U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

FWS - International Conservation

https://www.fws.gov/program/mentor-fellowship

F24AS00181 - MENTOR – HAWLT (Holistically Addressing WildLife Trafficking)
Fiscal Year: 2024
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Due Date for Applications: **03/04/2024**

Table of Contents

A. Program Description 2
A1. Authority 2
A2. Assistance Listing Number 2
A3. Background, Purpose and Program Requirements 2
A4. Funding Opportunity Goals 7
B. Federal Award Information 7
B1. Total Funding 7
B2. Expected Award Amount 7
B3. Expected Award Funding and Anticipated Dates 8
B4. Number of Awards 8
B5. Type of Award 8
C. Eligibility Information 9
C1. Eligible Applicants 9
C2. Cost Sharing or Matching 9
C3. Other 10
D. Application and Submission Information 10
D1. Address to Request Application Package 10
D2. Content and Form of Application Submission 11
D3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM) 25
D4. Submission Dates and Times 25
D5. Intergovernmental Review 26
D6. Funding Restrictions 26
D7. Other Submission Requirements 29
E. Application Review Information 29
E1. Criteria 29
E2. Review and Selection Process 31
E3. CFR – Regulatory Information 33
E4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates 33
F. Federal Award Administration Information 33
F1. Federal Award Notices 33
F2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements 33
F3. Reporting 40
G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s) 41

G1. Program Technical Contact 41
G2. Program Administration 42
G3. Application System Technical Support 42
H. Other Information 42

A. Program Description

A1. Authority

Endangered Species Act—International cooperation (16 U.S.C. §1537)

Applications awarded under this announcement will be funded through a Participating Agency Program Agreement (PAPA) between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation (DDI). The Activity Title of the Agreement is Critical Capacity Partnership signed on August 17, 2021. Section 632(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (FAA), 22 U.S.C section 2392 (b).

A2. Assistance Listing Number

15.679

A3. Background, Purpose and Program Requirements

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service or USFWS) mission is to work with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service's International Affairs Program delivers on this mission through its financial and technical assistance programs by supporting strategic projects that deliver measurable conservation results for priority species and their habitats around the world.

A key priority of the International Affairs Program is to work with others to holistically address and, in turn, halt the trafficking of wildlife, a critical conservation concern and a threat to global security. Wildlife trafficking is estimated to be a multi billion-dollar business involving the unlawful harvest and trade of animals and plants. It has broad security implications, with corruption and sophisticated transnational crime syndicates at the center of many trafficking chains. Wildlife trafficking removes hundreds of thousands of animals and plants from wild populations each year and further increases the extinction risk for threatened and endangered species, which are often the target of wildlife crime because of their limited supply and increased economic value. Additionally, trafficking of wildlife can place stressed animals in unsanitary conditions, compromising their welfare and increasing the risks of disease spillover and spread.

The Service's Combating Wildlife Trafficking Program is focused on the need for greater capacity to address this complex threat to wildlife and people. As such, this new funding opportunity, part of the Service's fellowship program, Mentoring ENvironmental Training in Outreach and Resources conservation (MENTOR), seeks a partner to co-design the inaugural MENTOR-HAWLT (Holistically Addressing WildLife Trafficking) program, based in Kenya. The Service has a strong record of working closely with national governments, U.S. agencies, and a range of other partners to ensure a strategic, evidence-based approach to capacity development in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. This funding opportunity aligns with the

Service's mission, including the commitment to international cooperation and the conservation of endangered or threatened species in foreign countries as authorized and encouraged by the Endangered Species Act.

USFWS MENTOR Model Description

Since 2008, the Service has supported multi-year cooperative agreements to develop the capacity of conservationists through the series of USFWS MENTOR Fellowship programs (See Abu-Bakarr et al. 2022). These programs establish transdisciplinary teams of emerging conservation leaders, representing multiple disciplines and sectors, who work together to problem-solve on threats to wildlife, such as the unsustainable commercial wild meat trade and uncontrolled extractive industry exploitation, as well as species conservation focusing on pangolins, manatees, chimpanzees, and fish. For a given MENTOR program, a lead recipient organization works with the Service to co-design the program. Teams of eight to ten MENTOR Fellows are identified and assembled to participate in rigorous academic and field-based training that emphasizes technical conservation skills, as well as team building, conflict management, environmental governance, outreach, and leadership. Training occurs through a combination of virtual and in-person learning. Fellows learn adaptive management using the Conservation Standards to design pilot conservation projects, which they then work as a team to implement projects over an 8-12 month period. Fellows work with mentors who help them to expand critical thinking and problem-solving skills. At the end of the 18-month program, Fellows earn a post-graduate certificate, diploma, or degree from a national or regional university or college.

As the program has grown, international MENTOR Forums have served an important role of bringing together former Fellows from the series of MENTOR programs to network and focus on conservation leadership. The first MENTOR Forum, held in 2020 in Sierra Leone, included over 30 participants from the seven MENTOR programs. The Forum sought to share and evaluate the MENTOR programs implemented across Africa over the last decade. The three-day bilingual meeting provided an opportunity for mentoring, exchanging technical information, sharing approaches to address common threats to wildlife, examining experiences on species conservation, and synthesizing lessons on capacity development initiatives for conservation leadership. Having Fellows from different MENTOR programs meet in-person is critical for forging future collaboration and a support network vital to addressing today's complex conservation challenges. Hosting regular MENTOR Forums is a key component of the MENTOR Model.

Funding Opportunity

MENTOR – HAWLT (Holistically Addressing WildLife Trafficking)

Introduction

The Service is soliciting proposals for the first iteration of MENTOR-HAWLT, a conservation fellowship program focused on holistically addressing wildlife trafficking, with an emphasis on integrating robust social science to understand and address the human dimensions of the issue. Under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), the Service expects to issue one award for up to $1,000,000. The anticipated period of performance is July 1, 2024 – March 31, 2027.

Globally, thousands of wildlife species are threatened by wildlife trafficking, which, in turn, negatively impacts biodiversity and human well-being. Wildlife trafficking occurs in varied

social-ecological contexts and includes numerous and diverse actors along the source-transit-destination trade chain. The illicit and often covert human behaviors at the center of this issue are driven by interacting social, economic, cultural, and political factors. Given this complexity, holistic approaches based on understanding the complex systems in which trafficking occurs are needed. Such approaches require cross-disciplinary collaboration that integrates expertise from relevant fields. **The goal of the MENTOR-HAWLT program is to develop capacity to plan, implement, and evaluate holistic approaches to reduce wildlife trafficking that include evidence-based interventions designed to address the complex human dimensions of the issue.**

By strengthening the cross-disciplinary capacity of the team of MENTOR-HAWLT Fellows, the proposed program will holistically address poaching and trafficking of wild plants and animals of conservation concern in Kenya with a focus on: (1) developing an empirical understanding of the contexts in which species are poached and trafficked, (2) integrating robust social science information to understand and address the human dimensions within the complex systems in which poaching and trafficking occur, and (3) developing, implementing, and evaluating activities that reduce the threat of poaching and trafficking to species populations. With this approach, the proposed MENTOR-HAWLT program should identify and address the drivers of poaching and trafficking of selected species, including social, economic, and cultural factors.

Geographic Scope - Kenya

This inaugural MENTOR-HAWLT program will take place in Kenya, a land rich in biodiversity and characterized by varied landscapes and thousands of wild plant and animal species, most living outside protected areas and many classified as vulnerable or endangered (Weru 2016). Despite concerted conservation efforts at local, national, and international levels, many of these threatened species are the targets of poaching and trafficking, including elephants, rhinos, big cats (e.g., lion, cheetah), reptiles (e.g., chameleons, tortoises), pangolins, sandalwood, and aloe (Weru 2016).

In addition to aligning with the Service mission, this funding opportunity aligns with the Government of Kenya's National Wildlife Strategy 2030, which calls for the active participation of Kenyans in wildlife conservation with the recognition that wildlife provides a range of essential benefits and is a key component of the nation's environmental, social, economic, and cultural development (GoK 2018). The strategy also recognizes poaching and the illegal wildlife trade as key pressures on Kenya's wildlife and prioritizes collaboration and cross-sectoral coordination to address these and other pressures.

Project activities will take place in Kenya but should also identify destination countries where wildlife is trafficked from Kenya and provide recommendations for research and interventions focused on the consumer end of the illicit trade chain. Consideration may be given to projects that include Fellows and organizations from key source, transit, and destination countries immediately bordering Kenya, with sufficient justification related to project goals and demonstrated feasibility in terms of logistics, cost, and other factors.

Program Design and Evaluation

Proposals should be tailored around the following phases of program design and evaluation. Additional information on proposal requirements is provided in subsequent sections of this document, including section D2. *Content and Form of Application Submission* that includes a

table of measurable objectives, indicators, and expected outputs. Additionally, sections *B5. Type of Award* provides details on the Service's substantial involved in co-design and implementation, and section *E1. Criteria* describes the criteria for meeting minimum programmatic requirements for this funding opportunity.

Program Phases

Phase I – Program Co-Design

Following the review and selection of the proposal, the Service will work with the recipient of the award to further refine goals and objectives, select Fellows, Mentors and Lecturers, and identify topics to be covered in the curriculum (see section *B5. Type of Award* below). Post-fellowship, and as resources allow, the Service will monitor an additional objective related to positive changes in Fellows' career trajectory and any accomplishments that stem from the Fellowship program.

Phase II – Fellow Selection

Proposals should address the proposed composition of the team of MENTOR-HAWLT Fellows and what disciplines and work experiences will be represented. Candidates should be recruited from multiple disciplines (e.g., social sciences, biological sciences, marketing, education, legal systems, business, etc.) to inform a holistic approach to wildlife trafficking. Ideally, candidates should be recruited at a critical point in which investment in their capacity can change the trajectory of their conservation careers, as opposed to candidates who have not yet demonstrated potential or, conversely, candidates who are already well established in career positions. After the award is issued, the Service will work with the selected applicant on the co-development of the evaluation rubrics for Fellow, Mentor, and Lecturer selection; recruitment processes; and the identification of competencies necessary to advance national and local counter-wildlife trafficking priorities.

Phase III – Delivery of Training and Mentoring Program

Proposals should describe the proposed MENTOR-HAWLT curriculum, including any key topics. Training should emphasize technical conservation skills, as well as team building, conflict management, environmental governance, human rights and social safeguards, outreach, leadership and adaptive management. The Service will work with the selected applicant to further refine the curriculum and training plans.

As part of the MENTOR-HAWLT program, Fellows will design and implement **pilot conservation projects** over an 8–12-month period. While much attention has been focused on elephant and rhino poaching, the trafficking of many other species, including plant species, needs more attention. Therefore, applicants should propose potential Fellow pilot projects that address poaching and trafficking of species receiving less international and national attention and take a holistic approach to understanding and addressing these issues within complex socio-ecological systems. Based on the needs of the selected species, projects must include two or more (at least one must include a behavior change intervention) of the following interrelated focal areas:

- Demand for wildlife
    - Conduct a preliminary assessment of local, national, and international demand for the selected species.

