



U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Science, Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships (STIP)
Annual Program Statement (APS)

7200AA18APS00003

Issuance Date: March 5, 2018

Closing Date: March 4, 2019

CFDA #: 98.012 - USAID Development Partnerships for University Cooperation and Development

Pursuant to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, the United States Government, as represented by the [U.S. Agency for International Development](#) (USAID), [U.S. Global Development Lab](#) (Lab), invites Applications for the Science, Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships in Higher Education program.

The purpose of this Annual Program Statement (APS) is to disseminate information to prospective Applicants so they may develop and submit Applications for USAID funding. This APS: (A) describes the types of activities for which Applications will be considered; (B) describes the funding available and the process and requirements for submitting Applications; (C) explains the criteria for evaluating Applications; and (D) refers prospective Applicants to relevant documentation available on the internet.

USAID/Lab anticipates awarding multiple grants and/or cooperative agreements as a result of this APS. However, publishing this APS does not commit USAID to make any awards.

The STIP APS is not a Request for Applications (RFA) or a Request for Proposals (RFP). Rather, the **STIP APS requests STIP Concept Notes in response to addenda published to this APS**. Based on those Concept Notes, USAID will determine whether to request a full Application from an appropriate partner.

To be competitive under a particular addendum to this APS, Applications must be fully responsive to all directions under this APS document except when specifically noted otherwise in the addendum.

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List of Acronyms

ADS	Automated Directive Services
AO	Agreement Officer
APS	Annual Program Statement
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HESN	Higher Education Solutions Network
Lab	U.S. Global Development Lab
LASER	Long-term Assistance and Services for Research
LMIC	Low and Middle-Income Country
M/B/IO	Missions, Bureaus, and Independent Office
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MSI	Minority-Serving Institution
PEER	Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research
RTAC	Research Technical Assistance Center
SSEB	Source Selection Evaluation Board
STIP	Science, Technology, Innovation, and Partnership
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

Introduction: U.S. Global Development Lab at USAID

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and its partners have been working to tackle the world's toughest development challenges for more than 50 years. Our mission is to partner to end extreme poverty and promote resilient, democratic societies while advancing our security and prosperity. We have long invested in science, technology, innovation, and partnership (STIP) to achieve progress across many of USAID's goals. Today's global development landscape is rapidly evolving. Driven by scientific breakthroughs, disruptive innovation, and rapid advancements in information and communication technologies (ICT), coupled with growing contributions by the private sector, these changes offer unprecedented opportunities to leverage the world's best thinking to solve critical global challenges.

Recognizing the value of a more focused and coordinated approach to harnessing these changes, USAID established the U.S. Global Development Lab (Lab) in April 2014. The Lab serves as an innovation hub, working in all technical and geographic areas. We take smart risks to test new ideas and partner within the Agency and with other actors to harness the power of innovative tools and approaches that accelerate development impact.

Lab Mission

The Lab has a two-part Mission that aims to:

1. Produce breakthrough development innovations by sourcing, testing, and scaling proven solutions that impact millions of people; and
2. Accelerate the transformation of the development enterprise by opening development to people anywhere with good ideas, promoting new and deepening existing partnerships, bringing data and evidence to bear, and harnessing scientific and technological advances.

Lab Approach

The Lab operates under a set of guiding principles. The Lab aims to be:

- Open and Inclusive - Drawing upon the ingenuity of people from around the world particularly from developing countries.
- Evidence-based - Investing based on strong evidence of impact.
- Catalytic - Attracting the support of others to enable sustainable development solutions that reach massive scale.
- Agile - Creating fast feedback loops that enable continuous learning and performance improvement.

Lab Tools

The Lab is focused on STIP as our primary tools to reach key development outcomes. We work across USAID and with the broader international development community to find innovative

approaches and solutions. When a new solution or approach proves effective, we endeavor to mainstream it across USAID and with our partners to increase its impact.

Lab Objectives

The Lab's programming is aligned around five objectives:

- **Science:** Increasing the use of scientific research to improve development outcomes and make better policy and programming decisions.
- **Technology:** Advancing the use of enabling technologies and data-driven approaches to empower underserved communities and improve development effectiveness.
- **Innovation:** Increasing the adoption of high impact development solutions and the effective use of innovation models and design practices.
- **Partnerships:** Advancing the use of private sector engagement, new collaborative approaches, and cultivation of entrepreneurial ecosystems to accelerate and scale development impact.
- **Agency Integration:** Increasing the effective integration of STIP by Missions and Bureaus to advance USAID's sustainable development results and priorities.

