



REFERENCE: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) No: 72067424R00011
Energy Talent Development - West Africa (ETD-WA) Activity

SUBJECT: Amendment No. 02

DATE: January 16, 2025

Dear Prospective Applicants,

The purpose of this Amendment is to:

- I. Add the following to Section E. Application Review Information, 2. Merit Review Criteria, Phase 1: Concept Paper review (page 30):

“The concept paper merit review criteria appear in descending order of importance.”
- II. Respond to the following questions received in relation to the referenced NOFO as listed on the table below.

Except as provided herein, all terms and conditions of the original NOFO remain unchanged and in full force and effect.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

Nancy
Kleinhans

Digitally signed by
Nancy Kleinhans
Date: 2025.01.16
15:17:41 +02'00'

Nancy Kleinhans
Agreement Officer

Questions & Answers - NOFO 72067424R00011 - ETD-WA

No	Question	Answer
General Questions		
1	Is the budget for one country or the whole region?	Per NOFO Section A. Basic Information (page 4), "Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency, USAID intends to provide \$8,000,000 in total USAID funding over a five (5) year period." The funds are for the overall grant and not country specific.
2	What is the minimum project size or funding amount USAID is looking to support under this program?	Refer to the answer to Question 1, above.
3	It is said that the proposed concept paper should assume a total activity cost of \$8M. Is it mandatory to provide tentatively an estimation of budget for activities in the concept paper?	Refer to NOFO Attachment 8 Concept Paper Form, SECTION I - APPLICANT INFORMATION , AND SUMMARY which states this section should include an overall activity budget.
4	I understood, you're looking for a multiple project for a total USD 8 million, is it true?	Per NOFO Section A Basic Information (page 5), "USAID intends to award one (1) award with renewal periods pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity. Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency, USAID intends to provide \$8,000,000 in total USAID funding over a five (5) year period."

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General Questions		
5	Should the application focus on just one country or on the whole of West Africa?	<p>Per NOFO Section D. Application Content and Format, (page 15), the instructions for the full application state, “Describe where activity implementation will take place. This can be in one or more of the countries identified in Section B.”</p> <p>NOFO Section B. Eligibility (page 6), lists the following countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.</p> <p>Per NOFO Section E. Application Review Information, Merit Review Criterion #1 Technical Approach (page 31), “This award is expected to benefit the West Africa region. Applicants may propose working in one or more of the multiple countries listed within West Africa. Applicants are allowed to propose working in one or more of the following countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea-Conakry, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.</p>
6	Is there any desired focus or preference for any specific one (or more) of the eligible countries? Does this impact the no. of 8M awards due?	We do not have further priorities beyond what is listed in the NOFO
7	Can the project submission include two countries, for example Mali and Ivory Coast, which are part of the company's areas of intervention?	Yes, the concept paper could include two countries, for example Mali and Ivory Coast. Refer to the answer for Question 2, above. Applicants may propose working in one or more of the multiple countries listed within the West Africa region.
8	Can Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) be considered? DRC borders most West African countries, however, it is not explicitly mentioned in the eligibility criteria.	No, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) cannot be considered. Refer to the answer to Question 2, above. DRC is not one of the countries listed in the NOFO.

No	Question	Answer
General Questions		
9	Is there a limit to the number of capacity-building programs?	<p>No, there is no limit to the number of capacity building programs. The applicant should propose the number of interventions or capacity building activities that complement their overall technical approach and will support achievement of the Objectives described in NOFO Section C. Program Description (page 10).</p> <p>As per NOFO Section E. Application Review Information, “Merit Review Criterion #1 Technical Approach (page 30), “The application should reflect a proposed approach to design and implement capacity building activities that is sound and understands the energy sector needs in individual West African countries.”</p>
10	Can the projects involve not only training in the energy sector, but also incubation for young people who want to set up businesses?	Yes, applicants can be involved in incubation for young people who want to set up business, if the activity will support achievement of the Objectives described in NOFO Section C. Program Description (page 10).
11	Who can benefit from the grant?	As per NOFO Section C Program Description, (page 9), “The Activity will build the capacity of energy stakeholders (including developers, electrification agencies, industry associations, cooperatives, savings and credit groups, and other enterprises, institutions, decision-makers, and consumers). “ It continues to state, “the Activity will pay special attention to building the knowledge, skills, abilities of women, youth, and other underrepresented populations, including but not limited to female business and advocacy group leaders.”
12	How many projects/beneficiaries the amount of the grant is used to finance?	<p>NOFO Attachment 8 Concept Paper Format states, “Describe all proposed activities, including rationale, planned inputs, and anticipated outputs.” Applicants must propose the number of projects/beneficiaries.</p> <p>NOFO Section C Program Description (page 10), “Targets and data collection methods for the program will be established upon award in accordance with the Power Africa MEL plan.”</p>
13	Can these funds be allocated to fundamental research projects on materials for electrical and electrochemical	No.

