

ASHA FY22 RFA (720DD122RFA00002)

Questions & Answers

Posted 04/30/2022

Organization	Question	Answer
1	On page 30 of the March 25,2022 Request for Applications Section E 2 a mentions Phase 1 Merit Review Criteria 1 and 1b: - Does Phase 1 Merit Review Criteria 1 and 1b correspond to Annex 1a and Annex 1b? - What is the purpose of Annex 1b?	- Phase 1 Merit Review Criteria 1 and 1b do not correspond to Annex 1a and Annex 1b. All applicants are required to respond to Phase 1 Merit Review Criterion 1. Only eligible applicants who wish to be evaluated for the Middle East Set-Aside are required to respond to Merit Review Criteria 1b. - If an organization is invited to submit a Phase 2 application, they may be asked to submit Annex 1b to respond to requests for clarification from the Selection Committee.
2	“Strategic impact of the OSI as tracked through past donor-funded project(s) in at least the last three calendar years (2019, 2020, and 2021).” Can this include grants from ASHA or other donor funds in years before 2019 that have had a major public diplomacy impact?	Yes, this can include examples of strategic impacts from before 2019 <u>in addition to</u> examples from the last three calendar years. In all cases, examples from the last three calendar years (2019, 2020, and 2021) must be included.
	“Provide current data for at least the past twelve (12) months of results using impact indicators used by the organization.” By impact indicators, do you mean AMEP indicators or general indicators tracked by the OSI?	“Impact indicators” refers to indicators used by the organization. (If an organization has not yet received a USAID award, they may never have used “AMEP” indicators, as such.)
3	The RFA indicates that we are to submit the Phase 1 application using the form in Annex 1. There are TWO Phase 1 forms- A and B. Are we to submit both forms? If so, it is unclear what information is needed in Annex B, how is that different from the required information on diplomacy on Annex 1?	To submit a Phase 1 application, all applicants are required to submit Annex 1a. If an organization is invited to submit a Phase 2 application, they may be asked to submit Annex 1b to respond to requests for clarification from the Selection Committee.
	It appears that there are no character limits on the PDF form Annex 1a to questions 13 and 14. Is that correct or should there be a space limit for these questions? In the past the forms had character limits.	Thank you for pointing that out. We have updated the Annexes to incorporate the character limits.

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4	We are inquiring regarding the OSI and USO relationship and to clarify conflict of interest. USO is [USO Name] a [United States] nonprofit 501(c)(3) founded by [Founder Names]. OSI is [OSI Name] a [non-US] for-profit corporation with Principal shareholders [Founder Names]. [OSI Name] has holding in land reserved for a boarding school to be used for ASHA initiative. Both [Founder Names] are US Citizens and have 2 for-profit businesses in [United States]. Is this a conflict of interest? Are we allowed to proceed with this initiative, or do we need to partner with an OSI entity that does not involve the same individuals?	The USO and OSI may be the same entity. Please see Section C: Eligibility Information for the Pre-Award Terms, specifically the Conflict of Interest Pre-Award Term. The full text for the Pre-Award Terms is found in Section G: Additional Information Required Subsequent to Application.
5	OSIs must be founded or sponsored by U.S. citizens. Further, each USO must have a continuing and successful supportive formal relationship with its partner OSI that has lasted at least two (2) years prior to the date of application. "Sponsored" means a continuing relationship that MUST include significant financial support from the USO; and may also include technical support, joint ventures, exchange programs, volunteer placement programs, faculty exchanges, fundraising or other arrangements and may include in-kind contributions. Partnerships and mutual collaborations alone are insufficient. • What constitutes "significant financial support" from the USO to the OSI? • • What constitutes a "supportive formal relationship"?	• "Significant financial support" is that which shows the USO is invested in the success of the OSI, and it allows the USO to know the financial condition of the OSI. The flow of finances should be USO to OSI, not an exchange of funds nor one in which the OSI is transferring funds to the USO. • A "supportive formal relationship" is one that is established through a legal, binding agreement. Examples might include Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) that allow for staff / faculty exchanges.
6	Re Past Impact Statement: "Describe...how the Applicant tracks its progress...with respect to recognition by local communities and the local public at large." What is meant by "the Applicant" (USO or OSI)? Which "local communities" and "local public at large" – in the US or the host country?	The "Applicant" is the USO. "Local communities" and "local public at large" refer to the host country, where impact is being made through the OSI's work.

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7	The RFA, Page 16, section 4. Application Submission Procedures notes this: "The Phase 1 Technical Applications must submit one document labeled according to Annex 1." The RFA, Page 14, section 3. General Format and Content of Application notes this: "Use of the provided Annexes is mandatory." There are two annexes for Phase I: "ANNEX 1a - PHASE 1 App for FY22 RFA.pdf" and "ANNEX 1b - PHASE 1 Clarification for FY22 RFA.pdf" Is it correct that we only send Annex 1a?	Yes, to submit a Phase 1 application, all applicants are required to submit Annex 1a. If an organization is invited to submit a Phase 2 application, they may be asked to submit Annex 1b to respond to requests for clarification from the Selection Committee.
8	Does everyone need to prepare the ANNEX 1b – PHASE 1 TECHNICAL APPLICATION "CLARIFICATION" TEMPLATE? Under what circumstances should it be completed? Are Pre-award costs allowable? If yes, how far ahead? If yes, what portion may be spent as pre-award costs?	If an organization is invited to submit a Phase 2 application, they may be asked to submit Annex 1b to respond to requests for clarification from the Selection Committee. Please do not submit Annex 1b with your Phase 1 application. Per the RFA, "USAID will not allow the reimbursement of pre-award costs, as defined in 2 CFR 200.458, under this award without the explicit written approval of the Agreement Officer." If successful in receiving an award, you may present a reimbursement request with strong justification to the Agreement Officer. However, approval of these requests is rare. Please note that award recipients need to receive a number of approvals from the AOR, engineers, and the environmental officer before implementing activities/expending funds. No funds will be reimbursed to unsuccessful award applicants.