Higher Education Institution Engagement

USAID has a long history of engaging higher education institutions (HEIs)¹ to achieve development objectives. Together with HEIs, the Lab partners with USAID colleagues, other federal agencies, NGOs, and the private sector to increase the scientific knowledge and evidence directed toward addressing USAID's development priorities and improving policy and programming decisions.

STIP APS Funding Priorities and Programmatic Focus

When USAID intends to support a variety of creative approaches towards developing methodologies to assess and implement development objective activities, the Agency may use an [Annual Program Statement \(APS\)](#) to generate competition for these awards. When used, USAID will publish an APS at least once a year, either with an open-ended response time or a closing date of at least six months after issuance. More specifically, the STIP APS is designed to provide a vehicle for USAID to engage with the higher education community broadly and creatively, across the research and development spectrum. Additionally, by encouraging universities to

¹ For purposes of the STIP APS, a higher education institution will be defined as follows, consistent with guidance provided by USAID/E3/Education: "A tertiary education institution . . . is an organization that provides educational opportunities that build on secondary education, providing learning activities in specialized fields. It aims at learning at a high level of complexity and specialization. Tertiary education includes what is commonly understood as academic education but also includes advanced vocational or professional education. This may include public or private universities, colleges, research institutes, training institutes [including teacher training institutes], etc."

engage civil communities broadly across STIP programmatic emphases, the STIP APS seeks to provide broad flexibility for the academic community to collaborate with USAID, each other, and local institutions (including the private sector, government, and civil society organizations) to build partnerships around key development challenges.

USAID/Lab anticipates that ultimately the STIP APS will contribute to the Lab's mission and objectives through successful achievement of the following outcomes:

Desired Program Outcomes

- **Generate Targeted Evidence and Solutions through Innovative Approaches:** The Lab will support innovative higher education-based programming that directly addresses priority development challenges and research questions identified across the Agency and with our partners. Within the STIP APS, this programming may focus on integrated, cross-sectoral questions to fill knowledge and solution gaps that traditional, sector-based USAID research programming doesn't address. The areas of programming could involve funding research directly or funding tools and methods to promote discovery with more agility, speed, and efficacy. It could also entail the discovery, implementation, and testing of novel solutions for development.
- **Facilitate the Translation of Evidence and Promising Solutions to Impact:** Research findings and the products/solutions that come from that research are often ineffectively applied to development problems. To fill this gap, the Lab will support efforts to make research programming and innovative solutions arising from such research more actionable so that development actors use, apply, and integrate them into their development work. The Lab will facilitate coordination between higher education institutions, donors, and local communities, synthesis and translation of research, and communication between academics and other actors involved in development. This could entail engaging with policy-makers and innovators early to help define research questions and development challenges before activities are conducted, and ensuring that academics/donors respond to a demonstrated need. It may also involve activities related to knowledge management, expert advising, and/or convening and communication around research products and the policies or practices those products inform.
- **Strengthen the STIP Ecosystem to Ensure Long-lasting Impact:** It is equally important to have an enabling environment primed for integrating promising research findings and solutions into the appropriate channels for successful uptake and sustainability. Whenever possible, the Lab seeks to build both individual and institutional capacity of key aspects within a particular STIP ecosystem to reduce barriers and maximize opportunities to promote evidence-based decision making and uptake -- from the department of a university, to a working group within a government Ministry, to a civil

society organization, to influencing regulation in the private sector.

Strategically, we have learned that these outcomes will be best achieved in the context of the Lab's goal of improving USAID partnerships with HEIs and accelerating local scientific potential. It is anticipated that as part of the STIP APS awards, the recipients will work with USAID to integrate the results of these awards across the [USAID Program Cycle](#), in strategic planning, project design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

Additionally, USAID expects that STIP APS recipients will partner with other development actors and leverage external resources to overcome barriers that local researchers and institutions face in conducting and using research, which in turn will promote local economic growth and sustainable, long-term development impacts. This could involve direct support to local researchers, institutions, agencies, or regional associations. This may also involve working with USAID Missions to identify local research potential, help unlock local resources (i.e. from host country governments), or foster partnerships across regions (including other developed and developing countries). USAID is especially interested in potential collaboration with the private sector to ascertain problems and issues that warrant attention, mobilize and apply private sector expertise, capabilities and resources, and build robust research and development cooperation between universities and industry.