No	Question	Answer
General Questions		
	devices related to renewable energies?	
14	What types of organizations are eligible	Refer to NOFO Section B, Eligibility (page 6) for information on what organizations are eligible.
15	Can individuals apply as well?	Any applicant that meets the criteria described in NOFO Section B Eligibility (page 6) may submit a concept paper.
16	Does our organization have to be legally registered in the country in which the work is being done, or would we need to apply with a partner?	Organizations should comply with legal registration requirements of the country where they intend to implement. If an applicant intends to only implement short term training in a country, then perhaps it isn't required. Applicants should consult with their legal counsel and decide if the registration is required. For the purposes of eligibility, the applicant must be legally registered in at least one of the countries listed in NOFO Section B. Eligibility (page 6).
17	Can a subcontractor of TetraTech on Empower West Africa apply? Are there any restrictions?	Yes, a subcontractor of Tetra Tech could apply if the organization meets eligibility requirements described in the NOFO. However, per NOFO Section D. Application Content and Format, Conflict of Interest Pre Award Term (page 25), "The applicant must notify USAID of any actual or potential conflict of interest that they are aware of that may provide the applicant with an unfair competitive advantage in competing for this financial assistance award. Examples of an unfair competitive advantage include but are not limited to situations in which an applicant or the applicant's employee gained access to non-public information regarding a federal assistance funding opportunity."
18	Can an organisation that is already involved in implementation of a USAID activity still submit?	Yes, refer to the answer to the question above.
19	Is it acceptable to jointly apply with one or more organizations, where one is based in West Africa and the other based in the U.S.?	One applicant must be proposed as the prime or applicant that will receive the grant. A U.S. entity cannot be proposed as a prime because eligibility for prime applicants is restricted to local entities as defined in Section B. The prime applicant should describe any partners,

No	Question	Answer
General Questions		
		including U.S. partners, in Section III of the Concept Paper Format. A partner could be proposed as a sub-awardee.
20	Can a local organization partner with a regional or international partner. Is that allowed?	Yes, See the answer to question #12, above.
21	If several structures work to submit a proposal, do we need to formalize the partnership?	Refer to the answer to the question above.
22	Is collaboration with local organizations permitted?	Yes, collaboration with local organizations is encouraged.
23	Will there be an opportunity for the USAID team to publish a list of companies or individuals interested in collaborating with organizations in the target countries? If so, could this information be included in the related documents section of the grant announcement?	No, USAID will not publish a list of companies or individuals interested in collaborating. You can refer to https://www.workwithusaid.gov/ to see if any organizations have publicized sub partnering opportunities.
24	Are public universities or Capacity building Centers in such universities qualified to apply	Please review the Eligibility section to ensure that the university or capacity building center will meet the criteria.
25	Would USAID consider supporting a new organization, provided we partner with local experts and stakeholders?	Yes, as long as the organization meets the eligibility criteria.
26	Please we need the format.	You can download the Concept Paper Format from this website: https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/35758
27	Are external references such as links to institutional websites or personal pages allowed into the concept paper for staff presentation?	No, external references are not allowed. As per NOFO Section D. Application Content and Format (page 13), "Any additional information or reference material pages not requested by the NOFO may be removed prior to evaluation and may adversely affect an applicant's evaluation/review."

No	Question	Answer
General Questions		
		USAID will only evaluate the 5 pages of the Concept Paper Form and resumes. NOFO Attachment 8 Concept Paper Form states, "Applicants may provide up to 4 resumes (maximum of 2 pages each) of individuals who will be key to implementation of the proposed activity. Inclusion of resumes will not count against the Concept Paper page limit (i.e., not included in the 5-page limitation)."
28	Please, does the webinar record?	No.
29	Please provide clarifications regarding the cost-sharing or matching requirement, if available.	<p>The applicant is not required to provide cost share information in the Concept Paper Format.</p> <p>However, if invited to submit a full application the applicant will comply with Cost Share information included in NOFO Section B Eligibility, 2. Cost Sharing (page 6) which requires a cost share of 10% of the award. This section states, "Such funds may be provided directly by the recipient; other multilateral, bilateral, and foundation donors; host governments; and local organizations, communities and private businesses that contribute financially and in-kind to implementation of activities at the country level.</p> <p>This may include contribution of staff, level of effort, office space or other facilities or equipment which may be used for the program, provided by the recipient."</p> <p>The Business (Cost) Application, required in phase 2 of the procurement, will include cost share information required in NOFO Section D. Application Content and Format (page 20).</p>
30	Based on the requirement to provide 10% of the budget as cost sharing, clarify whether this contribution must be provided exclusively by the lead organization or whether it can be distributed among all members of the consortium.	As per NOFO Section B Eligibility (page 6), "USAID has established a required minimum recipient cost share of 10% for the award. Such funds may be provided directly by the recipient; other multilateral, bilateral, and foundation donors; host governments; and local organizations, communities and private businesses that contribute financially and in-kind to implementation of activities at the country level."

