

**Notice of Funding Opportunity Number: 72052022RFA00004
USAID/Guatemala's Prosperous and Resilient Landscapes Activity**

ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS RECEIVED

TECHNICAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. RFA Reference: D.5; Page Number: 23. Relevant RFA Language: "The Technical Application is limited to 25 pages and every page of the application must be numbered."

Question: To allow space to present comprehensive solutions for the Prosperous and Resilient Landscapes Activity, would USAID allow applicants to place the Cover Page, ¿Table of Contents, and Executive Summary on separately numbered pages that do not count against the 25-page limit?

A1. Yes.

2. RFA Reference: E.2.C.a; Page Number: 36. Relevant RFA Language: "demonstrating the technical resources and expertise required to realistically and efficiently accomplish the Activity's technical, coordination, monitoring and reporting, and communications needs. a.2 Extent to which the management and staffing plan ensure that activities in the proposed geographic areas including the national level are effectively covered."

Question: ¿So that applicants have sufficient space to depict the staffing configuration, would USAID allow applicants to place an organizational chart in an annex that does not count against the 25-page limit?

A2. Yes.

3. RFA Reference: E.2.C.b; Page Number: 36. Relevant RFA Language: "Key personnel will be evaluated with respect to demonstrated relevant qualifications, technical and program management experience and skills applicable for completing Activity interventions and meeting the specific personnel qualifications described below."

Question: ¿So that applicants can present complete information for USAID to evaluate proposed Key Personnel, would USAID allow applicants to submit Key Personnel CVs (3 pages per-CV) as an annex to the Technical Application that does not count against the 25-page limit?

A3. Yes.

4. I just wanted to confirm the meaning of your statement on Page 16 of the RFP that "USAID intends to award one Cooperative Agreement". The 5 year, \$30 million grant will be awarded to one organization of consortium? Presumably to cover all the geographic areas mentioned?

A4. The 5 year, \$30 million grant will be awarded to one organization or consortium and will cover all of the geographic areas mentioned.

5. Please provide more detail regarding USAID's preferred geographic coverage in the Western Highlands. ¿In which Western Highlands departments and municipalities does USAID expect results?

A5. Applicants may propose interventions and results in landscapes or municipalities within the Western Highlands region if the proposed locations directly support the goal of reducing Guatemala's land-based greenhouse gas emissions and increasing carbon sequestration from land use.

6. Please provide more detail regarding USAID's preferred geographic coverage of the Activity in Peten. Does USAID anticipate results in the entire department of Peten or only in the three management zones of the Maya Biosphere Reserve?

A6. Applicants may propose interventions and results in the Multiple Use and Buffer zones of the Maya Biosphere Reserve and may propose interventions in southern Petén if they directly support the goal of reducing Guatemala's land based greenhouse gas emissions and increasing carbon sequestration from land use.

7. In Section B.4.f (page 17) of the NOFO, USAID mentions that "the AOR will give consent for the Rapid Response Fund." Should the budget be set aside for a Rapid Response Fund? If so, does USAID have an expected amount of funds that should be set aside for this purpose?

A7. Yes, a budget should be set aside for a Rapid Response Fund. Offerors should propose an amount to set aside for this purpose.

8. Does USAID have a preference regarding the carbon monitoring methodology to be used by the Activity? Would it be possible to use a carbon monitoring methodology already in public use or would it be necessary to develop a methodology exclusively for the Activity?

A8. The carbon monitoring methodology used should be consistent with USAID's 2022 Climate Change Standard Indicator Handbook: Definition Sheets. Refer to indicators 13.6 and 13.7 for additional details.

9. In section A.1. (page 4), USAID mentions "landscape restoration" as one of four strategic approaches for the Activity. What is USAID's definition of the term "landscape restoration"? ¿Are there USAID documents that explain this term? If so, please provide links to those documents.

