**Questions and answers to the BAA-OAA-LLDI-2019 Addendum # 04, USAID/Azerbaijan**

**Question 1.** Is there a standard form for the Expression of Interest? If yes, please share it with us.

**Answer 1.** There is no standard form for the Expression of Interest (EOI).

**Question 2.** On page 4 of the Addendum, USAID states "For this BAA, USAID is unable to make an award to any organization who has been a USAID recipient of $5 million in the last 5 years." Our organization has supported USAID-funded initiatives as a subcontractor over the last 5 years, during which we have received funding from prime implementing partners rather than directly from USAID. Since our organization has been a subcontractor/subgrantee, can USAID confirm that we are still eligible to participate as a consortium or coalition partner (with a local organization lead) under this BAA?

**Question 3.** Does USAID welcome expressions of interest submissions from partners who are willing to serve as partners with a local organization lead, but who have not yet formed a consortium/coalition? Is USAID open to partners forming consortium/coalitions during the co-creation process, as opposed to having consortium/coalition fully formed at the concept note stage?

**Answer 2 & 3.** The answer to both of your questions is a resounding yes! USAID welcomes your EOI and it's absolutely fine if you have yet to identify consortium partners/members. That is what the co-creation workshop is for, should your EOI get you through this first round and you get invited to the co-creation.

**Question 4.** Is involvement of international organizations obligatory or it is just suggested as an advantage?

**Answer 4.** It is neither obligatory nor seen as an advantage. At this stage, the Expression of Interest stage, just focus on explaining who you are as an organization, how you suggest contributing to the challenge of building the capacity of Business and Professional Associations in Azerbaijan, and following the guidance provided in the Broad Agency Announcement guidance.

**Question 5.** Can a business association be both Project Partner (Implementing Body) and a Beneficiary? I.e. If we involve Azerbaijan Beekeepers Association as a Project Partner, can they be also beneficiaries – train its staff and members, improve their resources OR not?

**Answer 5.** Yes. We expect that local partners will also need capacity building but we encourage you not to focus on your own needs so much as how your organization can add value to the challenge we are trying to tackle in building the capacity of Business and Professional Associations in Azerbaijan. You may need capacity support as well, and that's expected, but we

want to know why you think your group is well placed to support others and what makes you uniquely placed to be a good partner to USAID in this activity.

**Question 6.** After development of Concept Papers, will you demand a full proposal as well?

**Answer 6.** After the submission of Expressions of Interest, USAID will decide which organizations will be invited to the co-creation workshop, a two-day event for successful submitters of Expressions of Interest to come together and jointly design concepts. Groups will be able to take another several weeks after the co-creation workshop to continue to develop those concepts. Then, they will submit those concept papers to USAID after which we will review the concept papers and make choices about which ones are the most promising for funding. At that point, USAID will contact successful groups and work towards making awards. Full proposals - 50 plus pages of documentation - will not be required but we will probably expand slightly on whatever concept paper you submit, together, to get to an award document that satisfies USAID's internal procurement requirements.

**Question 7.** We need clarification regarding what sort of organization you mean by international organization in the following para from the call.

*"USAID is not seeking consortia led by international organizations. We value our international partners and look forward to expression of interest submissions from international partners who are willing to serve as consortium or coalition partners with a local organization lead. We will prioritize consortia led by local organizations whether they are civil society organizations or private sector organizations."*

Do you mean multilateral banks, international NGOs etc? We appreciate it if you make us clear on this.

**Answer 7.** We are seeking consortia led by local Azerbaijani organizations. That said, at this point in the process you do not need to have your consortium partners identified. You should focus on articulating why you think your particular organization is well placed to work on the identified challenge of building the capacity of Business and Professional Associations in Azerbaijan, and what makes you uniquely placed to be a good partner to USAID in this activity.

**Question 8.** I am representing the local nonprofit organization . Are we eligible to send the expression of interest to participate in this initiative or this initiative relate only to business associations?

**Answer 8.** You are absolutely welcomed to submit an expression of interest. USAID seeks diverse partners from nonprofit organizations, civil society, universities, associations, government, private sector firms etc. Please do prepare an expression of interest that follows the instructions in the BAA Addendum and focuses on articulating why you think your particular

organization is well placed to work on the identified challenge of building the capacity of Business and Professional Associations in Azerbaijan, and what makes you uniquely placed to be a good partner to USAID in this activity.

**Question 9.** How many months can be the duration of the submitted Projects?

**Answer 9.** This is not necessary to consider at this time. Please focus your expression of interest on articulating why you think your particular organization is well placed to work on the identified challenge of building the capacity of Business and Professional Associations in Azerbaijan, and what makes you uniquely placed to be a good partner to USAID in this activity. Do not worry about submitting project designs with funding amounts or duration of project information at this time. That will come later in the process.

**Question 10.** How much is the budget ceiling for proposals?

**Answer 10.** This is not necessary to consider at this time. Please focus your expression of interest on articulating why you think your particular organization is well placed to work on the identified challenge of building the capacity of Business and Professional Associations in Azerbaijan, and what makes you uniquely placed to be a good partner to USAID in this activity. Do not worry about submitting project designs with funding amounts or duration of project information at this time. That will come later in the process.