- Behavior change
    - Review existing social science data to understand drivers of target audience behavior. Where needed, collect new robust, ethical, and culturally-sensitive baseline data. Use findings to develop and pilot small-scale behavior-change interventions via the most appropriate behavior-change approach(es), including social marketing, education/outreach, choice architecture, and incentives and/or deterrents.

- Governance structures
    - Synthesize national and international policy related to wildlife poaching and trafficking, and conservation, in general (see Weru 2016, p. 33). Identify opportunities and gaps.
    - Assess local, national, international governance structures. This could include comparing poaching/trafficking under different governance structures (see IUCN Green List), impact of governance on attitudes and behaviors (see Bennett et al. 2019)

- Community-led resource management and conservancies
    - Determine the effectiveness of community-based conservation efforts and/or conservancies that focus on reducing poaching and trafficking, identifying characteristics of successful efforts as well as potential barriers to success. Based on findings design community-based interventions (e.g., benefits sharing, community-based monitoring teams, alternative/sustainable livelihoods).

- Collaborative conservation
    - Multisectoral – identify current/needed sectors involved and their roles (government, law enforcement, non-governmental organizations, international/local, business/tourism, private/communities, etc.)
    - Partnerships – identify existing/needed partnerships.
    - Cross-border evidence exchange and cooperation – assess current levels of information exchange (e.g., biological and prosecutorial information).

- Wildlife population monitoring
    - Examine existing and collect current population and distribution data, documenting the biological status of the poached and trafficked species.
    - Clear understanding of population status of underrepresented species

- Poaching levels and drivers
    - Collect baseline data on the social, cultural, economic, political, and situational factors that drive poaching and trafficking. This may include cost-benefit analysis of living with wildlife, levels and drivers of human-wildlife conflict, etc.

Phase IV – Monitoring and Evaluation

Proposals should describe a monitoring and evaluation plan for MENTOR-HAWLT, including and building upon the objectives, indicators, and outcomes listed in the *Example project evaluation table* in Section D2. *Content and Form of Application Submission*. Post-fellowship, and as resources allow, the Service will monitor positive changes in Fellows' career trajectory and any accomplishments that stem from the Fellowship program. The results of this inaugural

MENTOR-HAWLT program will inform how the program may be replicated in other regions around the world.

LITERATURE CITED

Links to the following documents are provided to applicants as reference only. The inclusion of these documents should not be viewed as an official endorsement of a particular approach or strategy in responding to this NOFO.

Abu-Bakarr, I., Bakarr, M., Gelman, N., Johnny, J., Kamanda, P., Killian, D., . . . Wadsworth, R. (2022). "Capacity and leadership development for wildlife conservation in sub-Saharan Africa: Assessment of a programme linking training and mentorship." *Oryx,* 1-9. doi:10.1017/S0030605321000855.

Bennett., N.J. Di Franco, A, Calò, Nethery, E., Niccolini, F, Milazzo, M., Guidetti, P. (2019). Local support for conservation is associated with perceptions of good governance, social impacts, and ecological effectiveness. *Conservation Letters* doi: 10.1111/conl.12640.

Browne, C., Ronis, E., Miller, J., Gibbs, S., Kapetanakos, Y., Hendrix, T., Carlson, D. (2021). Systems approaches to combating wildlife trafficking: Expanding existing frameworks to facilitate cross-disciplinary collaboration. *Frontiers in Conservation Science* 2 doi: 10.3389/fcosc.2021.698666.

Government of Kenya (2018). *National Wildlife Strategy 2030*. Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife.

Weru, S. (2016). *Wildlife protection and trafficking assessment in Kenya: Drivers and trends of transnational wildlife crime in Kenya and its role as a transit point for trafficked species in East Africa*. TRAFFIC.

A4. Funding Opportunity Goals

The goal of the MENTOR-HAWLT (Holistically Addressing WildLife Trafficking) program is to develop capacity to plan, implement, and evaluate holistic approaches to reduce wildlife trafficking that include evidence-based interventions designed to address the complex human dimensions of the issue.

B. Federal Award Information

B1. Total Funding

Estimated Total Funding
$1,000,000
This funding opportunity will solicit a single award with an expected period of performance of two to three years and a range of $800,000 to $1,000,000 for the entire period of performance.

B2. Expected Award Amount

Maximum Award
$1,000,000

Minimum Award
$800,000
The Service reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted and will determine the resulting level of funding for the award.

B3. Expected Award Funding and Anticipated Dates

Expected Award Funding
$1,000,000
Expected Award Date
July 01, 2024

B4. Number of Awards

Expected Number of Awards
1

B5. Type of Award

Funding Instrument Type
CA - Cooperative Agreement
This cooperative agreement requires substantial involvement by the Service during the program design and implementation of this award to ensure the achievement of the program objectives. Service involvement will include:

- **Co-design and implementation**: Following the review and selection of the proposal, the Service will work with the award recipient to further refine goals and objectives and identify topics to be covered in the training program. The Service will work with the recipient to apply the USFWS MENTOR model, refine the geographic scope, determine combating wildlife trafficking priorities, and discuss potential pilot team project ideas. The Service will meet regularly with the recipient on program design and implementation. This includes regular phone calls (weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly) and in-person site visits.
- **Fellow selection process**: The Service will be substantially involved in the Fellow selection process, including the co-development of the evaluation rubric for selection, candidate recruitment, and identifying the competencies considered necessary to advance national conservation and counter-trafficking priorities.
- **Staff selection:** The Service may help select project staff, including Mentors and Lecturers.
- **Curriculum design**: The Service will work with the recipient to identify topics to be covered in the MENTOR-HAWLT curriculum.
- **Training:** As applicable, the Service will conduct virtual and in-person teaching to the MENTOR-HAWLT Fellows in disciplines where Service staff have specific and relevant expertise (e.g., social science methods, combating wildlife trafficking, etc). The Service

will also help facilitate training on adaptive management, conservation planning, conservation leadership, and project design.

- **Partnership-building and networking:** The Service will support partnership-building with other MENTOR programs (including via the international MENTOR Forum) and other relevant conservation organizations. The Service will also increase awareness of MENTOR-HAWLT by amplifying the program with external audiences as well as other U.S. Government agencies and donors.

C. Eligibility Information

C1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible Applicants

25 – Others (see text field entitled "Additional Information on Eligibility" for clarification)

Additional Information on Eligibility

Applicants can be individuals, multi-national secretariats, non-profit non-governmental organizations, for-profit organizations, and public and private institutions of higher education.

C2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement

No

Percentage of Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement

0

Cost sharing is the portion of program costs not borne by the Service. Under this program, cost share is not required, but may be committed on a voluntary basis (Voluntary Committed Cost Share). Voluntary Committed Cost Share (See 2 CFR 200.1). If cost share is included, it should be necessary and reasonable to accomplish project objectives, and allowable in accordance with 2 CFR 200 Subpart E—Cost Principles.

Applicants may consider all types of cost sharing, including in-kind and public-private partnerships. Examples include the use of office space owned by other entities; donated or borrowed supplies and equipment; (non-federal) sponsored travel costs; waived indirect costs; and program activities, translations, or consultations conducted by qualified volunteers. Assign a monetary value in U.S. dollars to each in-kind contribution. The values of offered cost-share should be included in the detailed budget and explanations of contributions should be included in the Budget Narrative whether cash or in-kind.

If the proposed project is a component of a larger program, identify other funding sources and the specific funding amount to be provided by those sources in the Budget Narrative. In addition, it is recommended that the Budget Narrative address the overall cost-effectiveness of the proposal, including leveraging institutional or other resources.

Funds provided by another U.S. Federal Government agency or another Service award cannot be reported as cost share but contributions should be noted and explained in detail in the Budget Narrative.

If cost share is included in the budget, written records must be maintained to support all allowable costs that are claimed as its contribution to cost share, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit.

C3. Other

Funds provided under this program may not be used for assistance to governments, parts of government, or government employees in countries that USAID notifies the Service to be ineligible for assistance.

Some countries may not be eligible depending on the restrictions associated with each fiscal year of funding under this NOFO and based on policy circumstances. Awards are contingent on funding eligibility and policy circumstances in each country and may be subject to special coordination or communication with USAID and/or its partners. The Service has confirmed with USAID that this project may be implemented in Kenya. As such, the Service may request that applicants remove certain activities or other countries from the project to meet funding or policy requirements.

Foreign Entities or Projects:

State Sponsors of Terrorism: This program will not fund projects in countries determined by the U.S. Department of State to have repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism and therefore are subject to sanctions restricting receipt of U.S. foreign assistance and other financial transactions.

Office of Foreign Assets Control Sanctions: This program will not fund projects in countries subject to comprehensive sanction programs administered by the U.S. Department of Treasury, Office of Foreign Asset Control without proper licenses.

In-Country Licenses, Permits, or Approvals: Entities conducting activities outside the U.S. are responsible for coordinating with appropriate U.S. and foreign government authorities as necessary to obtain all required licenses, permits, or approvals before undertaking project activities. The Service does not assume responsibility for recipient compliance with the laws, regulations, policies, or procedures of the foreign country in which they are conducting work.

Excluded Parties:

The DOI conducts a review of the SAM.gov Exclusions database for all applicant entities and their key project personnel prior to award. The DOI cannot award funds to entities or their key project personnel identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or otherwise excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits, as their ineligibility condition applies to this Federal program.

D. Application and Submission Information

D1. Address to Request Application Package

This funding opportunity contains everything needed to apply. To request paper copies of the materials, please contact cwt@fws.gov.

Program Website Link
https://www.fws.gov/program/mentor-fellowship

D2. Content and Form of Application Submission

SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance

All applicants must submit the Standard Form (SF)-424, Application for Federal Assistance. This form is available with the announcement on Grants.gov and in GrantSolutions. The form must be complete and signed by an Authorized Representative. For all applicants except individuals and commercial entities, the Authorized Representative's signature on a standard application form submitted to the Service represents their certification that the entity's financial management system meets 2 CFR §200.302 financial management requirements. The non-Federal entity's financial management system must be sufficient to:

1. Permit the preparation of required reports;
2. Trace funds to a level of expenditures adequate to establish that the entity has used such funds per Federal statutes, regulations, and terms and conditions of the Federal award;
3. Provide for the requirements in 2 CFR §200.302(b); and
4. Comply with §200.334 Retention requirements for records, §200.335 Requests for transfer of records, §200.336 Methods for collection, transmission, and storage of information, and §200.337 Access to records.

If this application requests more than $100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Representative's signature on or submission of the SF-424 form in GrantSolutions also represents their certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying.

When completing the SF-424 Application form, enter only the amount requested from this Federal program in Box 18a, Estimated Federal Funding. Include any other Federal sources of funding in Box 18e. Estimated Other Funding and identify any such sources and amounts in the required Budget Narrative (see below). For individuals applying as a private citizen (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own or operate in your name), do NOT include your Social Security Number on this or any other document to be submitted with your application! When completing the SF-424 Application form, individuals must enter in Box 8b. Employee/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN) the substitute number "444-44-4444." Individuals may register in SAM.gov but are not required to have a SAM.gov registration. For individuals without a SAM.gov registration enter in Box 8c. the substitute Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) "KA5HQCLKUVW1".