Funding Opportunities

This APS is unfunded and represents the framework through which later, funded addenda will be constructed. The Lab will collaborate with internal or external partners to post specific funding opportunities through addenda to this APS that address development challenges of importance to USAID. These addenda will likely focus on particularly intractable or impactful development challenges that may occur within or across specific countries, regions, or sectors. Addenda will be the exclusive source of funding through this APS and will be posted on www.grants.gov.

Funded addenda that are currently open include the following:

Addendum 1

Responsible USAID M/B/IO: U.S. Global Development Lab

Title: [Accelerating Local Potential Addendum](#)

Co-Creation, Collaboration and Communication under STIP APS

A critical component of the STIP APS is the co-creation process. Past experience demonstrates that the most successful partnerships are grounded in mutually reinforcing relationships between HEIs, their partner organizations, and one or more of USAID's development objectives. In order to most effectively consider whether and how HEI, the broader development community, and

USAID interests might align, USAID seeks extensive communication with prospective partners so we can jointly explore and define key challenges and problems, and then jointly develop promising solutions to those issues.

The co-creation process is characterized by potentially extensive engagement and communication between USAID and any key project partner(s). Key project partners as well as organizations (public or private) who are interested in providing material, financial, or intellectual support to the proposed project may be invited to interact during the process.

Co-creation brings together participants to create solutions to specific development challenges. When using co-creation, USAID teams work alongside partners and potential implementers collaboratively to define the problem, identify new and existing solutions, build consensus around areas for action, and/or refine plans to move forward with programs and projects. As its name implies, co-creation relies on collaboration with a diverse set of actors, allowing for a more equitable distribution of both the responsibility and ownership of outputs across all partners.

For Applicants under the STIP APS/associated Addendum and seeking to receive USAID funding to implement the proposed activities, USAID's discussions with that those Applicants will take place within the parameters of publicly available information.² These parameters provide ample room for extensive, robust discussions regarding the development problem in question, best practices, lessons learned in the relevant technical sectors, and pertinent research and evaluations and various other matters.

Once a Concept Note naming the Applicant is submitted under an APS Addendum, USAID can meet with and ask the Applicant (and other partners, if the Concept Note is proposing partnerships) extensive and highly detailed questions about the content of the Concept Note. Such questions are essential to USAID's review of the Concept Note and USAID's determination of whether the proposed Concept Note warrants further discussion and development.

However, USAID cannot engage in highly specific, detailed activity design with the entity seeking an award of USAID funding until **after** USAID decides the Concept Note meets the minimum criteria under this APS, and any additional criteria under Addenda, and warrants further consideration and development. Submission of a qualifying Concept Note is needed.

If the Concept Note meets the criteria set forth in both the STIP APS umbrella and the associated Addendum, USAID personnel can have highly specific, detailed activity design discussions with

²"Publicly available information" is anticipated to consist of information available on public websites, the information published in the overriding APS as well as the specific addendum to which the Applicant has applied, and general information available in the news or other public repositories.

the prospective award recipient throughout the remainder of the process, e.g. up to and through any award that might be issued under this APS. Please see the “**Application & Award Process**” section below for more information.

Note: None of USAID’s communication during the co-creation process provided by this APS should be interpreted as a commitment to making an award of USAID funding.

Applicants are advised that participation in the co-creation process under this APS is entirely at their own risk; the Government is not responsible for any cost incurred by the Applicant, if the Applicant decides to accept the invitation to co-create with USAID. A commitment to an award of USAID funding is only made when an award agreement is signed.

Application & Award Process

This STIP APS provides a platform for the initiation of consultations by HEIs and their partners with USAID M/B/IOs, and reflects USAID’s interest in expanding and diversifying its HEI partner base, while supporting ideas with high potential for transformative impact. The general STIP APS is unfunded and serves as a general umbrella APS, to which the Lab and other USAID M/B/IOs can post specific addenda or funding opportunities that are focused on cross-sectoral or intractable development challenges. An addendum highlights a specific program or activity, where technical assistance or partnership opportunities are communicated by a USAID M/B/IO. USAID addenda are time-sensitive calls for Concept Notes. While this APS is not supported by specific funds, funding levels and estimated numbers of awards will be specifically outlined in any subsequent addenda.