A9. For the purposes of this Activity, USAID considers "landscape restoration" to be the act of restoring the ecological functionality of forests and other landscapes and improving human well-being in previously deforested or degraded landscapes in the target areas for this activity. USAID would be willing to consider the approaches outlined in the document "USAID Work in Reforestation with Programmatic Examples," with the exception of plantation forestry.

10. In section A.1. (page 4), USAID mentions that the purpose of the Activity is to improve livelihoods of “forest dependent communities.” What is USAID’s definition of “forest dependent communities”?

A10. For the purposes of this Activity, USAID considers “forest dependent communities” to be both indigenous and non-indigenous communities that are located in and around forests and that sustain their livelihoods and earn a majority of their income from forest products and services.

11. Is USAID open to applicants proposing regions of work in addition to the three stated in the NOFO? Particularly if proposed interventions can serve as a buffer to protect, provide connectivity, and reduce pressure on other regions of Guatemala where USAID is investing, such as the Manchón Guamuchal?

A11. No.

12. How does USAID define “legal” employment? How should applicants consider legality when developing interventions to increase employment, earnings, and access to better jobs?

A12. With this amendment, the term “legal employment” has been changed to “formal sector employment.” See Amendment No. 1 to original RFA.

13. How should applicants distinguish between result 3 under objective 2 “Reduced land-based greenhouse gas emissions from the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) Sector” and the 4 results under objective 1? Is there a specific difference identified/defined by USAID?

A13. With this Amendment, USAID has deleted Result 3 under Objective 2 (Reduced land-based greenhouse gas emissions from the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) Sector), as this result is fully covered under Objective 1. See Amendment No. 1 to original RFA.

14. Can USAID confirm whether applicants can report increased annual sales through low emissions *services* in addition to products under result 2, objective 2.

A14. USAID would be willing to consider increased annual sales through low emissions services, such as tourism.

15. Page 17 of the NOFO mentions a Rapid Response Fund. ¿Can USAID confirm whether applicants are required to include a RRF and what are the parameters surrounding the mechanism? For example, is there a minimum total amount for the fund and is it included in the \$30M total project amount?

A15. See response to question 7. The total amount for the fund is to be included within the \$30M total project amount.

16. The history of performance is not included in the 25-page limit—is there a limit of pages on this section? ¿As well, is it recommended that the prime applicant include history of performance information for all core partners or sub-recipients on the application?

A16. The history of performance will have a 5-page limit and should include all core partners and sub-applicants.

17. Although the NOFO states that the indicators and targets will be developed in collaboration with USAID, would it be beneficial for applicants to propose illustrative indicators & targets?

A17. Yes.

18. RFA Reference: A.5; Page Number: 11. Relevant RFA Language: “[Objective] 1. Reduce land-based greenhouse gas emissions in Guatemala and increase carbon sequestration”

RFA Reference: A.5; Page Number: 13. Relevant RFA Language: “[Objective 2, Result] 3. Reduced land-based greenhouse gas emissions from the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) Sector”

Question: Result 2.3 is for reduced land-based greenhouse gas emissions, which seems to directly align with Objective 1 and all four results under Objective 1. Would USAID consider amending the RFA to move the “Reduced land-based greenhouse gas emissions from the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) Sector” result to Objective 1?

A18. See response to question 13.

19. RFA Reference: D.5.b; Page Number: 23. Relevant RFA Language: “Table of Contents...i) Technical Approach; ii) Management and Staffing Plan; iii) History of Performance (not included in the page limit)”

RFA Reference: D.5.d; Page Number: 24. Relevant RFA Language: “the criteria set forth below: A. Technical Approach; B. Sustainability Plan; C.

Management Plan, Staffing and Key Personnel; D. Institutional Capacity and Past Performance”

RFA Reference: E.2; Page Number: 34. Relevant RFA Language: “Merit Review Criteria... A. Technical Approach; B. Sustainability Plan; C. Management Plan, Staffing and Key Personnel; D. Institutional Capacity and Past Performance”

RFA Reference: c) History of Performance; Page Number: 31-32.