Project Abstract Summary (OMB Number 4040-0019)

Applicants must complete and submit the Project Abstract Summary form. The Project Abstract Summary form must provide a brief award description. The description must be in plain language that the public can understand without viewing the full application proposal. It should include a brief, simple description of the project purpose, activities to be performed, deliverables and expected outcomes, intended beneficiaries, and subrecipient activities, if known at the time of submission.

Do not include personally identifiable, sensitive, or proprietary information in the award description as this is available to the public. Use only English characters, numbers, punctuation,

and standard symbols. Use of non-English, non-standard characters (also referred to as special or extended ASCII characters) will result in the award description failing to be reported correctly to USASpending.gov. Award descriptions are limited to 4,000 characters or less. Applicants should check the length of the award description and proofread for proper grammar and spelling.

For applicants applying through Grants.gov: Applicants must download and complete the Grants.gov "Project Abstract Summary" form from the full text announcement. To submit the Grants.gov "Project Abstract Summary" form with the application, applicants must add the form as an attachment to the Grants.gov "Attachments" form that is included in the application package.

For applicants applying through GrantSolutions-Grants Management Module (GS-GMM): Applicants must enter the information in the Project Abstract Summary screen. Do not upload a document in place of entering the information directly into GS-GMM Project Abstract Screen.

Project Narrative
Project narratives should be ten or fewer pages and pages should be numbered. Project summary, figures, data tables, maps, curriculum vitae, additional detailed information, partner organization or government letters of endorsement, financial materials, and required standard forms do not count toward the ten-page limit.

The following sections must be included in your Project Narrative:

1. Project Title
2. Statement of Need
3. Project Goal, Objectives, Activities, and Methods
4. Relevant Party Engagement
5. Support for Protected Areas
6. Project Monitoring and Evaluation
7. Project Learning and Sharing
8. Ethics Standards
9. Project Timetable
10. Description of Entities Undertaking the Project
11. Sustainability

Include as an addendum (not included in 10-page limit):
12. Literature Cited
13. Project Location
14. Partner Organization or Government Letter of Endorsement

Detailed information about each required section is provided below.

Project Narrative Sections:

1. Project Title: Provide a basic description of the project, including the location and country, in the title. Please note that this title will be the reference archived and communicated in all future documents. *Example: MENTOR – HAWLT (Holistically Addressing WildLife Trafficking) in Kenya*

2. Statement of Need: This section should describe the conservation problem and answer why this proposed project is necessary to address wildlife trafficking. This section should demonstrate a systematic understanding of the conservation context, which can be based on a review of existing evidence from previous research, expertise, literature reviews, and other sources of information. The proposed project should be described within this greater context. Please summarize previous or on-going efforts that are relevant to the proposed work, including how this proposal differs from or builds on past work, and how you plan to expand upon the successes, failures, and lessons learned from past efforts.

It is important for applicants to show that conservation project proposals are based on the best available evidence. Applicants are encouraged to describe and cite the evidence base for the most important conservation activities within a proposal. For example, applicants should describe the existing evidence that suggests proposed activities will be effective, with a focus on activities that may have substantial or sensitive consequences or activities that are considered high risk by the project. To identify evidence for conservation activities, applicants are encouraged to search and cite the Conservation Evidence database (https://www.conservationevidence.com/). The evidence base may also include published or grey literature, previous personal experience, Indigenous and/or traditional knowledge, evidence review and synthesis libraries (e.g., Evidence for Nature and People) or species assessments published under the Endangered Species Act and the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. If a proposed activity is considered sensitive or high risk but has little to no existing evidence base among these information sources, applicants are encouraged to discuss where new evidence is needed to understand effectiveness. Further guidance and examples are available in Parks et al. (2022).

If you have previously received funding from the Service for this specific project work or site, please provide a summary of the funding, associated activities, products, outcomes, and associated measurable conservation results. A table may be the most efficient way to convey this information (e.g., Table 1). Former recipients of Service support should note that every proposal is expected to be a stand-alone document. Not all proposal reviewers may be familiar with past grants, thus a summary of activities and accomplishments helps reviewers better understand the proposal in context.

Table 1: Summary of prior Service funding.

Funding Source	Reference #	Funding amount ($)	Years of activity	Major activities	Outputs	Outcomes

3. Project Goals, Objectives, Activities and Methods: This section should describe the overall project goal and how it aligns with the goal and objectives of the proposed MENTOR-HAWLT program as described below in Table 2. The proposal should explain what will be achieved and how activities will be carried out. Proposals are expected to address each Objective in section *A. Program Description.*

Applicants should demonstrate that project goals, objectives, and activities are based on a systematic understanding of the social-ecological context. We encourage applicants to articulate a clear theory of change (e.g., a results chain or logic model) describing the short-, intermediate-, and long-term outcomes that you expect will need to be in place to achieve the project goal. This can be presented in either a narrative or in a diagram. The resources below may be useful for developing theories of change for conservation projects:

- Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation V. 4 (2020) - Section 2 "Plan" (for other languages see https://conservationstandards.org/download-cs/)
- For an overview of additional planning frameworks see: Decision support frameworks and tools for conservation

Additionally, applicants should identify potential challenges, assumptions, or uncertainties in implementing the project as a whole and for each of the activities (e.g., political will, accessibility, infrastructure) and how these will be addressed. Crucially, detail how each activity will be implemented so that monitoring and evaluation will be possible.
We recommend using the format below to describe the project's objectives and activities. Please include sufficient detail for each activity so that reviewers will have confidence in the team's expertise and ability to complete the activity. Between one and three paragraphs per activity is commonly adequate.

Goal: [Describe the overall project goal or end result you want to achieve]

Objective 1:
[Describe the specific outcomes you're trying to achieve using SMART criteria: Specific (who, what, where), Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound]

Activity 1.1:
[Describe the actions that will be carried out to achieve the desired short, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. Include a description of your methods, challenges, and assumptions]

Activity 1.2:

Objective 2:
Activity 2.1:
Activity 2.2:

4. Relevant Party Engagement: This section should detail who may be impacted by this project and how they will be involved in the project. As applicable, describe how you/your organization has coordinated with and involved other relevant organizations, local community groups, or individuals in planning the project, and detail if/how they will be involved in conducting project activities, disseminating project results, and/or incorporating your results/products into their activities. Please describe any previous work with these relevant parties and how working with them relates to the specific threats and target audiences. Where multiple groups are working in the same site or are listed as relevant parties in the proposal, letters of endorsement specifically referring to this proposal and to the proposed collaboration from each partner organization will

strengthen your proposal and may be requested by reviewers. For projects where Indigenous Peoples are present in or have a collective attachment to the project area and there are either: (i) risks of possible adverse impacts on their human rights, livelihoods, and/or culture; (ii) the potential for adverse impacts on their lands and territories, natural resources, or sacred sites (whether the land is under traditional ownership title or based on customary use and occupation); or (iii) threats that might result in physical relocation from those lands, letters should explain the planned or completed process for how the project will obtain/has obtained free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) in line with USAID's Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in addition to national and international laws, regarding proposed project activities. Technical support documents for implementing FPIC are available at https://biodiversitylinks.org/library/key-resources#parks.

5. Support for Protected Areas: Projects with activities taking place in a protected area must address the following questions regarding social safeguards. Technical support documents for implementing these safeguards are available at https://biodiversitylinks.org/library/key-resources#parks to help applicants and recipients of USAID-funded projects apply these requirements and avoid or mitigate social risks associated with conservation activities for parks and protected areas. If the applicant believes that any of these items are not applicable, an explanation for this determination must be provided:

- How will information detailing the proposed project and potential impacts be shared with local communities and the free, prior, and informed consent of affected indigenous communities be obtained in accordance with USAID's Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?;
- How will the potential impacts of the proposed project on existing land or resource claims by affected local communities or indigenous peoples be considered and addressed in a management plan?;
- What is the plan for providing proper training and monitoring to any eco-guards, park rangers, and other law enforcement personnel regarding safe and fair application of the law, including respect for human rights and avoiding intimidation or unnecessary use of force?; and
- Do effective grievance and redress mechanisms for reporting human rights abuse, misconduct, and other grievances exist? If not, what are the plans for their establishment?

6. Project Monitoring and Evaluation: Applicants should budget sufficient time and money for monitoring, evaluating, and adapting project activities. The monitoring and evaluation stage of an adaptive management approach involves incrementally applying lessons learned to adapt project activities and decision making to achieve desired outcomes. Ultimately, lessons learned at the project level can benefit future conservation efforts. **Please Note:** As a result of past efforts and evaluations related to the Service's and other conservation fellowship programs, the Service developed the measurable objectives, indicators, and expected outputs outlined in Table 2. Proposals should integrate these as well as additional measurable objectives, indicators, and outputs that contribute to the overall leadership development goal of the MENTOR Program and the goal of MENTOR-HAWLT. In addition, proposals should describe other indicators and methods that will be used to monitor the implementation of the proposed activities and evaluate progress.

Please describe how you will evaluate whether you met each objective and thus the overall goal of the project. If the ultimate goal of the project will occur after the period of performance of the project, describe which proxy indicators (in the form of outputs and short- and intermediate-term outcomes listed in Table 2) will show preliminary evidence of success. Please include this information in a similar format to Table 2 (which includes example indicators). A narrative can also be included to provide additional information.

The Service values projects that report both the successes and challenges of efforts as a means by which the applicant can improve their decision making and future performance, and so the Service can more effectively conserve wildlife going forward. Please describe how the activity or theory of change will be adapted should the objective(s) not be met. Please articulate any areas of risk or uncertainty in the intervention and how your team plans to address these information needs.