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General Questions		
31	Kindly confirm whether the cost-share requirement, either in cash or in-kind, still applies or if it has been waived?	The cost share requirement is still in the NOFO and referenced in multiple sections including Section B. Eligibility, Section D. Application Content and Format and Section E. Application Review Information.
32	Will you consider reducing the cost share or waiving it entirely?	No.
33	Cost share: "10% of the total 8 million" Do we need proof of this 10% directly when we apply? -Can we submit a letter of engagement of a third party which will support this 10% if selected?	No cost share information is required with submission of the concept paper. However, if invited to submit an application, you will follow the instructions in NOFO Section D. Application Content and Format (page 20) which requires submission of, "1) an estimate of the amount of cost-sharing, the type of resources committed (e.g., funds, in-kind, etc.), 3) the sources of cost share contributions (e.g., third party contributions from non-Federal entity, applicant organization funds, direct procurement, etc.), and 4) the basis of calculation (e.g., detailed explanation of costs)."
34	What are the (most important) evaluation parameters of the concept papers?	See NOFO Section E. Application Review Information, Section 2: Merit Review Criteria (page 30). With this amendment 2 to the NOFO, we have added a note stating the merit review criteria for concept paper review are in descending order of importance. They are in the same order of importance as the criteria for full application review.
35	REQUEST - review these intervention areas once more?	Refer to NOFO Section C. Program Description which starts on page 8.
36	Can an organization submit a proposal related to a yearly training program that covers a number of countries for the 5 years?	Yes. You would need to describe how this training program meets the objectives in the program description
37	Will we receive confirmation of the receipt or feedback on the concept paper?	Yes. We will confirm receipt by email. Following the end of the evaluation you will receive feedback.
38	Are we going to receive the document that Annessh is	Yes, the documents will be uploaded to Grants.Gov.

No	Question	Answer
General Questions		
	projecting ?	
39	What are the different steps of the submission please, please tell us in a few words ?	The first step is to complete Attachment 8 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Email the concept paper to the points of contact noted in the NOFO. Once concept papers are reviewed, Power Africa will invite some applicants to submit full applications.
40	And the team, you impose a composition. Can we add other type of function ?	We have not required a specific structure. You should propose the people and positions that will help you deliver your approach to meet the goals of the activity.
41	If you are developing a concept for multiple countries, do you have to have local presence or registration in all of the markets or just have 1 primary local entity ?	You must just have one primary local entity registered in at least one of the countries listed in the NOFO. For example, you can have Headquarters in Ghana, but you may propose to travel to another country for training. You need not be registered in every single country.
42	For proofreading reasons for French speakers. I ask you to make available the various projected documents. Thank you for understanding.	The documents will be posted to Grants.gov
43	What are the KPIs going to be for ETD-WA?	<p>The NOFO doesn't specifically outline Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). However, the NOFO (see Section C, 4 on indicative results) includes expectations for measuring the success of the program such as the illustrative indicators below:</p> <p>1.3.1 Number of employed women benefiting from on-the-job, technical, or professional development training as a result of Power Africa assistance.</p> <p>3.2.3 Number of people trained in technical energy fields with USG assistance</p> <p>3.2.5. Number of Institutions with improved capacity to address Clean Energy Issues as supported by USG assistance</p> <p>However, do note that targets for the indicators will be established upon award in accordance with the Power Africa MEL Plan (see NOFO Section C, 4)</p>