NOTE: USAID will only consider Concept Notes that are submitted against a specific addendum to this STIP APS. USAID will not accept or consider any concept notes under this STIP APS unless it is submitted in direct response to an addendum issued under this STIP APS.

Applicants interested in pursuing an opportunity posted as an addendum should follow the instructions and guidance set forth in that text. This APS is not supported by specific funds; therefore the amount of resources made available under this APS will depend on the scope of the specific addenda, the concepts received, and the availability of funds. The Lab and/or the awarding M/B/IO for specific addenda will review submissions as indicated in the addendum. Applicants should submit Concept Notes according to the timeline outlined in the specific addendum and send the Concept Notes to the POC indicated in that addendum. Information on the target response time, and on any special deadlines, is available at www.grants.gov. The application and award process under this APS has the following steps:

Concept Note Submission

Interested Applicants must first submit an initial 5-page maximum Concept Note. **Concept**

Notes must respond a specific Addendum under this APS and should be prepared and submitted according to the specific instructions in the Addendum of interest. Applicants should submit only the information and materials specified in the Addendum. In the unlikely event that a specific format is not provided, the Applicant should refer to the STIP APS Concept Note template found at www.grants.gov, following all directions and requirements set forth within. Applicants should not submit any alternative document or narrative as a substitute for a Concept Note; application materials in any other format will not be accepted or reviewed. In addition, and as noted in the STIP APS Concept Note Template, *all Concept Notes MUST be in English and submitted electronically according to the instructions in each specific addendum.*

Concept Notes must be submitted to the names indicated in the specific STIP APS addendum. Concept Notes sent by any other means (including Grants.gov) will not be considered. The Concept Note submission deadline for each specific STIP APS Addendum will be indicated in that Addendum. Additional information can be found at www.grants.gov. For questions, please contact the USAID staff named in the specific STIP APS Addendum.

Concept Notes submitted under this APS are encouraged to demonstrate a cross-sectoral approach to solving an intractable development challenge through a consortium of actors, to be led by representatives from one primary recipient of the award (Prime Recipient)³. Additionally, these development challenges should relate directly to the STIP APS addendum to which the Concept Note is responding. These Concept Notes will be evaluated based on the criteria and considerations set forth in the “Concept Note Evaluation Criteria and Considerations” section below⁴.

USAID is eager to review the wealth of tremendous ideas that higher education institutions will submit in response to Addenda issued under this APS. Higher education institutions have been vital partners since the Agency was first created. USAID collaboration with the higher education community has been critical to achieving sustainable development results and impact. USAID will strive to review Concept Notes promptly and inform applicants as soon as feasible whether the activities proposed in the Concept Note warrant further consideration and development.

Review of Concept Notes

Once a Concept Note has been submitted in response to an addendum under the STIP APS,

³ Consortia applications are welcomed under this APS; however, one eligible entity must still be identified as the Prime Recipient. The other consortia partners will serve as subawardees to the Prime Recipient (if the relationship is monetary in nature) or as thought partners/advisors to the Prime Recipient (if the relationship is non-monetary in nature). The Prime Recipient will be responsible for managing and coordinating its partners as it seeks to achieve the three goals stated above.

⁴ Concepts Notes will be evaluated according to the criteria and considerations set forth in this STIP APS and any additional criteria indicated in the pertinent STIP APS addendum.

USAID will conduct an initial review of the Concept Note using the criteria outlined in the section: Concept Note Evaluation Criteria and Considerations, as well as the criteria stated in the individual Addendum.

The purpose of the initial review and related communication is to determine whether USAID wishes to engage in further discussions regarding the proposed approach and activities. The initial review and communication will result in one of three outcomes:

1. A decision to forego further consideration of the approach proposed in the Concept Note;
2. A decision to provide the Applicant an opportunity to submit a revised Concept Note (this is very rare); or
3. An invitation to engage in more in-depth and specific co-creation discussions aimed at further developing the proposed approach and determining whether to request a full application.