**Question 11.** Does an organization without a DUNS number or a partner alike (in case of consortium) need to obtain a DUNS number and get registered with SAM in order to submit an expression of interest?

**Answer 11.** DUNS number & SAM registration is not required at this stage, however it will be required when full application is submitted.

**Question 12.** I am representing the local nonprofit organization, which is the Student Credit Fund that is created for students. The mission of the Foundation is to create equal opportunities for students from low-income families to receive higher education by providing loans. Also this Student Loan Foundation organizes the professional career development and competency development programs for the students for ensuring their professional positioning in the labor market.

Are we eligible as a nonprofit organization to send the expression of interest to participate in this initiative?

**Answer 12.** You are absolutely welcomed to submit an expression of interest. USAID seeks diverse partners from nonprofit organizations, civil society, universities, associations, government, private sector firms etc. Please do prepare an expression of interest that follows the instructions in the BAA Addendum and focuses on articulating why you think your particular

organization is well placed to work on the identified challenge of building the capacity of Business and Professional Associations in Azerbaijan, and what makes you uniquely placed to be a good partner to USAID in this activity.

**Question 13.** I am representing the Universitas International LLC Azerbaijan that is dedicated to the improvement of the strategic, operational and technical performance of public and private sector institutions. Are we eligible as a consulting company to send the expression of interest within the framework of this initiative?

**Answer 13.** You are absolutely welcomed to submit an expression of interest. USAID seeks diverse partners from nonprofit organizations, civil society, universities, associations, government, private sector firms etc. Please do prepare an expression of interest that follows the instructions in the BAA Addendum and focuses on articulating why you think your particular organization is well placed to work on the identified challenge of building the capacity of Business and Professional Associations in Azerbaijan, and what makes you uniquely placed to be a good partner to USAID in this activity.

**Question 14.** The Addendum includes multiple references to fostering coalitions and collaboration among various actors, such as associations, government, and the private sector. While it is clear that only Azerbaijani local civil society organizations or private sector entities are eligible to *lead* consortia submitting Expressions of Interest, are international (i.e., non-Azerbaijani) private sector for-profit entities eligible to serve as non-lead consortium/coalition partners?

**Answer 14.** Yes! We value our international partners and the expertise they bring. That includes for profit and non-profit organizations. You are absolutely welcomed to submit an expression of interest. USAID seeks diverse partners from nonprofit organizations, civil society, universities, associations, government, private sector firms etc. Please do prepare an expression of interest that follows the instructions in the BAA Addendum and focuses on articulating why you think your particular organization is well placed to work on the identified challenge of building the capacity of Business and Professional Associations in Azerbaijan, and what makes you uniquely placed to be a good partner to USAID in this activity.

**Question 15.** Are Azerbaijani governmental agencies, departments, ministries, or other Azerbaijani governmental entities eligible to serve as non-lead consortium/coalition partners?

**Answer 15.** Yes! We value our government partners and welcome consortia and coalitions that include government partners. We will be unable to provide funding to government agencies, but that should not stop government agencies from joining coalitions and consortia.

**Question 16.** In terms of project timing, can you provide any guidance on the duration of proposed activities that would be acceptable? Also, can you provide any guidance as to the anticipated start dates of activities that may be funded under this BAA?

**Answer 16.** It is not necessary to consider the duration of activities at this time. Please focus your expression of interest on articulating why you think your particular organization is well placed to work on the identified challenge of building the capacity of Business and Professional Associations in Azerbaijan, and what makes you uniquely placed to be a good partner to USAID in this activity. Do not worry about submitting project designs with funding amounts or duration of project information at this time. That will come later in the process. We are unsure when exactly we will be able to have start dates since COVID 19 has provided us all with a new operating environment and constraints.

**Question 17.** The Addendum does not appear to address available funding for potential activities other than requesting that any possible cost sharing, matching, or leveraging be noted in the EoI. Should anticipated funding *needs* also be addressed in the EoI? Can you provide any guidance as to the range of overall funding under this Addendum, or range of funding for individual activities?

**Answer 17.** Funding is not necessary to consider at this time. Please focus your expression of interest on articulating why you think your particular organization is well placed to work on the identified challenge of building the capacity of Business and Professional Associations in Azerbaijan, and what makes you uniquely placed to be a good partner to USAID in this activity. Do not worry about submitting project designs with funding amounts or duration of project information at this time. That will come later in the process.

**Question 18.** Will USAID consider the inclusion of a grants program or other mechanisms for provision of equipment to project beneficiaries under awards made under this Addendum?

**Answer 18.** Please focus your expression of interest on articulating why you think your particular organization is well placed to work on the identified challenge of building the capacity of Business and Professional Associations in Azerbaijan, and what makes you uniquely placed to be a good partner to USAID in this activity. If you feel that suggesting specific activities like grant-making or provision of equipment strengthens your articulation of your organization's value added to solving this development challenge, you are free to suggest such activities.