



USAID/Lebanon

Annual Program Statement

Title: University Scholarship Assistance Program II (USAP-II)

APS NUMBER: 268-11-003

Issuance Date: December 23, 2010

Deadline for Questions: January 31, 2011, 4:00 p.m. Cairo local time.

First Initial Review of Concept Papers: February 28, 2011

Final Closing Date: December 31, 2011

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

This Annual Program Statement (APS) is the method by which USAID/Lebanon supports the Higher Education Scholarship Program conducted under the authority of the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act, as amended. Through this APS, USAID/Lebanon intends to support full scholarship assistance to economically disadvantaged public school students in Lebanon to attend universities registered with the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE). In addition to funding provided through this APS, the United States Government is also supporting student scholarships in Lebanon through the University Scholarship Assistance Program (USAP).

Eligible universities interested in receiving funding for programs and activities under the Higher Education Scholarship Program are invited to carefully read this APS in its entirety and to follow the grant application guidance in order to apply for funds. There is a two stage application process consisting of the submission of an initial concept paper and then – upon invitation by USAID – the submission of a full application. Initial concept papers and full applications must be submitted in English.

USAID plans to hold a general information session on the APS at USAID/Lebanon. All interested applicants are welcome to attend. The date for holding this session will be published on www.grants.gov.

The points of contact at the USAID/Egypt Mission:

Stanley Canton, Agreement Officer (scanton@usaid.gov), telephone 011-202-2522-6910

Abeer Rizk, Procurement Specialist (arizk@usaid.gov), telephone 011-202-2522-6884

Please submit questions, concept papers and applications to USAID/Egypt via **e-mail address:** scholarships@usaid.gov

This APS will be closed on **December 31, 2011**.

SECTION 2: ELIGIBILITY

A. Type and Nationality of Applicant

USAID/Lebanon is seeking innovative concept papers from qualified educational institutions or other institutions to provide scholarship assistance to meritorious and financially needy students to attend institutions of higher education in Lebanon.

Universities, Non-Governmental Organizations (both for-profit and non-profit), and other educational institutions are eligible to submit applications under this Annual Program Statement (APS) and may submit applications individually or in partnership with other institutions which comply with Government of Lebanon's legal requirements.

B. Legal Responsibilities

The proposed program must operate in compliance with applicable Lebanese law. Upon receiving a Cooperative Agreement, it will be specified in the Cooperative Agreement that it

is the sole responsibility of the Recipient to comply with local (Lebanese) law. The Cooperative Agreement will provide USAID/Lebanon with the right to terminate unilaterally the Cooperative Agreement in the event that a Recipient cannot carry out the agreed-upon program, or for any other reason.

C. Cost Share

Cost share refers to the resources an applicant contributes to the total cost of an agreement. It is the portion of project or program costs not borne by the Federal Government. Applicants are strongly encouraged to provide innovative approaches to cost sharing and to provide detailed explanations in their applications. In addition to USAID funds, applicants are encouraged to contribute resources from their own, private or local sources for the implementation of this program. Applicants are required to allocate U.S. Federal Government funding towards student scholarships and ancillary costs should be attributed to the cost share contribution. Illustrative examples for cost share include overhead, non-exempt taxes, fees, general and administrative costs or any other costs. Applicants should review 22 CFR 226.23 (http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2001/aprqrtr/pdf/22cfr226.23.pdf) in determining cost share contribution. Cost share will be considered as an element of cost effectiveness under USAID regulation 22 CFR 226 and of applicable USAID policy and procedure: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf>

Contributions can be either cash or in-kind and can include contributions from the NGO, local counterpart organizations and other donors (not other USG funding sources). Cost sharing contributions should be in accordance with OMB Circular A-110 - Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations which can be found at the following link <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a110/a110.html#23>. Information regarding the proposed cost share should be included in the SF 424 and the Budget as indicated on those documents. The cost sharing plan should be discussed in the Budget Notes to the extent necessary to determine its feasibility and realistic access to the sources and funds.

SECTION 3: FUNDING

USAID/Lebanon retains the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted in response to this APS.

Subject to the availability of funds, approximately \$18.4 million is expected to be available to support programs under this APS. USAID/Lebanon has identified FY 10 and FY 11 funds for this program. USAID/Lebanon anticipates awarding up to three new Cooperative Agreements through this APS.

Cooperative Agreements will cover a performance period ranging from four to five years based on the average of four years to complete one's undergraduate studies, in addition to one year of English language training if needed. Funds are expected to be available to support full five years scholarships including one year foreign Language (if needed) to students with high financial need under this project. The requested Cooperative Agreement amount and timeframe should be appropriate for and directly related to the activities proposed by the applicant.