Note: A decision to engage in more in-depth and specific co-creation discussions is NOT a commitment to funding, nor is it a commitment that USAID will request a Full Application. If an Applicant is invited to engage in co-creation and further discussions, additional guidance with respect to expectations during the co-creation process will be provided to the Applicant. There is no guarantee that participation in the co-creation phase will lead to an award from USAID. This is a collaborative process and the outcome may be that all, some, or none of the participants will be asked to submit a Full Application. If a formal co-creation workshop is held, it will be viewed as an opportunity to team up, brainstorm and prepare the initial skeleton of a project/activity that may or may not be funded.

If subsequent in-depth and specific discussions do not result in the identification and development of an activity worthy of further pursuit, the M/B/IO will not request a Full Application and will instead inform the Applicant that USAID is no longer interested in the proposed activity.

On the other hand, if more in-depth discussions enable the partners to jointly develop and design (or further clarify) a promising, high impact approach, and the M/B/IO decides a Full Application is warranted, USAID will inform the Applicant of that determination.

Full Applications

If an M/B/IO decides a Full Application is warranted, Full Application instructions and/or templates will be provided to Applicants by the M/B/IO. Full Application instructions and/or templates are expected to vary based on specific M/B/IO needs and project objectives.

Consistent with the co-creation focus of this STIP APS, USAID will continue to have robust communication with Applicants, potential partners, and other key stakeholders regarding the

technical substance of the evolving approach, as well as the identity and roles of proposed or additional partners. This will include USAID and partner communication regarding the content of the Full Application, including but not limited to the program description to be included in the resulting RFA and subsequent application.

Review of Full Applications

After receipt, all Full Applications will be reviewed for their technical merit by a decision panel, anticipated to be comprised of USAID/Lab staff and staff from the requesting M/B/IO. USAID may request Applicants to present their Application to the decision panel via teleconference or videoconference, or to travel to USAID/Washington (if local/within 50 miles of USAID Headquarters). The decision panels will only meet with Applicants when they determine a meeting is appropriate; applicants should not contact USAID to schedule a presentation.

Request for Additional Information

Consistent with the co-creation objectives of this STIP APS, the decision panel may suggest revisions and additions to the proposed project as well as potential partners and resources. The decision panel, working in collaboration with the Lab and the relevant M/B/IO may also seek additional information regarding the technical approach, the capacity of the applicant and partners, management and organization, past performance, budget, representations, and certifications.

AO Determination

If the decision panel selects an Application for funding, its review will be shared with the Agreement Officer (AO) for final approval and award negotiation. Based on the criteria outlined in the specific addendum, the decision panel will recommend which Full Application(s) be advanced to the AO for the relevant M/B/IO for award instrument negotiation and finalization. Depending on the nature of the lead partner and the activities to be conducted under the award, agreements and/or awards may take the form of grants, fixed obligation grants, cooperative agreements, leader with associate awards, collaboration agreements, or other appropriate assistance awards.

Final Review and Negotiation

The AO will engage in final review, negotiation, and determinations of assistance award instrument type, responsibility, and cost realism, and will craft an assistance award instrument with the Apparently Successful Applicant. Such assistance award instrument can be in the form of a Cooperative Agreement or a Grant.

If the Apparently Successful Applicant and USAID cannot arrive at a mutually agreeable arrangement, the AO will cancel the project at no cost to the Government.

Award and Implementation

The USAID AO will award the instrument, and the Awardee will begin implementation, in collaboration with the USAID M/B/IO, according to the terms and scope of the award instrument.

Award Information

We anticipate that the opportunities provided under this APS will be of high interest to the global academic community and therefore may result in a high number of Concept Note submissions. However, given anticipated funding levels, USAID will only be able to fund a small portion of the ideas that are offered. **Again, all Applicants are advised that submission of a Concept Note under this APS is entirely at their own risk; the Government is not responsible for the cost of Application preparation (at any stage in the process), nor is the Government committed to funding any Concept Notes or Full Applications that may be submitted under this APS.**

Awards under this APS will be made on the basis of the applicant's ability to effectively partner with the Higher Education community in pursuit of USAID M/B/IOs' objectives and goals while also reflecting and advancing the Lab's core Mission to:

- produce breakthrough development innovations by sourcing, testing, and scaling proven solutions that impact millions of people; and
- accelerate the transformation of the development enterprise by opening development to people anywhere with good ideas, promoting new and deepening existing partnerships, bringing data and evidence to bear, and harnessing scientific and technological advances.

