

QUESTION AND ANSWER DOCUMENT
BROAD MISSION ANNOUNCEMENT

As a general statement it should be understood that the BMA and Addendum is being issued as part of FAR part 35, Research and Development Contracting. As such, this is not a solicitation for a specific opportunity but is a means to bring together interested parties who will be given the opportunity to further discuss the issue as stated in the addendum and to come up with possible solutions based on research and development. The results of the meeting could be acquisition, or assistance, or the meeting might not result in any procurement action.

We originally did not state a dollar or time limit because the goal is to understand through the interested parties who are invited to the meeting, what would be the best intervention to achieve the desired goal of the addendum.

In this question and answer section we are now including a desired dollar and time amount but it is only for general guidance, USAID's actual intervention (money or time) will depend upon the results of the meeting (for which interested parties will only be invited based on the successful concept paper which is submitted).

- 1) Can you confirm whether this year the funding opportunities are limited to Transparency/Accountability/Corruption or if climate change-related initiatives would also be considered.

R/ This is correct. For now USAID/Mexico does not have a plan to issue an addendum that would include climate change-related initiatives.

- 2) Has a contractor performed similar work to this for the government in the past? If available, please provide the incumbent contract number. If you are unable to provide a contract number, is it safe to assume this is a new requirement for the government?

R/ This solicitation is based upon FAR 35 Research and Development and therefore it is not a procurement action per se. The Broad Mission Announcement and addendum is an announcement to inform all parties that USAID/Mexico is interested in convening a meeting based on science and technological advances. Applicants to the meeting will be based on a submitted concept paper and the results of the meeting may or may not entail a procurement or an assistance action.

- 3) In the description of the selection process, Stage 2 is described as follows: "Selected individuals or groups of organizations that have been accepted based on their Expressions of Interest will be invited to join the co-creation process." Is USAID Mexico looking for recommended specific program interventions that could be carried out by implementers to address the issue in Key Objective 1?

R/ Yes, USAID is looking for recommended specific program interventions that could be carried out by implementers to address the Key Objective in the BMA Addendum #1. The proposed interventions are to be submitted as "Expressions of Interest" per BMA and

Addendum guidelines. If selected to the next stage, applicants will be invited to a three-day co-design and co-creation workshop where participants form teams and re-embark on the design of proposed programs, which may or may not be similar in scope to the ideas initially put forth in the Expressions of Interest. The final, co-designed proposals will be presented to a review board for final technical review and consideration for funding. The concept papers shall designate a prime partner and sub-partners, if applicable.

- 4) With regard to the second stage of the co-creation process, does USAID anticipate asking selected organizations to collaborate on a joint Concept Paper or will there be opportunities for selected organizations to develop and submit individual Concept Papers?

R/ Selected organizations will form teams to collaborate in the co-design of new concept papers, which will propose programs for funding. An organization may opt to work individually in this phase, though the intent is to facilitate collaboration and partnerships.

- 5) Will organizations selected to join the co-creation process be eligible to compete for funding opportunities to implement project activities that come out of this process?

R/ If selected to join the co-creation process, applicants will be invited to a three-day co-design workshop where participants form teams and re-embark on the design of proposed programs, which may or may not be similar in scope to the ideas initially put forth in the Expressions of Interest. The final, co-designed proposals, or concept papers, will be presented to a review board for final technical review and consideration for funding. The concept papers shall designate a prime partner and sub-partners, if applicable.

- 6) How much flexibility is there when identifying partners between the Statement of Interest stage and the development/submission of the Concept Papers? Are implementers locked in with those partners or is there flexibility to add or replace partners for the Concept Paper stage?

R/ There is no flexibility to add new partners after the Expressions of Interest stage.

- 7) Can USAID provide an estimated timeline for the award process and preferably for each stage of the award?

R/ USAID expects the co-design workshops to take place in late March 2016, with final co-designed concepts to be presented to the Review Board in May 2016, and resulting selected awards to be finalized no later than September 2016.

- 8) Given the investment required for providing USAID with high quality products at every stage of the award process, will recipients of awards be able to recover pre-award expenses upon receipt of the award? What pre-award costs will be allowable and do interested implementers need to provide budgetary information on pre-award costs at the application stage?

R/ As outlined in the BMA and Addendum, travel costs to the co-design workshops will not be reimbursed by USAID. Additional pre-award costs (e.g., staff time devoted to participating in the workshop and drafting the concept) also will not be reimbursable.