Table 2. Example project evaluation table (To be expanded by applicant)

Goal: Develop capacity to plan, implement, and evaluate holistic approaches to reduce wildlife trafficking that include interventions designed to address the complex human dimensions of the issue.			
Indicator(s)	**Measurement technique(s)**	**Output(s)**	**Outcome(s)**
Objective 1: By 12 months after the date of award, all available MENTOR-HAWLT Fellowship slots are filled with transdisciplinary candidates who demonstrate a high potential for an impactful conservation career.			
# and % of slots filled with candidates scoring high on evaluation rubric 12 months after the date of award	Evaluation rubric completed 12 months after the date of award	MENTOR-HAWLT Fellows selected	**Short-term outcome:** Cross-disciplinary pool of applicants solicited **Intermediate outcome:** 'Best" candidates selected **Long-term outcome:** 'Best' candidates accept fellowship
Objective 2: By the end of the program, a successful academic and field-based training and mentoring program has been delivered to the MENTOR-HAWLT Fellows.			
# of Fellows completing the MENTOR-HAWLT program and ranking the program as successful in terms of their learning and the new conservation networks developed.	Pre/post comparison Change in pre/post test scores	Training and curriculum materials produced Cadre of Fellows, mentors, and lecturers established Products of pilot projects, including planning products, intervention materials, and impact reports/presentations	**Short-term outcome:** Fellows actively participate in experiential & collaborative learning **Intermediate outcome:** Fellows apply new skills to real-world projects **Long-term outcome:**

Objective 3: By the end of the Fellowship, all MENTOR-HAWLT Fellows have gained essential skills and meaningful experiences to advance local, national, and regional conservation objectives as leaders in holistically combating wildlife poaching and trafficking and other conservation issues.			
% change in competencies over Fellowship **# and % Fellows** identifying as leaders within their countries on holistic approaches to combating wildlife trafficking	Pre/post comparison Self-assessment		**Short-term outcome:** Fellows have marketable skillset for potential employers **Intermediate outcome:** **Long-term outcome:**
Objective 4: By three months after the end of the Fellowship, at least 90% of MENTOR-HAWLT Fellows are active in their conservation communities and applying training to improve conservation efforts.			
# and % Fellows active in conservation community and applying their training three months after the end of the Fellowship	Post-Fellowship survey	X# increase in Fellows active in conservation community X# increase in Fellows applying their training	**Short-term outcome:** **Intermediate outcome:** **Long-term outcome:**
Expected Outputs: (1) curriculum; (2) cadre of lecturers and Mentors; (3) products of pilot projects, including planning products, intervention materials, and impact reports/presentations; (4) a network that self-identifies as champions who holistically address poaching and trafficking of wild plants and animals in Kenya, (5) pre-/post-evaluations.			

USAID Standard Indicators

In addition to project-specific indicators, projects funded under this announcement will be required to report progress against USAID's standard indicators for biodiversity projects, as well as two USAID standard gender indicators. If one or more of the following indicators are relevant to the project, include them in your monitoring plan.

EG 10.2-1 Number of hectares of biologically significant areas showing improved biophysical conditions as a result of U.S. Government (USG) assistance

EG 10.2-2 Number of hectares of biologically significant areas under improved natural resource management as a result of USG assistance

EG 10.2-3 Number of people with improved economic benefits derived from sustainable natural resource management and/or biodiversity conservation as a result of USG assistance

EG 10.2-4 Number of people trained in sustainable natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation as a result of USG assistance

EG 10.2-5 Number of laws, policies, or regulations that address biodiversity conservation and/or other environmental themes officially proposed, adopted, or implemented as a result of USG assistance

EG 10.2-6 Number of people that apply improved conservation law enforcement practices as a result of USG assistance

GNDR-2 Proportion of female participants in U.S. government-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources
GNDR-4 Proportion of target population reporting increased agreement with the concept that males and females should have equal access to social, economic, and political opportunities

7. Project Learning and Sharing: As part of the project, applicants should disseminate findings and lessons learned from their work. We encourage applicants to consider producing a written document (e.g., publication in a peer-reviewed journal, a report, white paper) or other media (e.g., story map, online app), depending on the intended audience, that is open access (freely available to the public). The project should include time and resources for development of these materials as well as outreach to appropriate audiences, including local communities as relevant. Additionally, we require that all data collected using funds received via this NOFO be made publicly available in a timely manner following the completion of the proposed project (see note below for details on protecting sensitive data). Please state how the work may be disseminated among the intended audience (1) within the country/community where the project is proposed, and (2) throughout the conservation community conducting related work. Please consider your dissemination plan when determining a timeline and budget. We encourage applicants to consider how their work could be submitted for open-access publication in a peer-reviewed journal; we will support award recipients in this process where possible. The open-access publication process involves external review of the work thereby improving future efforts, increasing the visibility and perceived quality of the work, as well as providing an accessible location for data to be shared. For non-peer-reviewed published projects, award recipients should deposit all data in a relevant publicly accessible repository.

*** Please note:** We will require that all non-sensitive research data collected using funds received via this NOFO be made available to the conservation research community in a timely manner following the completion of the project. Such data can be invaluable to conservation practitioners to inform future strategies for species management and research. Sensitive and ethically protected data should be anonymized (thus making it non-sensitive and available for sharing) to protect the privacy of project participants, following the guidelines of the ethics approval committee. In the event data cannot be modified enough to protect the anonymity of individuals, exceptions for public sharing should be made in prior agreement with the Service.

8. Ethics Standards: Proposals must include a clear path for understanding and adhering to accepted ethics standards for projects involving animals and humans. *Social science research ethics:* All projects proposing social or behavioral research should address: (1) potential risks to research participants, (2) adequacy of protection against these risks, (3) potential benefits to the participants and others, and (4) the importance of the knowledge to be gained. The U.S. Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, known as the Common Rule (*45 CFR 46*), describes types of research involving people, defines key terms, outlines requirements for how a study is classified for formal review (exempt or non-exempt), outlines criteria for approval of research by an Institutional Review Board, lists general requirements for informed consent, and requires a written assurance or certification of compliance. Applicants proposing activities involving information collection from/about people are encouraged to review the definitions and requirements outlined in the Common Rule and consult an Institutional Review Board (IRB), Research Ethics Committee (REC), or similar authority/body in the country the research is being

conducted (see International Compilation of Human Research Standards) for guidance on how to adequately address ethical considerations and requirements according to the Common Rule and the policy of the country in which the activities are to be conducted. Applicants must detail social science ethics considerations specific to their project and provide written assurance that adequate protections will be implemented, describing the specific measures that will be taken. We strongly encourage applicants to identify a review institution or body from which an approval has been or will be obtained for all projects collecting information from/about people for which Service funds are requested. Additionally, for projects involving Indigenous peoples, researchers have a responsibility to uphold Indigenous rights as reflected in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Ignace et al. 2023).

9. Project Timetable: This section should provide a timetable indicating roughly when activities or project milestones are to be accomplished. Include any resulting tables, spreadsheets, or flow charts within the body of the project narrative (i.e., do not include them as separate attachments). The timetable should not propose specific dates but instead group activities by month for single year projects, and by quarter for multi-year projects.

10. Description of Entities Undertaking the Project: Detail who will carry out the project and what their specific qualifications are for doing so. Proposals must include a description of the recipient's capacity to lead the program, including proposed staffing and partners that will be engaged (e.g., proposed MENTOR-HAWLT Coordinator, program staff, mentors, lecturers, and what local, national, and regional NGOs, universities and networks might be involved). If staff are not yet in place, please identify the core roles and capacities that will be recruited. Provide a brief description of the applicant organization and all participating entities and/or individuals. Identify which of the proposed activities each agency, organization, group, or individual is responsible for conducting or managing. Provide a brief (under 1-page) curriculum vitae or biography for each key personnel with the technical/scientific expertise relevant to the activities and methods of the proposed project. Please note that **'Capacity to implement' is a primary criterion that will be used to evaluate proposals.** Please refer to Section *E1. Criteria* to review the detailed criteria.

11. Sustainability: Conservation is a long-game, and measurable conservation impacts (e.g., cessation in trafficking activities or reduced demand for illegally obtained wildlife species, or an increase in the population numbers of a particular species) can rarely be achieved through short-term funding. For this NOFO, all proposed activities should be designed with sustainability in mind, beyond the timeframe and funding made available through this opportunity. As applicable, proposals should describe how the design of the activities enables long-term sustainability (e.g., inclusion of and capacity development for range country personnel and institutions).

Additional Project-Specific Information
This information should be included as an addendum and will not count towards the 10-page limit.

12. Literature Cited: Include any key references as evidence to support the ideas in the proposal. Citations may be formatted in any style.

13. Project Location: This section should answer the question, "Where is the project located?" The map should clearly delineate the project area and be large enough to be legible. Label any sites referenced in the project narrative. Label any protected areas.

14. Partner Organization or Government Letter(s) of Endorsement: For projects implemented outside of the United States, non-governmental applicants must include a recent letter of support (no older than two years) from the appropriate local, regional, and/or national government wildlife or conservation authority. A current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the applicant and the government authority may be accepted as long as the MOU references the proposed work. Where appropriate, letters of support from partner organizations, local communities, or project beneficiaries should be provided. Endorsement letters should be in English and make specific reference to the Service and the proposed work. If a support or endorsement letter is not in English, applicants must also provide an English translation of the letter.

SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs

Applicants must complete and submit the SF-424A Budget Information form for Non-Construction Programs or Projects. All required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov or in GrantSolutions. Federal award recipients and subrecipients are subject to Federal award cost principles in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 200. Applicants must show funds requested from this Federal program separately from any other Federal sources of funding. In "Section A – Budget Summary" on the SF-424A form enter the funding requested from this Federal program in the first row. Identify any other Federal funding sources and amounts in the required Budget Narrative (see below). In the SF-424A "Contractual" category total, do not combine estimated subawards and contractual costs. Use the "Contractual" category to reflect estimated contractual costs only. Enter estimated subaward costs in the SF-424A "Other" category. Provide a separate description and total estimated costs for both contractual and subaward costs in the required Budget Narrative (see below).

Applicants may include an itemized Budget Table following the table format below. If your Budget Table requires more than one page, verify that the column headings and row titles appear on all pages. For multi-year or multi-phase projects, please include a separate budget table and narrative for each year/phase with subtotals.

If the proposed project is a component of a larger program, identify leveraged funds and other resources available and/or needed to accomplish the desired objectives (leveraged funds are funds that run parallel to or outside of the proposed SERVICE project budget). Include the specific funding amount to be provided by those sources and the relevant activities they will contribute to. In addition, it is recommended that the Budget Narrative address the overall cost-effectiveness and feasibility of the proposal, including leveraging institutional or other resources.

The itemized budget should provide enough information for reviewers to be able to understand the cost basis and calculation at a glance. For example, a $3,300 charge for lodging should include the formula for how the cost was calculated (e.g., *Lodging for 20 nights x 11 people x $15/night = $3,300)*. For personnel salary costs, include the baseline salary figures and the estimates of time (e.g., *50% time on project*).

For any salaries, staff time, or contractors for which Service funds are requested, the person should be identified, and their qualifications described in the Project Narrative (Description of

Entities Undertaking the Project). For any training, a description of the training should be included in the Methods section. For any meetings, a description of participants, a draft agenda, and desired outputs should be provided.

Expenses listed as "Miscellaneous" or "etc." are unallowable. Unless conditions listed under 200.433 Contingency provisions are applicable, "contingencies" are unallowable. Expenses listed as "Other" must be clearly identified and described in the Budget Narrative.

Equipment: Equipment is defined as an item with a per-unit cost of $5,000 or more and a service life of more than one year. If the item meets these criteria, all federal procurement policies and procedures must be followed. If an item does not meet these criteria, it should be considered a supply and listed under cost category E. Justify any equipment purchase/rental in the budget narrative. If equipment previously purchased with Federal funds is available for the project, provide a list of that equipment and identify the Federal funding source. For expensive items or large single purchases, provide detailed technical specifications or a pro forma invoice.

