Official Q&A for Grants.gov Posting

(NOFO DOS-SAU-2603-PD, UNITE)

Note: Questions 1-8 were answered previously. You can view or download them on Grants.gov under the "Related Documents" tab.

Q9: The NOFO indicates Embassy-funded technical-package support may be up to $25,000 per partnership, which for four to five teams could represent $100,000–$125,000 of the $150,000 total. What portion of the award is available for prime recipient functions (program management, partner selection, monitoring, coordination, toolkit development), or is that allocation left to applicants?

A9: The allocation is left to applicants to propose. The NOFO establishes a maximum of $25,000 in Embassy-funded technical-package support per partnership and a total available award of $150,000. It does not prescribe a fixed split between partnership-level support and prime-recipient management costs.

Applicants should propose an allocation they can justify as reasonable and sufficient to execute all four mandatory phases, including prime-recipient responsibilities for mobilization, partner selection, onboarding, monitoring, and market-entry toolkit production. Note that $25,000 per partnership is a ceiling, not a required amount, applicants may propose lower per-team technical-package amounts if that produces a more executable overall design.

As required, budgets must present complete scenarios for both four and five active partnerships. Budgets are scored on cost-effectiveness and scalability across both scenarios (15 points)

Indirect costs, either a NICRA rate or the 15% de minimis rate on Modified Total Direct Costs (2 CFR § 200.1), should be included within the $150,000.

Q10: Is the prime recipient expected only to verify and audit matching commitments that project teams bring forward, or also to identify and cultivate matching sources on the teams' behalf?

A10: The prime recipient's responsibility is to require, verify, and document the match, not to source it. Matching commitments are the responsibility of the participating project team institutions.

The NOFO assigns the prime recipient responsibility for "formalizing and verifying the 1:1 matching commitment from each participating project team institution" during Phase 2, and requires that cost-share plans be part of what teams submit during the Phase 1 competitive selection process. The match is therefore a condition of team selection, demonstrated by applicant teams and confirmed by the prime.

Applicants should design the sub-award competition so that documented match commitments are an eligibility or scoring requirement at the team-application stage. Applicants may propose technical assistance to help teams structure or document their match, but should not assume responsibility for generating matching revenue.

Under 2 CFR § 200.306(b), accepted cost share, including third-party in-kind contributions, must be verifiable in the recipient's or subrecipient's records, not counted toward any other Federal award, necessary and reasonable, and allowable under 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart E. As a pass-through entity, the prime must flow these requirements down and secure records access sufficient to verify them (2 CFR §§ 200.332(b), (e)). Proposals should describe the verification methodology and documentation standards to be applied.

Q11: The NOFO describes the 1:1 match as "$25,000 per partnership" in Objective 4 and as "$25,000 equivalent per project team institution" in the Performance Monitoring section. Since each team has three institutions, which applies? And may a single partner satisfy the full team match?

A11: What the $25,000 and $100,000–$125,000 figures refer to. The "$25,000 per partnership" and the "$100,000 to $125,000 in cumulative project

funding" figures in Objective 4 describe Embassy-funded technical package support, that is, up to $25,000 in Embassy support per project team, totaling $100,000 to $125,000 maximum in cumulative Embassy project funding across four to five teams. These figures establish the base amount against which the 1:1 match is measured. They do not describe the matching contributions themselves.

How the 1:1 match is applied. The match is applied at the institution level, as stated in the Performance Monitoring section. Each participating institution in a project team must demonstrate a minimum 1:1 matching commitment, measured against the amount of Embassy-funded support that team receives.

For clarity, where the Performance Monitoring section states "totaling $100,000 to $125,000 across the project," that figure likewise refers to the cumulative Embassy project funding serving as the matching base, not to a cap on aggregate institutional contributions. Applied at the institution level across four to five teams, total institutional matching commitments will exceed that figure. Applicants should budget and plan against the per-institution requirement described in this response.

May one partner satisfies the full team match? No. Consistent with Objective 4's purpose of demonstrating "genuine institutional commitment" from each partner type, every participating institution must contribute its own match. A single partner may not satisfy the matching obligation on behalf of the team.

Which institutions must match. Each institution within a project team that receives Embassy-funded technical package support must provide a 1:1 match against the support it receives. Applicants are responsible for proposing how the embassy-funded amount to support the project team is allocated among the participating institutions and for demonstrating the corresponding matching commitments in their cost-share plan. Where all three institutions receive support, all three must match.

Form of contribution. Contributions may be direct cash, in-kind support, or a combination. Eligible in-kind support includes, but is not limited to, dedicated faculty time, facility and lab access, specialized training resources, corporate

industry expertise, software licensing access, student/professional cohort management, and direct travel support.

Verification and documentation. Consistent with the NOFO's requirement for documented and verified matching commitments, all contributions counted toward the match must be verifiable in the records of the contributing institution and the prime recipient, necessary and reasonable to the project, allowable under 2 CFR 200 Subpart E, not counted toward any other Federal award, and valued and documented in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.306(d)-(j), for example, faculty time at the individual's regular rate of pay plus reasonable fringe benefits, and donated space at the fair rental value of comparable space. The prime recipient will formalize and verify these commitments during Phase 2 (Onboarding, Matchmaking, and Project Design). Applicants should describe their verification methodology in the Performance Monitoring Plan.

Accountability. The prime recipient is responsible to the Department for the cost-share commitments reflected in its approved budget, including contributions originating from project team partner institutions. Applicants should address how they will secure these commitments in writing and manage the risk of a partner under-delivering.

Note on the U.S. commercial or technical partner. Under this NOFO, for-profit entities may not receive sub-grants, subawards, or direct financial assistance, and may participate only as vendors providing commercial goods or professional services, or by contributing their own voluntary cost-share. A commercial partner's matching contribution therefore counts as a third-party contribution toward the prime recipient's overall cost-share commitment and may not be structured as a subaward.

Q12: Could you direct us to the current SF-424A form referenced in Section D?

A12: All required application forms. SF-424, SF-424A (Budget Information, Non-Construction), and SF-424B (Assurances, Non-Construction). are available on Grants.gov at https://www.grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/sf-

424-family. Note that SF-424B is required only for individuals, organizations exempt from SAM.gov registration, and organizations not required to fully register in SAM.gov.

Q13: The NOFO references 4-5 project seed awards/technical packages of up to $25,000 each. Should applicants include these partnership support funds within the SF-424A budget and budget narrative under the $150,000 cooperative agreement, or does the Embassy intend to provide a separate pool of funding for the project teams outside the recipient's award budget?

A13: All costs associated with the project teams, including the technical package support of up to $25,000 per project team, must be included within the applicant's proposed budget under the $150,000 cooperative agreement.

There is no separate pool of Embassy funding available to project teams outside the recipient's award. As stated in the NOFO, total available funding is $150,000 for one anticipated award, and the recipient is responsible for managing the full portfolio, including finalizing project team budgets and agreements.