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44	What in USAID Power Africa’s view would indicate success with ETD-WA?	<p>The NOFO (see Section C, 4 on indicative results) includes expectations for measuring the success of the program such as the illustrative indicators below:</p> <p>1.3.1 Number of employed women benefiting from on-the-job, technical, or professional development training as a result of Power Africa assistance.</p> <p>3.2.3 Number of people trained in technical energy fields with USG assistance</p> <p>3.2.5. Number of Institutions with improved capacity to address Clean Energy Issues as supported by USG assistance</p> <p>However, do note that targets for the indicators will be established upon award in accordance with the Power Africa MEL Plan (see NOFO Section C, 4)</p>
45	Would embedded advisory be considered as part of/ constitute an element of the training?	This would depend on the nature of the advisory services. If the embedded advisors’ scopes of work were to include mentoring and other forms of skills transferring/capacity building, this would be considered capacity building.
46	What are the requirements for environmental and sustainability issues; would training on these be required?	See NOFO Section H, Post Award Requirements and Administration, Section 4 “Environmental Compliance” on page 36.
47	Is there going to be a requirement for how many training sessions should be delivered in each of the 5 years?	No. The applicant should propose the number of interventions or capacity building activities that fits within their overall strategy for meeting activity/grant objectives.
48	Will there be training considerations for soft skills?	The applicant should propose the types of interventions or capacity building activities that advance the grant objectives.
49	Is there a minimum scale or number of beneficiaries that the project should impact to be competitive?	There is no minimum. Applicants should propose an approach that meets the objectives of the grant.

No	Question	Answer
General Questions		
50	How many applicants will be accepted?	There is no limit to the number of Concept Papers that will be accepted. A limited number of applicants will be invited to submit full applications upon review of their Concept Papers.
51	Do all partners need to have a SAM.gov registration?	Each applicant that does not have an exemption under 2 CFR 25.110, is required to be registered in SAM.gov before submitting an application. (See Section E: Submission Requirements and Deadlines, Part 4 4. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and SAM.gov Registration on page 29)
52	Any disadvantage if one does not have a SAM?	Each applicant that does not have an exemption under 2 CFR 25.110, is required to be registered in SAM.gov before submitting an application. (See Section E: Submission Requirements and Deadlines, Part 4 4. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and SAM.gov Registration on page 29)
53	We noticed that the three first links in the registration process don't work. Is there any solution?	It isn't clear which links you are referencing. Please visit www.sam.gov and just below "Register Your Entity or Get a Unique Entity ID" click on "Get Started." If you need help, contact the Federal Service Desk, available through the Help menu at the top left of the sam.gov website.
54	Are long-term training sessions (15 days, 1 or 3 months) and practical internships eligible for this funding?	Yes.
55	What is the expected timeline for project implementation once the grant is awarded?	We anticipate award of the grant in mid May 2025. The duration of the grant is 5 years.
56	Are there restrictions in activities that can be expensed with this grant funding if an organization is awarded?	Capacity building support may not include project-targeted support, for example transaction advisory services, design, feasibility studies, etc. (NOFO Section C Program Description) Construction is not authorized (NOFO Section D: Application Content and Format)

No	Question	Answer
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57	Can the award also support degree programs like MSc relating to the intervention areas?	Degree programs are not excluded as a possible form of interventions. “The Activity will build the capacity of energy stakeholders... through training, workshops, mentorship opportunities, on-the-job learning opportunities, business development services, business matchmaking, participation in conferences, certifications, etc.” (Section C Program Description)
58	Just for clarity, how many contracts will be awarded from this NOFO?	Per NOFO Section A. Basic Information (page 4), “USAID intends to award one (1) award.” This section also states, “This may include a cooperative agreement or grant that is a fixed amount award. The final award type determination is at the discretion of the Agreement Officer.”
59	How many companies will be selected for Phase 2?	This will depend on the number of concept papers that receive a high technical rating from the evaluation committee.
60	Weight of All Evaluation Criteria?	All evaluation criteria are listed in descending order of importance. See Section E, Application Review Information, Section 2: Merit Review Criteria
61	Does “local entities” consider International Non-Governmental Organization (INGOs) based in the country or is it only for National NGOs?	NOFO Section B. Eligibility (page 6) includes the definition of ‘local entity.’
62	Can a NGO form a consortium with a U.S. government agency to apply for this funding opportunity?	If the NGO meets the eligibility criteria in NOFO Section B. then it can form a consortium and apply for funding.
63	We noticed that all the links in the registration process don’t work. How to proceed in this case?	It isn’t clear which links you are referencing. Please visit www.sam.gov and just below “Register Your Entity or Get a Unique Entity ID” click on “Get Started.” If you need help, contact the Federal Service Desk, available through the Help menu at the top left of the sam.gov website.
64	Could you please clarify the Meaning of the different	No. The categories referenced are not included in the NOFO. It appears they may have