Supplies: List items separately using unit costs and the percentage of each unit cost being charged to the award for photocopying, postage, telephone/fax, printing, and office supplies (e.g., Telephone: $50/month x 50% = $25/month x 12 months).

Contractual:

1. Subawards: For each subaward, provide a detailed line-item breakdown explaining specific services in a separate tab in the Budget Table and Narrative. Subaward budgets should include the same level of detail for personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, and indirect costs required of the direct applicant. If indirect costs are charged on a subaward budget, include the subrecipient's NICRA.

2. Consultant Fees: For example, lecture fees, honoraria, travel, and per diem for outside speakers or independent evaluators: list number of people and rates per day (e.g., *2 x $150/day x 2 days*). Consultant/outside expert fees/honoraria should be consistent with the level of experience and based on a fair market value.

Category/Budget Item	**Units**	**Cost per Unit ($)**	**No. of Units**	**Total**	**USFWS**	***Recipient***
Personnel						
Trainer	month	$xxx	xx	$ xxx	$xxx	$XXX
Project Director	month	$ xxx	xx	$ xxx		$ xxx
Project Coordinator	month	$ xxx	xx	$ xxx		$ xxx
Personnel Subtotal					$xxx	$ xxx
Fringe Benefits						
% rate	lump	$ xxx	xx	$ xxx	$xxx	$XXX
Fringe Benefits Subtotal					$ xxx	$ xxx

Category/Budget Item	Units	Cost per Unit ($)	No. of Units	Total	USFWS	*Recipient*
Travel						
Vehicle day-use (with driver)	Day	$ xxx	xx	$ xxx		
Vehicle maintenance and repair	lump	$ xxx	xx	$ xxx	$xxx	
Domestic Flights (Coordination at Transit Points)	Each	$ xxx	xx	$ xxx	$xxx	
Meals (4 day Training 30 ppl)	Day	$ xxx	xx	$ xxx	$xxx	
Accommodation (4 day Training 20ppl)	Day	$ xxx	xx	$ xxx	$xxx	
Travel Subtotal						
Equipment						
xxx	Each	$ xxx	xx	$ xxx	$xxx	
xxx	Each	$ xxx	xx	$ xxx	$xxx	
Equipment Subtotal					$ xxx	$ xxx
Supplies						
xxx	Each	$ xxx	xx	$ xxx	$xxx	
xxx	Each	$ xxx	xx	$ xxx	$xxx	
Supplies Subtotal					$ xxx	$ xxx
Contractual						
xxx	lump	$ xxx	xx	$ xxx	$xxx	
xxx	month	$ xxx	xx	$ xxx	$xxx	
Contractual Subtotal					$ xxx	$ xxx
Other						
xxx	lump	$ xxx	xx	$ xxx	$xxx	
xxx	month	$ xxx	xx	$ xxx	$xxx	
Other Subtotal				$ xxx	$ xxx	$ xxx
TOTAL DIRECT CHARGES				$ xxx	$ xxx	$ xxx
INDIRECT CHARGES				$ xxx	$ xxx	$ xxx
GRAND TOTAL					**$xxx**	**$xxx**

Budget Narrative
Applicants must include a budget narrative that describes and justifies requested budget items and costs. In your budget narrative, describe how the SF-424 Budget Information, "Object Class Category" totals were determined. For personnel salary costs, generally describe how estimates were determined by identifying what type of staff will support the project and how much time they will contribute to the project (in hours or workdays). Describe any proposed items of cost that require prior approval under the Federal award cost principles, including any anticipated subawarding, transferring, or contracting out of any work under the award. Provide a separate description and total estimated costs for both contractual and subaward costs. If equipment previously purchased with Federal funds is available for the project, provide a list of that equipment and identify the Federal funding source. Identify any third-party cash or in-kind contributions that a partner or other entity will contribute to the project and describe how the contributions directly and substantively benefit completion of the project. For in-kind contributions, identify the source, the amount, and the valuation methodology used to determine the total value. See 2 CFR §200.306 for more information. Please note the prohibitions on certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment in 2 CFR 200.216. The Department of the Interior's Unmanned Aircraft web page provides a list of approved unmanned aircraft and related equipment and software.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure
Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), 2 CFR §1402.112, applicants must state in their application if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of submission.

a. *Applicability*.
    1. This section intends to ensure that non-Federal entities and their employees take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements.
    2. In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by sub recipients, the conflict of interest provisions in 2 CFR§200.318 apply.

b. *Notification*.
    1. Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass- through entity in accordance with 2 CFR §200.112.
    2. Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Financial Assistance Officer in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that have been reported by sub recipients.

c. *Restrictions on lobbying*. Non-Federal entities are strictly prohibited from using funds under a grant or cooperative agreement for lobbying activities and must provide the required certifications and disclosures pursuant to 43 CFR §18 and 31 USC §1352.

d. *Review procedures*. The Financial Assistance Officer will examine each conflict of interest disclosure on the basis of its particular facts and the nature of the proposed grant or cooperative agreement, and will determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, develop an appropriate means for resolving it.

Enforcement. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the government may be cause for termination of the award. Failure to make required disclosures may result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR §200.339, Remedies for noncompliance, including suspension or debarment (see also 2 CFR §180).

Uniform Audit Reporting Statement

All U.S. states, local governments, Indian tribes, institutions of higher education, and non- profit organizations expending $750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in the applicant's fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System, in accordance with 2 CFR 200 subpart F. U.S. state, local government, Indian tribes, institutions of higher education, and non- profit applicants must state if your organization was or was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year. If your organization was required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year, provide the EIN associated with that report and state if it is available through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse website.

Certification Regarding Lobbying

Applicants requesting more than $100,000 in Federal funding must certify to the statements in 43CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying. If this application requests more than $100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Official's signature on the appropriate SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance form also represents the entity's certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Applicants and recipients must not use any federally appropriated funds (annually appropriated or continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a Federal award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any U.S. agency, a Member of the U.S. Congress, an officer or employee of the U.S. Congress, or an employee of a Member of the U.S. Congress connection with the award. Applicants and recipients must complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities" form if the Federal share of the proposal or award is more than $100,000 and the applicant or recipient has made or has agreed to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection with the application or award. The SF-LLL form is available with this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov. See 43 CFR, Subpart 18.100 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required.

Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement

Applicants must provide a statement indicating if there is any overlap between this Federal application and any other Federal application, or funded project, in regard to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel. If no such overlap or duplication exists, state, "There are no overlaps or duplication between this application and any of our other Federal applications or funded projects, including in regard to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel". If any such overlap exists, provide a complete description of overlaps or duplications between this

proposal and any other federally funded project or application in regard to activities, costs, and time commitment of key personnel, as applicable. Provide a copy of any overlapping or duplicative proposal submitted to any other potential funding entity and identify when that proposal was submitted, to whom (entity name and program), and when you anticipate being notified of their funding decision. When overlap exists, your statement must end with "We understand that if at any time we receive funding from another source that is duplicative of the funding we are requesting from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in this application, we will immediately notify the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service point of contact identified in this Funding Opportunity in writing."

D3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Registration:
This requirement does not apply to individuals applying for funds as an individual (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own, operate, or work within), or any entity with an exception to bypass SAM.gov registration with prior approval from the funding bureau or office in accordance with bureau or office policy. All other applicants are required to register as a financial assistance recipient in SAM.gov prior to submitting a Federal award application and obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). A Federal award may not be made to an applicant that has not completed the SAM.gov registration. If an applicant selected for funding has not completed their SAM.gov registration by the time the program is ready to make an award, the program may determine the applicant is not qualified to receive an award. Federal award recipients must also continue to maintain an active SAM.gov registration with current information through the life of their Federal award(s). Entities already registered in SAM.gov should review their registration to confirm that they are registered as a financial assistance recipient, which requires completion of the SAM.gov "Financial Assistance General Certifications and Representations". See the "Submission Requirements" section of this document below for more information on SAM.gov registration.

Applicants can register on the SAM.gov website. The "Help" tab on the website contains User Guides and other information to assist you with registration. The Grants.gov "Register with SAM" page also provides detailed instructions. Applicants can contact the supporting Federal Service Desk for help registering in SAM. Once registered in SAM, entities must renew and revalidate their SAM registration at least once every 12 months from the date previously registered. Entities are strongly encouraged to revalidate their registration as often as needed to ensure their information is up to date and reflects changes that may have been made to the entity's IRS information. If applicable, foreign entities who want to receive payment directly to a U.S. bank account must enter and maintain valid, current banking information in SAM.

D4. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications
03/04/2024

Application Due Date Explanation

Applications must be submitted electronically through GrantSolutions by 11:59 PM **ET on March 4, 2024.** Applications must be submitted in English. **Late applications will not be accepted**. A confirmation email containing an assigned application number beginning with "FWS-" will be sent to applicants upon submission. If you do not receive this email within five days of the opportunity closing date, contact cwt@fws.gov**. DO NOT SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION MORE THAN ONCE. Duplicate applications will be discarded. Please see more information about submission requirements in section D7. Other Submission Requirements. Applicants must have an active registration in SAM to apply.**

D5. Intergovernmental Review

An intergovernmental review may be required for applications submissions from a U.S. state or local government prior to submission. Applicants must contact their State's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to comply with the state's process under Executive Order 12372. The State Single Point of Contact list is available on the OMB Office of Federal Financial Management website.

D6. Funding Restrictions

Indirect Costs: Individuals

Individuals applying for and receiving funds separate from a business or non-profit organization they may operate are not eligible to charge indirect costs to their award. If you are an individual applying for funding, you must not include any indirect costs in your proposed budget.

Indirect Costs: Organizations

The Federal awarding agency that provides the largest amount of direct funding to your organization is your cognizant agency for indirect costs, unless otherwise assigned by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB). If the Department of the Interior (DOI) is your organization's cognizant agency, the Interior Business Center (IBC) will negotiate your indirect cost rate. Contact the IBC by phone 916-930-3803 or using the IBC Email Submission Form. See the IBC Website for more information.

Organizations must have an active Federal award before they can submit an indirect cost rate proposal to their cognizant agency. Failure to establish an approved rate during the award period renders all costs otherwise allocable as indirect costs unallowable under the award. Recipients may not shift unallowable indirect costs to another Federal award unless specifically authorized to do so by legislation.

Required Indirect Cost Statement to be submitted by Organization:

U.S. state or local government entities receiving more than $35 million in direct Federal funding must include the following statement in their application and attach a copy of their most recently negotiated rate agreement:

- We are a U.S. state or local government entity receiving more than $35 million in direct Federal funding. We submit our indirect cost rate proposals to our cognizant agency. Our current indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. Attached is a copy of our most recently negotiated rate agreement/certification.