Question a: Could USAID confirm that the Table of Contents for the Technical Application should contain the four sections outlined in sections D.5.d (page 24) and E.2 (page 34): A. Technical Approach; B. Sustainability Plan; C. Management Plan, Staffing and Key Personnel; D. Institutional Capacity and Past

Performance?

A19.a. With this Amendment, USAID has deleted the requirement and table for “Past Performance” and will instead consider “History of Performance” as a part of Merit Review Criteria D. History of Performance may be included in an Annex with a 5-page limit and must meet USAID requirements for font size:

- 10-point font can be used for graphs and charts.
- Tables, however, must comply with the 12-point Times New Roman requirement.

See Amendment No. 1 to original RFA.

Question b: ¿Could USAID confirm that History of Performance should be included in the Cost Application (and not in the Technical Application)?

A19.b. With this Amendment, History of Performance will be included as a part of the Technical Application and considered in Merit Review Criteria D: Institutional Capacity and History of Performance (10 points).

20. RFA Reference: E.2.C.b. Page Number: 36. Relevant RFA Language: “Key personnel will be evaluated with respect to demonstrated relevant qualifications, technical and program management experience and skills applicable for completing Activity interventions and meeting the specific personnel qualifications described below.”

Question: ¿Would USAID allow applicants to submit three references per key personnel candidate on a separate page in an annex that does not count against the 25-page limit?

A20. See response to question 3.

21. RFA Reference: D.3. Page Number: 21. Relevant RFA Language: “10-point font can be used for graphs and charts. Tables, however, must comply with the 12-point Times New Roman requirement.”

RFA Reference: E.2.D. Page Number: 36-37. Relevant RFA Language: “Institutional Capacity and Past Performance”

Question a: Section E.2.D requires past performance information to be presented in a table. To improve readability and allow applicants to include a little more information about past projects, would USAID allow applicants to use 10-point font for the past performance table?

A21.a. See response to question 19.

Question b: ¿Alternatively, would USAID allow applicants to place the past performance table in an annex that does not count against the 25-page limit?

A21.a. See response to question 19.

22. RFA Reference: F.3.6. Page Number: 49. Relevant RFA Language: “In accordance with USAID’s Evaluation Policy, USAID/Guatemala may contract an external evaluation to answer key evaluation questions relating to the Activity’s

performance and the achievement of planned results. Internal evaluations (conducted by the awardee) are subject to review and approval by USAID.”

Question: Could USAID confirm that USAID will separately fund all baseline, mid-term, and final evaluations and no costs for these evaluations should be included in applicants’ budgets?

A22. USAID will separately fund all evaluations, but associated staff time for supporting evaluations should be included in applicant budgets.

23. On page 13 of the NOFO, under Objective 2 results, Result 1 is “Increased legal temporary and permanent employment through low emission livelihood activities for forest dependent communities, indigenous peoples, women, and youth.” Would USAID please clarify the terms “legal” and “permanent” in this context?

A23. See response to question 12. For the purposes of this activity, “permanent” employment is for a duration of one year or longer. See Amendment No. 1 to original RFA.

24. On page 15, the NOFO indicates that this activity should build on lessons learned from prior Activities funded by USAID, including USAID’s Climate Nature and Communities in Guatemala. Would USAID please share with applicants the relevant reports and evaluations from this project?

A24. Lessons learned will be provided to the successful offeror upon the close of the aforementioned Activity.

25. Page 50 refers to an attachment with illustrative indicators. ¿Can USAID provide the attachment?

A25. Refer to EG.13: Sustainable Landscapes Standard Indicators.

26. RFA Reference: D.2. Page Number: 21. Relevant RFA Language: “● Use standard 8 ½” x 11”, single sided, single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1” margins, left justification and headers and/or footers on each page including consecutive page numbers, date of submission, and applicant’s name. ● 10-point font can be used for graphs and charts.”

RFA Reference: E.2.A Technical Approach. Page Number: 35. Relevant RFA Language: “Successful applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the proposed approach will reduce land-based emissions and achieve the desired results using a Theory of Change (ToC).”