Eligibility Information

Addenda under this APS may request Concept Notes/Full Applications (in cases where only a Full Application is requested) from all types of organizations. Such organizations must demonstrate engagement with HEIs as well as other institutional partners, be they public, private, for-profit, nonprofit organizations, public international organizations, non-governmental organizations, U.S. and non-U.S. governmental organizations, or multilateral and international donor organizations. All organizations must be determined to be responsive to the APS as well as the specific addenda to which the Concept Note is being submitted and must come from organizations that can be determined to be sufficiently responsible to lead the final award.

The recommendation or selection of an Application for award does not in any way guarantee the award. The AO must evaluate the risks posed by applicants before making the award. The AO must evaluate risk in accordance with the principles established by USAID and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) (see 2 CFR 200.205). In order for an award to be made, the AO must make an affirmative determination that the Applicant is "responsible" as discussed in ADS 303.3.9.

Standard Clauses and Provisions of Award

Information regarding clauses and provisions will be offered to the Apparently Successful Applicant when the award instrument is drafted.

The standard clauses or provisions for awards are generally prescribed by law and regulation. Organizations are encouraged to consider providing reasonable cost sharing, leverage, or other exchange of resource arrangements, and are encouraged to suggest creative approaches to resourcing projects.

Information Protection

USAID's goal is to facilitate the research and development that will lead to innovative, and potentially commercially viable, solutions. Understanding the sensitive nature of submitters' information, USAID will work with organizations to protect intellectual property. Concept Notes should be free of any intellectual property that the Applicant wishes to protect, as the Concept Note may be shared with USAID partners as part of the selection process. However, once Applicants have been invited to engage in further discussions, Applicants will work with USAID to identify proprietary information that requires protection.

Therefore, organizations making submissions under this APS grant to USAID a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to use, disclose, reproduce, and prepare derivative works, and to have or permit others to do so to any information contained in the Concept Note submitted under the APS. If USAID engages with the organization regarding its submission, the parties can negotiate further intellectual property protection for the organization's intellectual property.

Organizations must ensure that any submissions under this APS are free of any third party proprietary data rights that would impact the license granted to USAID herein.

Evaluation Criteria and Considerations

USAID will use the following criteria to assess both Concept Notes and Full Applications. These criteria reflect core principles outlined above, and are applied to all submissions. Any Concept Note submitted under an addendum to this APS should propose an approach that satisfies these criteria and exhibits the characteristics set forth below. **Note:** In addition to the following criteria and considerations, there may be additional criteria highlighted in the specific STIP APS addendum.

Criterion 1: Alignment with M/B/IO Strategic Objectives and Programming Priorities

The Concept Note must align with the targeted M/B/IO's strategic plan (including Country Development Cooperation Strategies) and programming priorities as outlined in the addendum

or reference materials.

Criterion 2: Level of Partner Engagement

Sub-criterion 2.1: Higher Education Institution Engagement and Collaboration

The Concept Note/Full Application must be based on engagement and collaboration with the higher education community for activities such as problem identification and definition, the development of the proposed approaches to solve the prioritized problem(s), and implementation of the proposed project. The proposed work should clearly reflect the interests of the proposed university partners and clearly engage resources, assets, and expertise from the higher education community in the implementation of activities.

Concept Notes/Full Applications, which demonstrate a diversity of HEIs (including female researchers and researchers from U.S. minority-serving institutions (MSIs)⁵ and developing countries), will be evaluated favorably under this sub-criterion.

If a Concept Note/Full Application does not demonstrate strong/significant engagement and collaboration with the higher education community, the Concept Note/Full Application will be deemed ineligible and USAID has no obligation to review the Concept Note/Full Application.

Sub-criterion 2.2: Engagement of and Collaboration with Other Partners

The Concept Note/Full Application must be based on engagement and collaboration with partners beyond the higher education community. As appropriate, such partners should be engaged in problem identification and definition, the development of the proposed approaches to solve the prioritized problem(s), and implementation of the proposed project. The proposed work should clearly reflect the interests of such partners.

If a Concept Note/Full Application does not demonstrate strong/significant engagement and collaboration with other partners, the Concept Note/Full Application will be deemed ineligible and USAID has no obligation to review the Concept Note/Full Application.