U.S. state or local government entities receiving $35 million or less in direct Federal funding must include the applicable statement from this list:

- We are a U.S. state or local government entity receiving $35 million or less in direct Federal funding. We prepare and retain for audit an indirect cost rate proposal and documentation per 2 CFR 200, Appendix VII. Our current indirect cost rate is [insert rate], which is charged against [insert a complete description of the direct cost base used to distribute indirect costs to the award].
- We are a U.S. state or local government entity receiving $35 million or less in direct Federal funding. We have not prepared an indirect cost rate proposal and documentation per 2 CFR §200, Appendix VII and elect to charge the de minimis rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in 2 CFR §200.1. We understand we must use this methodology consistently for all Federal awards until we choose to establish a rate per 2 CFR §200. We understand we must notify the Service in writing if we establish a rate that changes the methodology used to charge indirect costs during the award period. We understand that additional Federal funds may not be available to support an unexpected increase in indirect costs during the project period and that such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by the Service.

All other organizations must include the applicable statement from this list and any related documentation in their application. Please note, an organization with a current negotiated (including provisional) rate may not elect to charge the 10% de minimis rate of Modified Total Direct Costs during the period covered by their current negotiated rate.

- We are an organization with a current negotiated indirect cost rate. In the event we receive an award, we will charge indirect costs per our current negotiated rate agreement. Attached is a copy of our current rate agreement.
- We are an organization with a negotiated indirect cost rate that has expired. Attached is copy of our most recently negotiated rate agreement. If we receive an award, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award date. We understand we must provide the Service a copy of our approved rate agreement before charging indirect costs to the Federal award.
- We are an organization that has never negotiated an indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate], which is charged against [insert a complete description of the direct cost base used to distribute indirect costs to the award]. If we receive an award, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award date. We understand we must provide the Service a copy of our approved rate agreement before charging indirect costs to the Federal award.
- We are an organization that does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate. In the event an award is made, we elect to charge the de minimis rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in 2 CFR §200.1. We understand we must use this methodology consistently for all Federal awards until such time as we negotiate a different rate with our cognizant agency. We understand that we must notify the Service in writing if during the award period we establish a rate that changes the methodology used to charge indirect costs to the award. We understand that additional Federal funds

may not be available to support an unexpected increase in indirect costs and that such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by the Service.

- We are an organization submitting a [insert either "Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program" or "Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Network"] project proposal, which has an indirect cost rate cap of [insert rate; CRU is currently 15%; CESU is currently 17.5%]. In the event we receive an award, we understand that if we have a current negotiated (including provisional) indirect cost rate agreement we must charge the capped indirect cost rate to the same base identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement. We understand we must request prior approval from the awarding program to use the 2 CFR 200.1 Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) base instead of our approved base and that we must submit such requests with our application, including a calculation showing how use of the MTDC base results in an overall reduction in the total indirect costs recovered. If we do not have current negotiated (including provisional) rate, we understand we must charge the capped indirect cost rate against Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) as defined in 2 CFR §200.1. If we have never negotiated a rate, we understand we must use the de minimis rate of 10% of MTDC.
- We are an organization that will charge all costs directly.

The Service will not fund:

- the purchase of firearms or ammunition;
- gathering information by persons who conceal their true identity;
- buying or purchasing of intelligence, evidence or information or paying informants;
- law enforcement operations that, to arrest suspects, prompt them to carry out illegal activities (entrapment); and
- any activity that would circumvent sanctions, laws, or regulations of either the U.S. or the country of the proposed activity.

The following cost elements **are not allowable** under this program:

- Pilot projects that include interventions that present potential environmental risks (e.g., invasive procedures with endangered or protected animals, land improvement/watershed management).
- Publication of materials for distribution within the United States that are not related to the program
- Pre-award Costs - Expenses incurred before the specified dates of award period of performance (unless prior written approval is received.)
- Programs designed to advocate policy views or positions of foreign governments or views of a particular political faction
- Entertainment and/or alcoholic beverages
- Purchase of land
- Direct support or the appearance of direct support for individual or single-party electoral campaigns
- Duplication of services immediately available through municipal, provincial, or national government
- Provision of salary support to government officials

D7. Other Submission Requirements

The Service uses the GrantSolutions system to manage financial assistance applications and awards. Applicants must register in and conduct any subsequent award business with the Service in GrantSolutions. To apply, your organization and organization officials must be established in GrantSolutions. To register your organization in GrantSolutions, send an email to help@grantsolutions.gov with the following information:

Subject: New Organization Request

- Organization/Individual Name
- Point of Contact first and last name, email, and phone number
- Organization Type
- SAM.gov Unique Entity Identifier (not required for individuals or Service-waived entities)
- Organization Employer Identification Number (Applicants that are INDIVIDUALS DO NOT include your social security number)
- Address

Organizational details should match those in the organization's SAM.gov registration. To establish organization official accounts and user role(s), complete a Recipient User Account Request Form for each official and email it to help@grantsolutions.gov. The GrantSolutions entity user roles are: Authorizing Official (ADO); Principal Investigator/Program Director (PI/PD); Support Specialist (GSS); Financial Officer (FO); and Financial Support Staff (FSS). All roles can do the following: enter applications, amendments, and reports, view awards, and view and create notes. The ADO and the PI/PD roles can also submit applications, amendments, and reports. The FO role can also submit reports. At a minimum, registered organizations must assign someone to the ADO and PI/PD roles. For more information, see the GrantSolutions Recipient Training and FAQs web page. For GrantSolutions registration, submission, and other assistance contact their Customer Support by telephone at 1-866-577-0771 or by email at help@grantsolutions.gov.

PLEASE NOTE: Applicants must have an active registration in SAM before attempting to register in GrantSolutions. The Service recommends applicants begin the initiation process for SAM at least 30 days before the submission deadline. If you experience problems registering or submitting an application in GrantSolutions, you may be granted a waiver. If you wish to seek a waiver, you must submit supporting documentation to demonstrate the issues you are experiencing. Documentation may include computer screenshots showing error messages or email communication with the GrantSolutions Help Desk attempting to resolve the issue. The request must be submitted at least **three** days before the submission deadline. Please send your waiver request to **DIC_GRANTS@fws.gov**.

E. Application Review Information

E1. Criteria

The minimum programmatic requirements for this funding opportunity are that (1) the proposal follows basic proposal content and formatting requirements as described in D2. Content and Form of Application Submission, and (2) the proposal addresses the program's Funding

Priorities, as described in *A. Program Description*. Proposed project goals should specify clearly in the body of the proposal how the objectives described above will be achieved. Proposals that do not address the desired objectives described above will not move forward in the review process. Proposals that meet minimum programmatic requirements will be evaluated based on the criteria below.

- *Show systematic understanding:* Demonstrate a systematic understanding of the social-ecological context of wildlife trafficking in the project system, including identifying the social, cultural, economic, and political factors driving the issue, and identifying where and how in this context the project will engage.
- *Build on prior evidence:* Demonstrate how the project is context specific, reflects a thoughtful and adaptive conservation strategy grounded in best available evidence, and how and why the proposed activities are expected to work (e.g., through the development/presentation of a theory of change or proven prior success of this or similar work). If there is a lack of evidence, the proposal should provide a strong rationale for the proposed approach and how it will be piloted. Address how the project ultimately will build the evidence base for effective interventions.
- *Adhere to ethical standards:* Demonstrate that project activities will adhere to accepted ethical standards and best practices established by pertinent local, national, or international policies and norms by considering and mitigating potential risks posed by project activities. This includes ethical considerations for research and interventions involving people and wildlife, assessing potential (and unintentional) positive or negative impacts of proposed activities, and defining measures to manage risks and maximize positive impacts. As relevant, integrate culturally appropriate approaches into work, such as developing tailored approaches based on the cultural attributes and wellbeing of engaged groups and including key personnel with relevant lived experience and expertise.
- *Include relevant parties and partners:* Demonstrate that activities will be developed and implemented in coordination, collaboration and/or consultation with local, national and international authorities, members of communities who will be affected by or engaged in activities and other relevant parties and partners.
- *Participate in collaboration and partnerships:* Establish new or maintain existing partnerships, networks, or communities of practice to support collaboration, leveraging resources, and shared learning to improve both short- and long-term, local and global conservation goals.
- *Show capacity for implementation:* Demonstrate capacity to implement the proposed project, such as key personnel with system-specific expertise, including (but not limited to) knowledge and prior experience relevant to the country, species, proposed activities, and/or relevant research methods, theory, and evidence. Proposals should highlight the applicant's expertise in (1) systems thinking, (2) holistic approaches to conservation that include people-centered solutions based on social/behavioral science, (3) establishing global networks, and (4) organizing training programs and developing capacity.
- *Show a monitoring and evaluation plan:* Demonstrate robust mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation and invest in contributing to the evidence base for conservation.
- *Show sustainability and amplification:* Describe a vision for project sustainability including (but not limited to) whether projects develop and foster lasting in-country capacity

Positive past performance with other Service awards (if applicable) is also a primary review criterion. Reviewers may consider the following sub-factors to break ties and further distinguish between applications with equivalent scores: financial need; geographical and project diversity in the Service portfolio; and proportion of proposal budget dedicated to administration, salaries, and travel.

E2. Review and Selection Process

Prior to award, the program will review any applicant statement regarding potential overlap or duplication between the project to be funded and any other funded or proposed project in terms of activities, funding, or time commitment of key personnel. Depending on the circumstances, the program may request modification to the application, other pending applications, or an active award, as needed to eliminate any duplication of effort, or the FWS may choose not to fund the selected project.

Prior to award, the program will conduct and document a review of the proposed budget to ensure figures are calculated correctly, proposed costs are clearly linked to the project narrative and seem necessary and reasonable, no obviously unallowable costs are included, costs requiring prior approval are identified and described, indirect cost are applied correctly, and any program match or cost share requirements are addressed.

The program may not make a Federal award to an applicant that has not completed the SAM.gov registration. If an applicant selected for funding has not completed their SAM.gov registration by the time the Bureau is ready to make an award, the program may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award. The program can use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Prior to award, the program will evaluate the risk posed by applicants as required in 2 CFR §200.206. Prior to approving awards for Federal funding in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently $250,000), the Bureau is required to review and consider any information about or from the applicant found in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System. The Bureau will consider this information when completing the risk review. The Bureau uses the results of the risk evaluation to establish monitoring plans, recipient reporting frequency requirements, and to determine if one or more of the specific award conditions in 2 CFR §200.208 should be applied to the award.

The Service's International Affairs program evaluates proposals by scoring how well each proposal addresses the program priorities and the requested elements listed in *E1. Criteria*. Programs MUST ensure that: (1) applications are reviewed and evaluated by qualified reviewers; (2) applications are scored and selected based on announced criteria; (3) consideration is given to applicant risk and past performance; (4) competitive applications are ranked; and (5) funding determinations are made. Programs must establish an evaluation plan comprised of five basic elements: (1) merit review factors and subfactors; (2) a rating system for competitive applications (e.g., adjectival, color coding, numerical, or ordinal); (3) evaluation standards or descriptions which explain the basis for assignment of the various rating system grades/scores; (4) program policy factors; and (5) the basis for selection.