“Applicants are encouraged to refer to the publication “Using Results Chains to Depict Theories of Change in USAID Biodiversity Programming” found here: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00M8MW.pdf.”

Question a: Given that Results Chains are typically very detailed and complex, would USAID allow applicants to submit the PRL Results Chain as an annex to the Technical Application that does not count against the 25-page limit, so that USAID has complete information to evaluate the applicant’s technical approach?

A26.a. No. The Results Chain is to be included within the 25-page limit.

Question b: In addition, would USAID allow applicants to use 8.5" x 14" paper with 9-point Arial Narrow font so that USAID can see greater detail in the applicant's Results Chain?

A26.b. No.

27. RFA Reference: E.2.A. Page Number: 35. Relevant RFA Language: "The technical approach should also summarize any mitigation measures taken to reduce relevant climate risks, as identified in the Climate Risk Management summary table."

RFA Reference: F.3.5. Page Number: 45. Relevant RFA Language: "For full details and risks identified, refer to the Climate Risk Management Summary Table."

Question: Section E.2.A requires applicants to propose mitigation measures to reduce risks identified in the Climate Risk Management summary table. Section F.3.5 contains a hyperlink to a Climate Risk Management Summary Table. However, that link appears to be a Google Doc that requires a password to access it. So that applicants can address the requirement in Section E.2.A, could USAID provide the Climate Risk Management Summary Table as an annex to the solicitation?

A27. CRM is included as an annex to this Amendment.

28. Does USAID require the same projects to be presented in both the Past Performance table in the Technical Application (referenced on Page 36) and the History of Performance table in the Cost Application?

A28. See response to question 19.

29. The instructions for the table of contents on Page 23 of the NOFO indicate that "History of Performance" is excluded from 25-page limit. Is this referring to the Technical Application requirements described under Merit Review Criteria D. Institutional Capacity and Past Performance (as presented on pages 24 and 36)? If so, would USAID please clarify if the table of past performance is excluded from the page limit or the entire Institutional Capacity and Past Performance section is excluded?

A29. See response to question 19.

30. Does USAID require resumes for proposed Key Personnel, and if so, are they exempted from the 25-page limit?

A30. See response to question 3.

31. Would USAID please clarify if the Cover Page, Table of Contents page, and Executive Summary page are included in the 25 technical application page limit?

A31. See response to question 1.

32. Would USAID permit one or more pages listing acronyms outside of the Technical Application's 25 page limit?

A32. Yes.

33. On page 15, the NOFO indicates that this activity should build on lessons learned from prior Activities funded by USAID, including USAID's Programa Clima, Naturaleza y Comunidades en Guatemala (CNCG). Would USAID please share with applicants the relevant reports and evaluations from this project?

A33. See response to question 24.

34. Does USAID have a preference for specific landscapes or municipalities within the target region or should these be proposed by the applicant?

A34. See responses to questions 5 and 6.

35. Does the scope of the work in the proposal entail the development of a Monitoring System for land-based greenhouse gas emissions at the National level?

A35. See response to question 8.

36. On page 13., the NOFO lists "Development of new markets and better links to market for sustainable timber and non-timber forest products" as a possible activity to achieve Objective 2. Is this potential activity limited to timber and non-timber products or could other commodities be considered?

A36. USAID is willing to consider other commodities.

37. Can this funding support non-traditional financing tools? If so, are there any limits to what types of tools can be used (e.g. grant funding, concessional funding)?

A37. This funding can consider a range of non-traditional financing tools. Due to the variety of possible financing tools available, specific limitations will be discussed with USAID post award.

38. Does the NOFO consider interventions in the whole Peten department or are there specific municipalities or geographical regions of the mission's interest?

A38. See response to question 6.

39. Are migrant municipalities a priority to intervene with the current NOFO?

A39. Interventions under this activity should focus on the geographical areas identified by USAID.

40. What is the interpretation / definition of forest dependent communities?

A40. See response to question 10.

