizational learning around complex practices (i.e. time and budget resources that facilitate the integration of participatory MEL)."

Are stipends or grants the preferred method for compensating project implementers, as described above?

**DRL Response:** Applicants should propose a compensation method that fits best with the program concept proposed, one that should also fit with the applicant's organizational policies and procedures.

3. On Page 12, item 19 states, "**Psychosocial Assistance** (to be incorporated into the ten (10) pages allowed for "Proposal Narrative," and into "Budget" and "Budget Narrative"). A section in the proposal, budget, and budget narrative to reflect appropriate resources and support for the psychosocial health of staff (i.e., activities can range from access to educational materials and training opportunities to counseling services to other contextually relevant support)."

Should the resources and support for psychosocial health of staff cover only the project implementer or should it also extend to project partner and/or CSO staff?

DRL Response: DRL encourages proposals that resource and support psychosocial assistance for all staff engaged in the MEL 360 Accompaniment project, including staff from the selected applicant and their implementing partners.

4. On Page 12, item 18 it states, “**Lessons Learned** (not to exceed one (1) page, preferably as a Word Document) from past programs on applied learning and evaluation that demonstrate how the implementer has safely operated and responded to programmatic challenges, learning from both successes and failures, in the operating environment. To be incorporated into the ten (10) pages allowed for “Proposal Narrative.”

Should this section be included in the attachments or is the 1-page limitation included in the 10 pages allowed for the Proposal Narrative which is listed as item 6 on page 10.

DRL Response: The **Lessons Learned** must be included in the ten (10) pages of the “Proposal Narrative.”

5. On page 3, under scope it states “DRL seeks proposals from organizations interested in providing accompaniment that engages community led civil society organizations (to be identified in collaboration with DRL) to apply participatory MEL which advances program design, implementation, evaluation.”

On page 12, it states “Individual Letters of Support and/or Memorandum of Understanding. Letters of support and MOUs must be specific to the project implementation (e.g., from proposed partners or sub-award recipients) and will not count towards the page limit.”

Can DRL please clarify if applicants should propose partners to engage in accompaniment at the proposal stage and include letters of support? Or should applicants propose an approach to working with DRL to identify organizations for accompaniment upon award?

DRL Response: See DRL Response to Q1 above. Letters of Support and/or MOUs are optional. Applicants are encouraged to propose how they will work with DRL to identify organizations for accompaniment, if the applicant is selected.

6. Is the applicant expected to conduct programmatic evaluations of DRG programming under this project, as stated on page 4 of the NOFO, "applicants are encouraged to create evaluations of DRG programming completed across up to three thematic areas?" Or is the applicant expected only to accompany DRG implementers to conduct their own evaluations?

DRL Response: The selected applicant will accompany the identified CSOs/DRG implementers (noted in DRL response to Q1) as they design and carry out evaluations on DRG programs. DRG thematic areas will be determined in collaboration with DRL.

7. Is it possible to learn more about the selection criteria, type and location(s) of civil society partners? It would be helpful to understand more about the process of joint selection of (what we assume are) existing DRL partners.

DRL Response: The selection criteria will be devised in collaboration with DRL after the project is awarded.

8. The NOFO indicates, "If local partners have been identified, DRL strongly encourages applicants to submit letters of support from proposed in-country partners". Are we able to identify partners in advance, or do we need to wait to do this jointly with DRL?

DRL Response: See DRL Response to Q1 and Q5 above. Letters of Support and/or MOUs are optional. Applicants are encouraged to propose how they will work with DRL to identify organizations for accompaniment, if the applicant is selected.

9. Do we understand correctly that the project will involve working with a network of evaluators? It would be helpful to have clarification on whether these evaluators are likely to be pre-existing evaluators/MEL staff located at CSOs and/or community members (such as survivors) without prior MEL experience.

DRL Response: DRL confirms that the selected applicant will work with a network of existing MEL practitioners, including evaluators, in addition to DRG program implementers. If applicants propose including other key stakeholders in DRG programming, such as survivors, in the envisioned network, then applicants should explain their rationale.

10. Is the aim to develop (1) evaluations of DRL programming and/or to (2) develop approaches capable of evaluating DRL programming? The NOFO indicates "applicants are encouraged to create evaluations of DRL programming..." so we assume it is #1. Is this correct?

DRL Response: Completing evaluations is an expected set of end products of this project. Since the accompaniment model is central to how the evaluations are produced, DRL notes that specific methodologies, tools, and "approaches capable of evaluating DRL programming," etc. are dependent on the evaluation questions the DRG program implementers are seeking to answer.

11. If we do understand correctly that deliverables should include evaluations of DRL funded projects with CSOs, what type of evaluative or knowledge products might DRL expect or prefer? Is a final evaluation report expected?

DRL Response: DRL confirms that evaluations of DRL funded projects are expected deliverables. Other deliverables, including a final evaluation of the accompaniment model, will again be determined with the selected applicant in collaboration with DRL.

12. If, on the other hand, the aim is to develop approaches to evaluating DRL funded projects, can you give an idea of what types of deliverables this may include? We realize the NOFO mentions 'learning briefs, short videos, presentations'. Can you expand on this?

DRL Response: The aim of this project is not to develop new approaches to evaluating DRL funded projects. As noted in DRL response to Q11, the types of deliverables that will be produced will be made in collaboration with DRL.

13. The NOFO indicates "final programmatic themes will be determined in collaboration with DRL" but that proposals should include examples of themes appropriate for methods proposed. Should we select at least three Thematic Areas or is it possible to select sub areas within one or two themes?

DRL Response: Applicants should propose thematic areas that reflect their expertise and strengths. To that end, there is no minimal number of thematic areas applicants must include in their application.

14. Although the top of page 23 in the NOFO refers to indicators, some of the DRL ALE projects have no performance indicators required. Are performance indicators a requirement for this project or encouraged/optional? We realize the application should include a Logic Model and M&E Narrative.

DRL Response: DRL confirms that eligible applications for this funding opportunity must include a Logic Model and M&E Narrative. After the project is awarded, the selected implementing partner will be required to submit a M&E Plan as referenced in the NOFO and PSIs.