- 9) Does USAID Mexico anticipate to determine the amount of resources available under the BMA on fiscal year basis, or does USAID Mexico anticipate receiving a single appropriation to fund initiatives resulting from this BMA?

R/ USAID does not have a confirmed budget for this BMA beyond the current fiscal year.

- 10) What is the anticipated, desired, and/or recommended duration of proposed projects?

R/ Proposed projects may span up to 36 months.

- 11) With regard to the disclaimer provided that says “All Expressions of Interest shall become the property of USAID Mexico,” how will USAID Mexico ensure that any proprietary ideas proposed by a responder are protected from other competitors?

R/ All Expressions of Interest will become property of USAID/Mexico, and won't be shared outside of USAID/Mexico. At the co-design workshops, responders will share ideas openly and work together to collaborate, co-create, and co-design new program(s). As such, ideas proposed by a responder are not protected from other competitors.

- 12) The bullet points under “Expression of interest” indicate that the research or development ideas must propose solutions that are grounded in “scientific discoveries or improvements in technology and/or the application of scientific or technical knowledge in the design, development, testing or evaluation of a new product or service (or improvement, etc.)”

Could you elaborate on how narrowly or broadly “scientific discoveries” is defined? Considering the challenges section refers to legal frameworks, institutions, policies, and capacity building, could this be interpreted as new research or understanding of governance institutions, political economy, multi-stakeholder platforms, or access to information protocols and procedures? Or must the expression of interest focus on the development, deployment, or application of technology, i.e. information/communication technologies?

R/ Yes, “scientific discoveries” could be interpreted as new research or understanding of governance institutions, political economy, multi-stakeholder platforms or access to information protocols and procedures. The Expression of Interest may also focus on development, deployment or application of information/communication technologies. Both examples are relevant and valid.

- 13) Must the proposal address transparency, accountability, and anti-corruption, or can it focus specifically on one or two of these objectives (while recognizing that they may be complementary)?

R/ The proposal should address the Key Objective outlined on Page 1 of the Addendum. As the Objective includes mention of the three sub-objectives (transparency, accountability and anti-corruption), the Expressions may focus on one or all three of them. Please note that USAID's transparency programming focuses primarily on the prevention-side of the three objectives.

- 14) What is the upper limit of a grant amount that will be considered and what is the range for the proposed duration of projects?

R/ While there is no upper-limit at this stage, we anticipate grants to range from \$250,000 to \$3,000,000 and for each proposed project to not exceed 36 months.

- 15) Can a project be implemented during two or three years?

R/ Projects may be implemented during a maximum of three years.

- 16) Is 300, 000 USD the minimum amount for a project?

R/ Please see response to question No. 14.

- 17) Which is the maximum amount for a single project?

R/ Please see response to question No. 14.

- 18) Nos interesa saber cuál es la duración de este proyecto, pues no encontramos dicha información en su convocatoria.

R/ Cada proyecto podrá tener hasta un máximo de 3 años de implementación.

- 19) ¿Cuántas propuestas es posible enviar por organización?

R/ No hay límite establecido para el número de propuestas que puede enviar cada organización.

- 20) De ser posible, nos gustaría saber dentro del tema de transparencia, si tienen algunos temas que consideran prioritarios.

R/ El enfoque de USAID primariamente está del lado de la prevención de este tema. USAID busca dar apoyo a las prioridades de integridad, transparencia y ética del Gobierno de México (federal y estatal).

- 21) Tiempos para la ejecución de proyectos. Los proyectos que se presentarán, teniendo en cuenta que serán co-diseñados, tienen algún límite de tiempo en su ejecución o es posible presentar propuestas multi-anales (3 años)?

R/ Sí, se pueden presentar propuestas hasta por 3 años.

22) De recibir el apoyo, ¿saben en qué fecha aproximadamente se empezarían a ejecutar los proyectos?

R/ Estimamos que la ejecución de los proyectos comenzará a más tardar el 1 de octubre de 2016.

23) ¿Cuál es la fecha tentativa en que los proyectos ganadores pueden iniciar a ejecutarse?

R/ Ver respuesta a la pregunta No. 22.

24) ¿Cuál es la fecha en que deben concluir los proyectos ganadores?

R/ Ver respuesta a la pregunta No. 21.