41. Are forest dependent communities limited to concessions, communities living within forests and other natural areas (protected areas, municipal areas) or also communities that rely on forests for their livelihoods? Do agroforestry producers qualify as “forest dependent”?

A41. See response to question 10.

42. Does NOFO accept proposals towards Carbon Crediting generation mechanisms?, and further payment for Carbon sequestration in coffee or cocoa agroforestry, or forestry?

A42. USAID is willing to consider carbon credit generation or other payment for ecosystem services mechanisms as a component of this activity.

43. Can sustainability schemes Remediation and Compensation funds of the private sector qualify as match-funding (i.e. RSPO)?

A43. No. Assuming that RSPO refers to Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, this may be counted as investment mobilized.

44. Can impact investment funds / loans be considered cash or in-kind?

A44. No. This may be counted as investment mobilized.

45. Can the sale of carbon credits be considered as cash or in-kind?

A45. No. This may be counted as investment mobilized.

46. What is the threshold requirement of each consortium partner for cash or in-kind contributions?

A46. USAID has not set a cost-share threshold requirement for each individual consortium partner. The overall mandatory minimum recipient cost share for this award will be 15% in addition to the Total Estimated Cost for USAID funds for the award (refer to page 18 of the RFA).

CONTRACTUAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. El día de hoy estuve revisando la página de Grants.gov, donde encontré la siguiente información Subject: Notice of Funding Opportunity Number: 72052022RFA00004 Program Title: USAID/Guatemala's Prosperous and Resilient Landscapes Activity. Ya he descargado el RFA, sin embargo, deseo consultar si usted tiene el documento en versión español.

A1. No disponemos de ninguna versión en español del RFA.

2. In Section B.4.e (page 17) of the NOFO, USAID mentions that “the Agreement Officer (AO) will approve all subawards under this Cooperative Agreement, including sub-agreements contracts under assistance.” Would USAID agree to changing the terms of substantial involvement so that it is not necessary for the AO to approve all sub-agreements? For example, could AO approved sub-agreements be limited to those of more than USD \$300,000? Also, could approval be granted annually as part of the work plan and budget approval process?

A2. Per 2 CFR 200.308(c)(6)) unless described in the application and funded in the approved Federal award, the subawarding, transferring or contracting out of any work under a Federal award needs approvals from the Federal awarding agency.

3. I have checked the links provided on page 25, section D and this are not working; ¿is there another way to get the templates for this application?

A3. Use this link to go to the FORMS [Grant Forms | GRANTS.GOV](#)

4. The link to the MECLA template on a Google file (page 48) has restricted access. ¿Can USAID provide an updated link?

A4. MECLA template is included as an annex.

5. On pages 18 and 39, the NOFO stipulates a mandatory minimum cost share of 15% and on page 38, it says a range of 10 to 20%. Can USAID confirm whether the minimum requirement is 15%?

A5. USAID confirms that the overall mandatory minimum recipient cost share for this award will be 15% in addition to the Total Estimated Cost for USAID funds for the award (refer to page 18 of the RFA).

6. RFA Reference: C.2; Page Number: 18. Relevant RFA Language: “USAID has established a mandatory minimum recipient cost share of a 15% in addition to the Total Estimated Cost for USAID fund for the award.”

RFA Reference: E.2.A. Page Number: 38. Relevant RFA Language: “Applicants are required to contribute a cost share in the range of 10 percent to 20 percent of the total USAID contribution to increase overall Activity impact.”

Question: ¿Can USAID please confirm that applicants are allowed to propose a cost share in the range of 10 percent to 20 percent?

A6. No, see response to question No. 5 above

7. RFA Reference: D.4. Page Number: 22. Relevant RFA Language: “File size must not exceed 20MB.”

RFA Reference: D.5. Page Number: 23. Relevant RFA Language: “The total size of each e-mail transmission should not exceed 25 Megabytes.”

Question: ¿Could USAID clarify whether the maximum size for a single email is

20MB or 25MB?

A7. The maximum size for a single email is 20MB.