SECTION 4: BACKGROUND

The Lebanese education system is roughly 50% private with a private education subsector that spans a wide range in terms of quality and cost. Overall, the quality of private education is higher than public education, with the gap decreasing in the secondary stage and then increasing tremendously at the higher education stage. This results in increased gaps between the more economically advantaged youth and their poorer counterparts who cannot afford quality private education. This situation is also reflected in significant differences in graduates' employment potential for more productive and profitable jobs.

Within this context, USAID/Lebanon's past and current scholarship assistance projects aim to address this gap and develop the potential of the economically disadvantaged to contribute to the overall economic and social development of Lebanon. USAID has recently awarded two grants to leading educational institutions in Lebanon to implement the University Scholarship Assistance Program (USAP). This APS constitutes a new funding opportunity for potential applicants who are interested in furthering USAID/Lebanon's objective of providing access to quality higher education for economically disadvantaged Lebanese students, and to increase their potential for employment for a more advanced country economy.

Applicants can find more information on current USAID programs at <http://www.usaid.gov.lb>.

SECTION 5: AREA OF INTEREST, PROGRAM OBJECTIVE AND APPROACH

A. Program Objective

The objective of the Higher Education Scholarship Program is to support academically skilled, of high financial need, Lebanese public school youth with the opportunity to gain a quality higher education in order to maximize their potential to support Lebanon's democratic and economic development. It has long been established that higher education is linked to increased economic potential and this program aims to expand the scope of this potential. This will be achieved by providing the opportunity for a cadre of promising students with financial need to access high quality undergraduate education in various fields who will contribute to breaking the cycle of poverty, developing a more functional democracy, and sustaining a more competitive, open economy in Lebanon. These youths will also be exposed to a campus environment that promotes tolerance, gender equality, social equality and critical thinking.

The universities that are targeted under this program are expected to be leaders in the educational field. This kind of university is determined by the following traits:

- Human Resource (high percentage of academic staff with PhD or equivalent)
- Infrastructure (extended modern facilities and library resources)
- Teaching (high percentage programs accredited by professional bodies, reasonable ratio of teachers to students)
- Research (amount of research grants received, post-doctoral research)
- Student body (high standards in admissions criteria, number of students employed after graduation)

Universities targeted for this program will also have areas of study in fields demanded by labor markets, such as in Engineering, Marketing, Business, Computer Science and others. In addition to academic development, targeted universities should have an ability to support

program scholars to gain leadership skills given the program goal to foster a new generation of young Lebanese who will be able to contribute to democratic and economic development in their chosen fields. A successful scholar will graduate with a combination of academic, leadership, and networking skills to allow them to better prepare and plan for the future.

At the end of this program, USAID expects that Lebanese students with high financial need coming from various geographical areas will have received full tuition scholarships and have completed their studies and earned their degrees in a timely manner. Targeted universities will need to determine their capacity to absorb USAP-II scholars and meet program demands and propose the appropriate number of students that can be supported at any given time.

B. Approach

In developing approaches to program activities under this APS, USAID strongly encourages applicants to consider the following practices:

1. Build on Prior Experience

USAID strongly encourages applications that build on ongoing and prior programs in relevant areas, incorporate lessons learned from similar activities, and address specific unmet needs. USAID also encourages the applicant to establish an institutional arrangement that will be responsible for managing the program distinct from normal student support practices.

2. Transparent Recruitment and Selection Processes

Students under this program must be selected based on financial need and merit. Other criteria such as potential for further leadership development, communication skills and community service will also be taken into consideration. USAID encourages concept papers that describe a transparent recruitment and criteria-based selection process that is transparent and competitive. The integrity of the program will not be compromised by a lack of understanding as to how any scholar was selected. Participating institutions will be required to demonstrate to USAID that selected students have high financial need and are graduates of public secondary schools.

Further, all scholars and their parents are required to be properly vetted through all USG regulatory requirements prior to a scholarship award being made. The applicant will present its strategy for vetting the selected students and their parents against publicly available databases and sources to ensure that the project benefits are not being provided, even inadvertently, to terrorists or their supporters, including people or organizations who are not specifically designated by the USG but who may nevertheless be linked to terrorist activities.

These sources include but are not limited to – the Terrorism Exclusion List (“TEL”) (<http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/fs/2002/15222.htm>), UN’s 1267 Committee List on Al- Qaida and the Taliban and Associated Individuals and Entities) (<http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/consolists.html>), the Specially Designated Nationals List which is administered by the Department of Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control, press reports, and NGO or international organization reporting.

Note: Dual nationality i.e. citizens who are holders of both the Lebanese and American citizenship are not eligible for this program.