No	Question	Answer
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	<p>categories below in the key information log?</p> <p>Business Start Date Fiscal Year-End Close Date Login.gov Email & Password MPIN* CAGE/NCAGE Code(s)* NCAGE Request Reference Number* Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Account Type EFT ABA Routing Number EFT Account Number Automated Clearing House (ACH) Phone Number Remittance Address (Name & Address) NAICS Codes Annual Receipts Number of Employees Accounts Receivable POC: Name, Email, Phone Optional POC: Name, Email, Phone Past Performance POC: Name, Email, Phone</p>	<p>been taken from www.sam.gov? Refer to the answer to the question above for information on how to reach the Federal Service Desk with questions about SAM registration.</p>
65	<p>Is the grant available for both on-grid and Offgrid sector related activities? OR only for offgrid sector related activities?</p>	<p>Per NOFO Section C: Objectives, the Activity should identify capacity building needs that would advance the following objectives, also outlined in the Empower West Africa (EWA) Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Optimizing utility performance to increase access; - Off-grid generation and connections increased; - Transition to clean energy development and deployment accelerated; - Private sector investment and innovation in the energy sector enhanced for domestic and regional infrastructure.

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66	<p>Section 4. Indicative Results Pages 10-11</p> <p>Question: Can the bidders propose custom indicators in addition to those listed in Section 4. Indicative Results, to support Power Africa in achieving its development objectives?</p>	<p>Yes. The illustrative indicators in Section C, 4 of the NOFO are based on Power Africa's MEL Plan, which your organization is encouraged to adopt. These indicators are designed to capture the results of interventions that support Power Africa's development objectives under this award. However, your organization may also propose customized indicators that are aligned with your specific proposed activities.</p>
67	<p>Section 3. Program Goals, Approach and Objectives Page 8-10</p> <p>Question: Can USAID kindly indicate how it intends to allocate the program funds among the ETD-WA 18 countries to provide equitable capacity building support? Should the focus be on regional v. country-based capacity building interventions?</p>	<p>The allocation of funding will depend on the successful applicant's strategy and what countries the successful applicant proposes to work in. Implementation in 18 countries is not required. Refer to the answers to questions 5-7, above.</p>
68	<p>Section 3. Program Goals, Approach and Objectives Page 10</p> <p>Question: In order to achieve close cooperation with the USAID Empower West Africa program for planning and programmatic synergies, and to offer the level playing field, can USAID kindly provide EWA's First Year Workplan or ensure that it is uploaded to DEC?</p>	<p>No. Engagement with the Empower West Africa program will only occur after the apparently successful applicant is identified and the grant awarded.</p>
69	<p>Section D, Application Content and Format. 3. Technical Application Format, f) Staffing and Management Plan Page: 16</p> <p>Question: Can USAID please clarify whether the offerors are flexible to propose location(s) for key and non/key personnel, or are there any restrictions that should be</p>	<p>Offerors may propose locations for key and non key personnel. There are no restrictions as long as they are within the countries listed in NOFO Section E. page 30.</p>

No	Question	Answer
General Questions		
	taken into consideration, as long as those are within the ETD-WA place of performance?	
70	Is the purchase of equipment allowed under this procurement?	Yes - Applicants can budget for any equipment necessary for implementation of activities. Refer to NOFO Section D. Application Content and Format (page 18) which describes procurement of equipment and supplies. This detailed information is not required at the concept paper stage. It is only required if invited to submit an application.
71	<p>Performance: “Demonstrated experience and capacity to successfully manage similar activities of comparable scope, size, and complexity”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Should this experience refer to a completed project? Can it be an ongoing project? 2. If we were a subcontractor with a technical participation of 80%, is the performance valid? 3. Does the amount of funding need to be like this one of 8 million? 4. Should the total amount of these performances be \$8 million? 5. -If the upcoming activity (ETD) includes several partners (consortium), do each partner have to explain their experience in projects of comparable scope? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Experience can refer to a project currently in implementation and or a recently completed project. 2. Yes, experience as a subcontractor is relevant and can be included. 3. This section of the merit review criterion states that applicants should articulate 1. Financial and Administrative capacity and 2. Technical capacity. Experience can be provided that is more or less than \$8 million. “Applications will be evaluated on the amount and appropriateness of the Applicant’s (and sub-awardees’) overall demonstrated experience and capacity to successfully manage similar activities of comparable scope, size, and complexity, as well as their capacity to effectively implement the proposed Activity.” 4. This question isn’t clear. Applicants should list experience that demonstrates capacity to effectively implement the activity. 5. Yes. Attachment 8 Concept Paper Form of the NOFO states, “The applicant must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Describe all of the core partners, including institutional strengths, capabilities, resources leveraged, and other appropriate context · Describe the specific roles and responsibilities of each partner in the proposed activities,