The following describes the review and selection process:

Recruitment of merit review panel: Prior to convening a merit review panel, a Service Program Officer will identify, recruit, and receive approval for each reviewer on the merit review panel. A minimum of five U.S. Government employees are required for each panel: at least three merit reviewers, one panel chair, and one recorder. Only permanent U.S. Government staff may score proposals. Prior to participating in any review or evaluation process, all staff and peer reviewers, evaluators, panel members, and advisors must sign and return to the program office Point of Contact the "Department of the Interior Conflict of Interest Certification" form. By signing this form, the reviewer agrees to recuse themselves from scoring or commenting on proposals for which they have a conflict of interest or appearance thereof. This form must be signed and filed before a reviewer can participate in the merit review panel. For a copy of this form, contact the Service Point of Contact identified in the Agency Contacts section below.

Initial Program Officer review for minimum programmatic requirements: After submission, each proposal will be reviewed by the relevant Program Officer to ensure that the proposal meets minimum programmatic requirements before advancing to the merit review. The minimum programmatic requirements are listed in Section *E1. Criteria*. The Program Officer will share with the merit review panel any proposals that did not meet minimum programmatic requirements and the reasons why, and the panel will have an opportunity to discuss.

Merit review to evaluate and select proposals for funding: Applications that meet minimum programmatic requirements will then be reviewed by the approved merit review panel with specific subject area and/or regional expertise. The Service may also solicit technical advice from qualified U.S. Government experts to provide additional information during the panel review and/or discuss your proposal with known past and present partners who are relevant technical experts to verify project feasibility and to encourage coordination and collaboration among projects on the ground.

After reading proposals, reviewers will individually assign a 1-3 score to each application, based on the degree to which the application meets the criteria described in Section *E1. Criteria*. The scoring system is as follows:

- Category 1: Excellent, highest priority to fund: Excellent proposal with no issues or minor revisions needed. Important, critical, compelling, high-priority project and proposal meets all program requirements. Minor revisions are allowed before funding is finalized.
- Category 2: Acceptable, lower priority to fund: Acceptable to fund it additional funds become available. Proposal meets program requirements but is not the highest conservation priority. Concerns and conditions for the proposal should be described in detail by the reviewers.
- Category 3: Do not fund. Reject proposal. Project does not address a priority or is unlikely to achieve the desired impact, and/or proposal has other fundamental issues or problems that make it unsuitable for this program.

Each review panel submits their individual scores to the panel chair prior to the review. The panel chair will organize the scores to identify trends and areas of alignment among the

reviewers. These trends and areas of alignment may be used to facilitate the panel discussion (i.e., the highest ranked proposals may get discussed first). During the review, the panel will briefly discuss each proposal and agree on a consensus score using the same 1-3 scoring system above. The panel recorder will document any pertinent discussion items that demonstrate how a panel reached consensus to provide sufficient support for the consensus score. Ultimately, it is the consensus score of the review panel that will determine whether the proposal is recommended for award.

Co-design with Service for final proposal development: Following review, the highest ranked project will be requested to work with the Service on the co-development of the final proposal. Applicants whose project is recommended for funding may be asked to demonstrate financial capabilities to manage Federal funds in accordance with standards set in 2 CFR 200.302 Financial management.

Communication of funding decisions: Once proposals have been selected and approved for funding, the Program Officer will reach out to applicants by email or via GrantSolutions to inform the applicant whether the proposal is recommended and approved for funding. Successful applicants will receive a notice as described below in *F1. Federal Award Notice*. If the proposal was not recommended for funding, the applicant can request feedback (via the Program Officer) from the merit review panel. Please note that while the time that it takes to review the proposals and communicate decisions is dependent on the number of proposals received, unsuccessful applicants will receive notice within 180 days, as indicated below.

E3. CFR – Regulatory Information

See the Service's General Award Terms and Conditions for the general administrative and national policy requirements applicable to Service awards. The Service will communicate any other program- or project-specific special terms and conditions to recipients in their notices of award.

E4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Awards under this program are expected to be announced before June 30, 2024.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

F1. Federal Award Notices

F2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

See the DOI Standard Terms and Conditions for the administrative and national policy requirements applicable to DOI awards.

See the Service's General Award Terms and Conditions for the general administrative and national policy requirements applicable to Service awards.

Buy America Provision for Infrastructure: Required Use of American Iron, Steel, Manufactured Products, and Construction Materials.
As required by Section 70914 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58), on or after May 14, 2022, none of the funds under a federal award that are part of a Federal financial assistance program for infrastructure may be obligated for a project unless all the iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States, unless subject to an approved waiver. Recipients conducting infrastructure projects under the award must include related requirements all subawards, including all contracts and purchase orders for infrastructure work or products under this program. For the full text term applicable to infrastructure and related waiver request standards and procedures, see the Service's General Award Terms and Conditions.

Special Terms and Conditions
Applications awarded under this announcement will be funded through a Participating Agency Program Agreement between the Service and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation (DDI). The Activity Title of the Agreement is Critical Capacity Partnership signed on August 17, 2021.
Please note that recipients are subject to the special terms and conditions outlined below:

1. Special Reporting and Information - Per the PAPA, the Service will contact the recipient to obtain the following information:
    a. USAID Standard Indicator Reporting - Recipients must report on up to eight USAID standard indicators, as applicable to each award, annually on or before September 30. The Service will provide the Performance Indicator Reference Sheet (PIRS) describing the indicators, including acceptable measurement methods and disaggregation. Results during each U.S. federal fiscal year (October 1 through September 30) are aggregated with results of similar partnerships to better communicate the scale and impact of FWS-managed and Agency-wide USAID conservation programs. Standard indicators are not a substitute for activity-specific measures useful for adaptive management and learning.
    b. Eliminate, Neutralize and Disrupt (END) Wildlife Trafficking Act Reporting - USAID and the Service are key members of the U.S. Task Force on Wildlife Trafficking, responsible for implementation of the END Wildlife Trafficking Act. Reporting on indicators related to wildlife trafficking response or status in END Act Focus Countries may be requested.

2. Special Provisions – Co-branding and Co-marking
    a. All projects, activities, public communications, and commodities funded partially or fully by USAID are subject to the Service and USAID co-branding and co-marking standards and requirements. The use of the Service and USAID names and the reproduction of the logos on any garment, piece of equipment, commemorative item or other object, or within a publication, media event, or in conjunction with an event or other activity, when the use is essentially a public service and will contribute to the educational and conservation program must

request and receive approval from the Service for co-branding and co-marking. To obtain the necessary approval, a written email request to the Service program is required. The email request should include entity's name, address, full description of item/s to carry the logos, how the item or name will be used, presented and/or distributed. If the request is approved by the Service, the recipient must follow USAID's branding and marking guidelines available at https://www.usaid.gov/branding and follow the Service's instructions for use of the Service logo.

3. Data and Information Products
    a. 2 CFR 200.315 applies to all data and information products generated with federal financial assistance. Data and information products under this award should generally be publicly available and actively shared with appropriate international, national, and regional platforms and networks, in order to maximize their conservation and other development value. Data or information products that are law- enforcement-sensitive, that could put individual people, places or wildlife at risk, or that only serve time-limited project management purposes should not be made public or otherwise shared with those lacking a need to know.

4. Special Provisions – Compliance with USAID Policy Guidance
    a. USAID 2020 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy: https://www.usaid.gov/policy/gender-equality-womens-empowerment. It is expected that activities carried out under this award do not disadvantage women and give consideration to how to address disadvantages women often face in developing countries. Progress reporting and monitoring and evaluation exercises must include sex-disaggregated data for all people-level indicators. The Service may, as it deems warranted, conduct gender analyses to inform the development, implementation, and adaptation of activities under this award. The Service will inform the recipient of any such gender analyses relevant to the award, as well as expectations for incorporating the analyses' recommendations into the activity.
    b. USAID Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
    If it is determined by the Service that Indigenous Peoples may be stakeholders to an activity, the recipient should comply with USAID's Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, April 2020: https://www.usaid.gov/policy/indigenous-peoples. The recipient should apply principles related to analysis, engagement, safeguards, and partnership in order to respect and strengthen Indigenous Peoples' rights and development.

5. Special Provisions – Environmental Regulations
    a. USAID environmental regulations codified in Federal Regulations (22 CFR 216) and in USAID's ADS Chapters 201 and 204 (https://www.usaid.gov/about-us/agency-policy/series-200), should be followed in order to ensure environmental and social safeguards are in place while executing the Program. An Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP) is required and has been completed, reviewed, and approved. The EMMP reflects environmental and social risks identified in the USAID/DDI Initial Environmental Examination (IEE),

including a Climate Risk Assessment and social safeguards for work related to protected areas. Resources for understanding and applying protected area social safeguards are available at https://biodiversitylinks.org/library/key-resources#parks. If environmental and social risks identified in the IEE are applicable and the approved EMMP identifies mitigation actions, an Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Report (EMMR) on the application of the EMMP must be submitted concurrent with project reporting. The Service will provide an EMMR reporting template if applicable.

6. Special Provisions - Support to Law Enforcement
    a. This award may fund conservation efforts authorized under the Foreign Assistance Act that require working with or providing direct support to entities meeting the definition of "foreign security force," which may include law enforcement personnel, park rangers, police, or customs officials. However, the Leahy Law prohibits assistance to security forces known to have committed a gross violation of human rights. To apply the Leahy Law, the U. S. Department of State screens individuals and units intended to receive assistance before the commencement of any support. All forms of support to a foreign security force, including provision of training, workshop participation, technical assistance, and direct purchase of material or equipment, are subject to vetting for any record of human rights violations (i.e., "Leahy vetting").
    b. Leahy vetting must be completed in advance of assistance being delivered. The Service will provide the necessary form to the recipient; the form should be completed and returned to the Service at least 30 business days before the applicable training or assistance activity will take place. The recipient must encrypt the form before emailing it to protect Personally Identifiable Information (PII). Individuals or units that have passed this screening are eligible to receive assistance for up to one year before being vetted again.
    c. Any anticipated support for law enforcement not previously identified in the application must first be approved by the Service as part of a scope of work change prior to implementation of such support under this award.

7. Special Provisions - Investment Promotion
    a. No funds or other support provided under this award may be used in a project or activity reasonably likely to involve the relocation or expansion outside of the United States of an enterprise located in the United States if non-U.S. production in such relocation or expansion replaces some or all of the production of, and reduces the number of employees at, said enterprise in the United States.
    b. No funds or other support provided under this award may be used in a project or activity, the purpose of which is the establishment or development in a foreign county of any export processing zone or designated area where the labor, environmental, tax tariff, and safety laws of the country would not apply, without prior written approval of USAID. The recipient must contact the Service to obtain USAID approval.
    c. No funds or other support provided under this award may be used in an activity that contributes to the violation of internationally recognized rights of workers in

the cooperating country, including those in any designated zone or area in that country.

8. Special Provisions - Eligible Countries
    a. This award is issued with funds appropriated under the Foreign Assistance Act and such funds will only be expended for assistance to countries eligible for assistance under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, or under acts appropriating funds for foreign assistance.