8. RFA Reference: D.3. Page Number: 21. Relevant RFA Language: "10-point font can be used for graphs and charts. Tables, however, must comply with the 12-point Times New Roman requirement."

Question: ¿Could USAID confirm that 10-point font can be used in text boxes?

A8. No.

9. RFA Reference: D.5; Page Number: 23. Relevant RFA Language: "The Technical Application must include the following sections:"

Question: ¿For ease of reading, would USAID allow applicants to include a List of Acronyms on separately numbered pages that do not count against the 25-page limit?

A9. Yes.

10. RFA Reference: D.3. Page Number: 21. Relevant RFA Language: "10-point font can be used for graphs and charts. Tables, however, must comply with the 12-point Times New Roman requirement."

RFA Reference: Section D: Business Cost Application Format. Page Number: 24. Relevant RFA Language: "While no page limit exists for the full cost application, applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible while still providing the necessary details."

Question: ¿For the Cost Application, would USAID consider revising the table font size to 10-point to allow for a cleaner and more concise presentation of information? This would align with instructions on page 24, which states that the Cost Volume should be as concise as possible.

A10. No, applicants must comply with the 12-point Times New Roman requirement.

11. RFA Reference: Section D: Business Cost Application Format; Page Number: 24. Relevant RFA Language: "The business (cost) application must illustrate the entire period of performance, using the budget format shown in the SF 424A."

Page Number: 26-27; Relevant RFA Language: Table: Summary Budget by Years

Question: Page 24 instructs applicants to use the budget format shown in the SF-424A. And on pages 26-27, USAID has included a summary budget table for offerors to use. However, there are some discrepancies between this table and the 424A budget categories. For example: (1) equipment and supplies are not grouped together in the 424A; (2) the 424A has one category for Contractual to include sub-awards as well as grants, consultants, and any other contractual

costs, which is currently missing from the table on pages 26- 27. Could USAID please confirm that offerors should provide a budget summary that aligns with the 424A categories rather than the table included on pages 26-27 of the RFA?

A11. Yes, use the 424A categories.

- 12.RFA Reference: Section D: Business Cost Application Format. Page Number: 25. Relevant RFA Language: "c) Required Certifications and Assurances. The applicant must complete the following documents and submit a signed copy with their application"

Question: Certifications and Assurances are requested of the applicant on page 25 of the RFA. ¿Can USAID confirm that certifications and assurances are not required to be submitted for named sub-awardees?

A12. Yes, they are not required for sub-awardees.

- 13.RFA Reference: Section D: Business Cost Application Format. Page Number: 26. Relevant RFA Language: "The Budget must include the following worksheets or tabs, and contents, at a minimum...Detailed Budgets for each sub-recipient, for all federal funding and cost share, broken out by budget category and by year, for the entire implementation period of the project."

Question: ¿Because cost share contributions could come from various sources that may not align with specific budget categories, would USAID consider removing the reference to aligning cost share to major budget categories and request that offerors provide a separate breakdown of cost share contributions by year either in the budget narrative or the cost share plan?

A13. No.

- 14.RFA Reference: Section D: Business Cost Application Format, e Approval of Sub Awards. Page Number: 30. Relevant RFA Language: "DUNS Number"

Question: Per USAID information, the DUNS number has been eliminated and replaced by UEI. Could USAID amend page 30 to require UEIs for sub awardees?

A14. Yes. See RFA Amendment No. 1

- 15.Does Cost share include match funding?

A15. Please refer to these guidelines on 2 CFR 200.306, 2 CFR 700.10, and the Standard Provision "Cost Sharing (Matching)" for U.S. entities, or the Standard Provision "Cost Share" for non-U.S. entities.

- 16.¿Can cost share be in cash and in-kind?

A16. See response in question No. 15 above.

- 17.¿Can time investment of international staff of the organization be presented as

cost-share, and what evidence will be required by USAID?

A17. See response in question No. 15 above.

18. Should the proposal budget include VAT and local taxes?

A18. No.