Criterion 3: Potential for Impact, Feasibility, Sustainability and Scalability

Quality Concept Notes/Full Applications increase the impact, reach, efficiency and effectiveness of USAID's development assistance investments by mobilizing significant new resources, ideas,

⁵ The USAID MSI Program's mission is to facilitate an environment where U.S. MSIs become USAID partners by successfully competing for USAID awards and by engaging in U.S. foreign assistance activities. The USAID MSI Program provides support to minority-serving U.S. higher education institutions interested in USAID programs and activities and promotes the interests, capabilities, and experience of MSI's within USAID. MSI's include Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs). For more information on MSI's please follow this link - <https://www.usaid.gov/partnership-opportunities/universities/minority-serving-institutions>.

technologies and/or partners to address and solve critical development problems and related challenges. Successful approaches are characterized by and designed to achieve clear, measurable, and mutually understood objectives, outcomes and results.

USAID will evaluate the prospective development impact of the proposed concept, paying particular attention to:

1. **Feasibility:** The proposed approach should have well-defined and achievable objectives. The enabling environment and the proposed combination of partner assets, resources and expertise should be sufficient to yield significant impact on a specific and important development challenge. Financial and technical approaches must be viable. In addition, the involvement of local partners (particularly local universities) and/or beneficiaries in the development and implementation of the project should be clear and sufficient enough to indicate the project will be successful.
2. **Sustainability:** The proposed project should demonstrate the potential to yield sustainable solutions to the development challenge being addressed. These solutions should indicate how implementers will engage with an inclusive set of stakeholders and leverage resources from said stakeholders to ensure the project is long-standing.
3. **Scalability:** Where appropriate, USAID will consider whether and how the proposed approaches can be scaled or replicated in a manner that would offer a broader set of impacts at the national, regional or global level.

Gender Equality and Female Empowerment

Gender equality and women's empowerment is at the core of development, and USAID is dedicated to ensuring gender-inclusive programming and promoting female empowerment and gender equality. For this reason, all USAID programs are shaped by a thorough gender analysis, which aims to identify existing gender inequities and their causes, identify obstacles to female empowerment, and consider potential adverse effects of gender-based exclusion. Pursuant to ADS 205, the results of these gender analyses must guide the strategic planning and project design and implementation processes for all USAID projects. In addition, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plans must include appropriate gender-sensitive indicators and collection of sex-disaggregated data. Concept Notes/Applications that demonstrate an evidence-based plan for ensuring gender inclusion and female empowerment in response to a STIP APS addendum will be viewed favorably. A full description of USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy can be found [here](#).

Other Full Application Parameters

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the Full Applications submitted. USAID/Lab seeks to select projects across a wide range of technical and regional areas and leverage the

unique capabilities of the higher education community to apply and advance the application of Science, Technology, Innovation, and Partnership. USAID will not fund Applications that, in its view, will result in the use of U.S. taxpayer funding in a duplicative or redundant manner. This includes activities determined to not be in the best interest of the United States Government.

If USAID identifies opportunities to strengthen or fund a full Application by connecting with other USAID mechanisms, other potential funders, and/or external partners, USAID may make the Full Application available internally or externally for appropriate consideration, with the consent of the applicant and partners.

Points of Contact

For any questions regarding this general APS, contact labcdr_feedback@usaid.gov. Questions regarding specific addenda, including Concept Notes, must be submitted to the contact listed in that addendum. The AO for this APS is Roderick Watson at rwatson@usaid.gov, in USAID's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA) in the Bureau for Management. If a Full Application is awarded, the AO will appoint an Agreement Officer's Representative at that time to provide technical and administrative oversight of the specific award.

Additional Information on Award Administration

- Award Solicitation, Award Process and Standard Provisions for U.S. organizations and Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations: <http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/agency-policy/series-300>
- Grant and Contract Process: <http://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/get-grant-or-contract/grant-and-contract-process>
- Standard Provisions (Non-U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations): <http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mab>
- Intellectual Property and Other Issues: http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=d3769da5cf0d02900f539c8deb2cd59c&mc=true&n ode=se2.1.200_1448&rgn=div8
- USAID's Gender Equality Policy: <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/GenderEqualityPolicy.pdf>
- Environmental Compliance Background Information: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/environment/compliance
- USAID Open Data Policy: <https://www.usaid.gov/data/frequently-asked-questions>
- Information on how the Agency will ensure environmental soundness and compliance in design and implementation when required by the 22 CFR 216 determination: <http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/agency-policy/series-200>
- Branding and Marking Policy and Resources: <https://www.usaid.gov/branding>

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