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	Is a mechanical system (generation system) for new construction considered Commodity or Construction?	Installation of a mechanical or electrical component is considered construction if it requires an engineering design to add it to the overall system (i.e., not just a simple one-for-one replacement), or if it requires physical changes to the building systems (structural, civil, MEP, etc.) for its installation.
	Are there any special restrictions on acquisition of medical devices?	There are no special restrictions on the procurement of medical devices in particular. However, procurement of any commodities must adhere to the guidelines in 2 CFR 200.317-327 and ADS 310 and 312. Procurement of equipment (as defined in 2 CFR 200.1) also requires approval by the Agreement Officer. If USAID has any issues with the items being procured, you will be notified.
	In planning our on-campus student health and wellness center we will purchase medical equipment. Is it allowable to have a 3rd party, who will be managing this medical clinic, use this equipment?	The USO/OSI may determine who is allowed to use the equipment. The USO should have a formal subagreement in place with the OSI, who may determine further arrangements for managing equipment. Note: all provisions of the award agreement should "flow down," i.e., be incorporated into subaward agreements.
	Are solar panels allowable if the host country government is in charge of regulating the utility and power usage?	Yes.
9	We would like you to clarify if we are eligible to apply for the grant. We have had two U.S. University faculty members (from [US Universities]) who have been serving as Advisory Council Members and supporting the development of [OSI Name]'s Strategic Institutional Development Plan. They have contributed their time and efforts to developing the mission, vision, and strategic initiatives for faculty and curriculum development for the past 2 years. Can this contribution be counted as USO funding or sponsorship?	As per the RFA, OSIs must be founded or sponsored by U.S. citizens. Further, each USO must have a continuing and successful supportive formal relationship with its partner OSI that has lasted at least two (2) years prior to the date of application. "Sponsored" means a continuing relationship that MUST include significant financial support from the USO; and may also include technical support, joint ventures, exchange programs, volunteer placement programs, faculty exchanges, fundraising or other arrangements and may include in-kind contributions. Partnerships and mutual collaborations alone are insufficient. Applicants must decide whether they feel they can make a compelling argument for fulfilling these requirements.

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10	Is it important that the total activity cost in Phase 1 match the total activity cost ultimately put forward in Phase 2 (if invited)?	ASHA will allow for moderate cost changes to allow for an increase in costs due to issues like COVID or other major events. You must note the funding request increase and provide justification for the increase.
	Confirming the "Annex 1b Phase 1 Clarification" is only required during Phase 2 for those who are asked to provide it.	Correct. If an organization is invited to submit a Phase 2 application, they may be asked to submit Annex 1b to respond to requests for clarification from the Selection Committee.
12	1. As indicated on page 32 of the RFA, the 'Past Project Impact' statement should: "Address how the partnership with the USO has strengthened the OSI as an institution and positioned it to advance USG public diplomacy objectives," and should "Describe how the USO Applicant has fostered (for at least the past 10 years) and continues to foster a strong commitment by the OSI to fundamental American values and how the Applicant tracks its progress in this regard with respect to recognition by local communities and the local public at large". a. If the USO and OSI are the same legal entity, how should this information be expressed? Can you provide an example of the same legal entity USO and OSI in this context? b. Would it be insufficient to describe how the OSI in particular is fostering fundamental American values and tracking its progress?	a. If the USO and the OSI are the same entity, the applicant must provide proof with the Phase 2 Technical Application (not the Phase 1 application) that it is registered as a legal entity in the U.S. and that it is authorized to operate in the foreign country. The following types of documentation would be acceptable proof: 1) Letter of accreditation, 2) written statement from the Government-on-Government letterhead acknowledging the entity, or 3) the entity's documentation showing a government stamp. For OSIs operating in contexts where <u>submission of proof is not possible</u>, please provide a separate explanation in the form provided for the Phase 2 application. b. Describing how the OSI is fostering fundamental American values and tracking its progress can be sufficient as long as the OSI addresses what they will be doing in the future in addition to what they have done in the past. The burden to ensure these values are actually being fostered is the responsibility of the Applicant/the USO.
13	Can you provide additional guidance or examples of how to go about collecting data on audience awareness of American best practices if we are operating in an environment/country where open polling of participants isn't necessarily feasible?	There are many international organizations that provide "attitudes" within a country context as well as attitudes to the US (e.g., hostile or friendly). This can be used if polling is too dangerous.

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	Some areas of the world aren't receptive to this kind of data collection, and overtly stating that something is an American best practice could potentially damage the sensitive partnership we have with our OSI. It could even backfire and undermine positive effects that come from more indirect and implicit modes of operating. The impact of much that we do and the implicit association of much of it with "Americanness" are real and sustained over time but flagging it on an operational level can work at cross-purposes. Do our outreach efforts need to specifically state that something is an American best practice, or can we present and measure these best practices from the outset as "shared"? Any additional guidance or advice you can provide on navigating this delicate matter would be appreciated.	
14	Will you allow organizations to submit Phase 1 applications while their IRS 1023 Form, Application for Recognition of Exemption under 501(c)(3) is pending? We are a brand new not-for-profit organization called [USO Name] and we would love the opportunity to submit our project ideas on behalf of [OSI Name]. However, our application is pending approval. Will ASHA allow us to submit a concept paper about the need for access to healthcare in [non-US location]?	Per the RFA, there must be an established relationship (2 years minimum) between the USO and OSI with a proven track record. A "brand new not-for-profit" would, therefore, not be eligible.

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