9. Special Provisions – Country-level Coordination
    a. The Service has obtained concurrence from the relevant USAID Mission(s) where the award will be implemented. Any required or encouraged specific conditions related to in-country coordination with the relevant USAID Mission(s) that go beyond routine coordination and information sharing are included in the special conditions section of this award.

10. Special Provision – Source and Commodities
    a. In accordance with 22 CFR Part 228 and USAID ADS Chapter 310 and 312, suppliers of commodities and services financed under this award are authorized from country code 935. Country code 935 is defined as the United States, the Cooperating Country, and developing countries other than advanced developing nations, and excluding prohibited sources. A list of these countries is available at ADS 310 (https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/310)
    b. If the Service approved the recipient's purchase of a motor vehicle under this award, the recipient is authorized to purchase or lease a vehicle manufactured outside the United States, as the requirement in 22 CFR 228.19(b) has been waived.
    c. The Service may authorize the source and nationality of a procurement under this award in a country other than as specified in this section, only if:
        i. The procurement is of commodities or services of a type that is not produced in and available for purchase in any country authorized under this award; or
        ii. The Service determines in writing on a case-by-case basis that procurement in such other country is necessary (a) to meet unforeseen circumstances, such as emergency situations, or (b) to promote efficiency in the use of U.S. foreign assistance resources, including to avoid impairment of foreign assistance objectives.
        iii. The authorization for procurement under this paragraph must be in writing and must set forth the basis for the authorization. The recipient must seek written authorization from the Service before making such purchases.

11. Special Provisions – Other Agreements
    a. In each Cooperating Country in which a framework economic assistance bilateral agreement governing privileges, immunities, and tax exemptions of USAID-financed personnel, entities, and commodities is not in effect, the Service, with the assistance of USAID and, if necessary, the United States Embassy in the

Cooperating Country, will seek to obtain for its personnel, contractors, and recipients as well as for any commodities financed under this Agreement, exemptions from taxes, duties, and fees that may be imposed by the Cooperating Country with respect to activities or transactions financed under this Agreement.

b. Funds provided by the Service to the recipient for this award must only be used for the purposes stated in this award. If such assistance is no longer needed for such purpose, the recipient must immediately notify the Service so the Service may determine, in coordination with USAID, if the funds may be used for other purposes.

12. Special Provisions – Commerce and Trade

a. No funds or other support provided under this Agreement may be used for any testing or breeding feasibility study, variety improvement or introduction, publication, conference, or training in connection with the growth or production in a foreign country of an agricultural commodity for export which would compete with a similar commodity grown or produced in the United States: provided that this shall not prohibit (a) activities designed to increase food security in developing countries where such activities will not have a significant impact in the export of agricultural commodities of the United States; or (b) research activities intended primarily to benefit United States producers.

b. No funds or other support provided under this Agreement may be used to (a). Procure directly feasibility studies or pre-feasibility studies for, or project profiles of potential investment in, the manufacture, for export to the United States or to third country markets in direct competition with United States exports, of import-sensitive articles as defined by 19 U.S.C. 2463 (b) (1) (A) and (E)); or (b). Assist directly in the establishment of facilities specifically designed for the manufacture, for export to the United States or to third-country markets in direct competition with United States exports, of import-sensitive articles as defined by 19 U.S.C. 2463 (b) (1) (A) and (E)).

13. Special Provisions – Visa Compliance for Exchange Visitors

a. Any activities financed under this award that include the travel of foreign nationals to the United States must comply with USAID ADS 252.

14. Special Provisions – Audits

a. This award is subject to audit and inspection by authorized U.S. Government officials. For awards to non-U.S. nongovernmental organizations, if the recipient receives $750,000 or more per year in Service awards in their fiscal year, the recipient agrees that it will have an independent financial audit of the funds provided under such awards. The financial audit of the funds disbursed to the recipient will determine whether the receipt and expenditure of the funds provided under the grant are in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and whether the recipient has complied with the terms of the Agreement. An audit must be conducted for each fiscal year of the recipient. The audits must usually be performed annually, but not less frequently than every two years. The audits must be performed in accordance with generally accepted government auditing

standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States (https://www.gao.gov/yellowbook). Non-U.S., nongovernmental organizations receiving less than $750,000 per year are exempt from the financial audit requirements but are subject to the requirement to make records available upon request for review by authorized U.S. Government officials. The results of such audits must be submitted to the Service Program Officer identified in the Notice of Award.

15. Special Provisions – Books and Records
    a. The recipient must maintain books and records related to the award in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles as formally prescribed by the United States, the Cooperating country, or the International Accounting Standards Committee (an affiliate of the International Federation of Accountants). Such books and records of the recipient for this award may be audited by the Service, USAID, or other authorized U.S. Government officials for a period of three (3) years from the expiration of the award.

16. Special Provisions – Section 487 (Drug Trafficking and Other Offenses)
    a. No assistance may be provided under this award to or through any individual or entity where the U.S. Government has reason to believe that the individual, the entity or a "key individual" of the entity is or has been involved in "drug trafficking activities" (including "money laundering") (all quoted terms in this clause having the meanings given them in Section 487 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended and USAID ADS Chapter 206). The Service reserves the right to terminate this award or take other appropriate measures if the recipient or a key individual of the recipient is found to have been convicted of a narcotic offense or to have been engaged in drug trafficking as defined in 22 CFR Part 140.

Data Availability

Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), 2 CFR §1402.315:

a. All data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, valuation products or other scientific assessments in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, graphic, cartographic, narrative, or audiovisual, resulting from a financial assistance agreement is available for use by the Department of the Interior, including being available in a manner that is sufficient for independent verification.

b. The Federal Government has the right to:

    1. Obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, produced under a Federal award; and

    2. Authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, for Federal purposes, including to allow for meaningful third-party evaluation.

F3. Reporting

Financial Reports

All recipients must use the SF-425, Federal Financial Report form for financial reporting. At a minimum, all recipients must submit a **final** financial report. Final reports are due no later than 120 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award. The only exception to the interim financial reporting requirement is if the recipient is required to use the SF 270/271 to request payment and requests payment at least once annually through the entire award period of performance. We will describe all financial reporting requirements in the Notice of Award.

Non-Construction Performance Reports

Performance reports must contain a comparison of actual accomplishments with the established goals and objectives of the award; a description of reasons why established goals was not met, if appropriate; and any other pertinent information relevant to the project results. **Final** reports are due no later than 120 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim performance** reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award.

Construction Performance Reports

For construction awards, onsite technical inspections and certified percentage of completion data may be relied on to monitor progress for construction. Additional performance reports for construction activities may be required only when considered necessary. However, awards that include both construction and non-construction activities require performance reporting for the non-construction activities. See 2 CFR§200.329 for more information. The USFWS will describe all performance reporting requirements in the Notice of Award.

Significant Development Reports

Events may occur between the scheduled performance reporting dates which have significant impact upon the supported activity. In such cases, recipients are required to notify the Bureau in writing as soon as the recipient becomes aware of any problems, delays, or adverse conditions that will materially impair the ability to meet the objective of the Federal award. This disclosure must include a statement of any corrective action(s) taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation. The recipient should also notify the Service in writing of any favorable developments that enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned.

Real Property Reports

Recipients and subrecipients are required to submit status reports on the status of real property acquired under the award in which the Federal government retains an interest. The required frequency of these reports will depend on the anticipated length of the Federal interest period. The Bureau will include recipient-specific real property reporting requirements, including the required standard form or data elements, reporting frequency, and report due dates, in the Notice of Award when applicable.

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

Per 2 CFR §1402.112, non-Federal entities and their employees must take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements. In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by subrecipients, the provisions in 2 CFR §200.318 apply. Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with 2 CFR §200.112. Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Service Project Officer identified in their notice of award in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that reported by subrecipients. The Service will examine each disclosure to determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, work with the applicant or recipient to develop an appropriate resolution. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the government may be cause for termination of the award.

Other Mandatory Disclosures

The Non-Federal entity or applicant for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award. Non-Federal entities that receive a Federal award including the terms and conditions outlined in 2 CFR 200, Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters are required to report certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings to SAM. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies for noncompliance described in 2 CFR §200.339, including suspension or debarment.

Reporting Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance

If the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds $10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of this Federal award, then you as the recipient during that period of time must maintain the currency of information reported to the System for Award Management that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System) about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings in accordance with Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200.

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

G1. Program Technical Contact

For **programmatic technical assistance**, contact:

First and Last Name:
Christine Browne, Senior Social Scientist
Telephone:
+1 703-407-8023
Email: Christine_Browne@fws.gov

G2. Program Administration

For **program administration assistance**, contact:

First and Last Name:
Tatiana Hendrix, Program Officer

Telephone:
+1 571-581-7347

Email: Tatiana_Hendrix@fws.gov

G3. Application System Technical Support

For Grants.gov technical registration and submission, downloading forms and application packages, contact:
Grants.gov Customer Support
Numeric Input Field: 1-800-518-4726
Support@grants.gov

For GrantSolutions technical registration, submission, and other assistance contact:
GrantSolutions Customer Support
1-866-577-0771
Help@grantsolutions.gov

H. Other Information

Payments
Domestic recipients are required to register in and receive payment through the U.S. Treasury's Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP), unless approved for a waiver by the Service program. Foreign recipients receiving funds to a final destination bank outside the U.S. are required to receive payment through the U.S. Treasury's International Treasury Services (ITS) System. Foreign recipients receiving funds to a final destination bank in the U.S. are required to enter and maintain current banking details in their SAM.gov entity profile and receive payment through the Automated Clearing House network by electronic funds transfer (EFT). The Bureau will include recipient-specific instructions on how to request payment, including identification of any additional information required and where to submit payment requests, as applicable, in all Notices of Award.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT:

OMB Control Number: 1018-0100
Per the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA; 44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) collects information in accordance with program authorizing legislation to conduct a review and select projects for funding and, if awarded, to evaluate performance. Your response is required to obtain or retain a benefit. We may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Privacy Act Statement: This information collection is authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5701 et seq. The information provided will be used to administer all Service financial assistance programs and

activities including to: (1) determine eligibility under the authorizing legislation and applicable program regulations; (2) determine allowability of major cost items under the Cost Principles at 2 CFR 200; (3) select those projects that will provide the highest return on the Federal investment; and (4) assist in compliance with laws, as applicable, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970. This information may be shared in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 and the routine uses listed in INTERIOR/DOI-89, Grants and Cooperative Agreements: FBMS - 73 FR 43775 (July 28, 2008). Furnishing this information is voluntary; however, failure to provide all requested information may prevent the Service from awarding funds.

Estimated Burden Statement: We estimate that it will take you on average about 40 hours to complete an initial application, about 3 hours to revise the terms of an award, and about 8 hours per report to prepare and submit financial and performance reports, including time to maintain records and gather information. Actual times for these activities will vary depending on program-specific requirements. Direct comments regarding the burden estimates or any other aspect of the specific forms to the Service Information Clearance Officer, USFWS, U.S. Department of the Interior, 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: PRB (JAO/3W), Falls Church, VA 22041-3803, or by email to Info_Coll@fws.gov.