3. Diversity Considerations

USAID encourages geographic, gender and confessional diversity in its programming. USAID strongly encourages concept papers to show how scholars from different geographic regions and confessions will be recruited. Gender balance in scholars is a requirement and concept papers must show how this will be attained. Ideally, scholars will be a representative group from across the country and from both urban and rural areas, with gender and confessional equity.

4. Comprehensive Scholarship Program

The selected students will be offered full scholarships for the entire period of their undergraduate studies at a university in Lebanon, assuming they maintain minimum grade requirements. It is expected that full scholarships will include all relevant expenses in addition to tuition, such as housing, books and stipends. It is important for the success of this program that scholars have an excellent academic experience, be well prepared to enter the university through a sound orientation program, receive ongoing support and opportunities to practice leadership outside of the classroom, and receive career development counseling maximizing their ability to take advantage of their scholarship experience once they have graduated.

USAID encourages concept papers that clearly outline the methodology and approach that the applicant will use to implement this scholarship program based on the above considerations.

5. English Language Training

Because the target group for this program is high financial need public school graduates with academic promise, potential scholars may need additional English language training prior to beginning an academic program. For this reason, USAID encourages applications that include plans for scholars to take advantage, as needed, of intensive English language training for up to one year prior to beginning their academic courses. Applicants should provide detail on how this would be provided, including initial screening, monitoring, final testing, and follow up.

6. Program Management

USAID strongly encourages applicants to provide a detailed description of how this program will be managed. Applicants are encouraged to think of full time staff who will be dedicated to this program. USAID should be aware of which staff member will be the point of contact at each phase of the program and for overall program management. Qualifications for each major position will be needed.

Communication strategies will be an important part of program success from recruitment processes through follow-on activities. USAID encourages applications that describe how smooth communication at each phase of the program will be ensured among potential applicants for scholarships, scholars themselves and various actors within the program, and between the program management and USAID.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

USAID is committed to improving monitoring and evaluation practices for scholarship programs in Lebanon. Applications should describe how the applicant intends to ensure the ability to monitor program activities including (but not limited to) the academic progress and results of scholars, effect of counseling and leadership services, graduation rates, post-graduation activities. Applicants are encouraged to include a performance management plan (PMP) as part of their concept paper that includes both process and output level indicators

reflective of a plan for monitoring, collecting, evaluating and reporting data which will be used to measure overall progress towards achieving the program goals.

8. Cost-Effective Strategies

Scholarship programs are expensive especially those that offer full scholarships. For this reason, USAID encourages applications that demonstrate innovative and cost-effective strategies for possible cost savings. USAID strongly encourages applicants to consider partnership, teaming or other arrangements that make best use of existing institutional capacity (for example in recruitment strategies). Approaches which link institutions in different geographic areas are particularly encouraged. Other potential areas for cost efficiency include housing strategies for scholars and paid internship opportunities.

SECTION 6: APPLICATION PROCESS

USAID will review applications using a **two-stage process**. Applicants must first submit a eight-page concept paper directly to USAID before submitting a full application. Concept papers must meet the identified needs of this solicitation.

Proposed programs should have an estimated value and performance period that is within the parameters described in APS Section 3 entitled Funding and the interest area described in Section 5. USAID/Egypt may opt to exclude from further consideration any submission which is not within these parameters. No program expenditures will be paid by USAID/Lebanon, except those covered in a Cooperative Agreement signed by the USAID Agreement Officer. USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications received.

- **Do not submit a full application unless requested by USAID. Only upon receipt of positive USAID feedback on the concept paper is the applicant requested to put together a full application for USAID consideration, using the criteria below.**

The first review of Concept Papers will be evaluated on **February 28, 2010** and at regular intervals as needed thereafter for up to 12 months. At any time after posting, USAID may determine that the needs outlined in the APS have been met, at which time the APS solicitation will be closed. Awards may be made at any time.

This program is authorized in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as amended). USAID awards to U.S. organizations will be administered in accordance with 22 CFR 226, OMB Circulars A-21 (for universities) or A-122 (for non-profit organizations), ADS 303 and USAID Standard Provisions for U.S. nongovernmental organizations. For non-U.S. organizations, USAID Standard Provisions for non-U.S. non-governmental organizations would apply.

In order to publish answers prior to the first review, questions related to this APS should be submitted in writing to scholarships@usaid.gov no later than **January 31, 2010, 4:00 p.m. Cairo local time**. Additional questions may be submitted after that date and USAID will respond to these additional questions at an appropriate time based on the number of questions and the timing of further reviews. Responses to general questions will be posted on <http://www.grants.gov>. All correspondence must include the relevant APS number and title.

A. Step One: Submit Concept Paper (not to exceed 8 pages in total)

Eligible organizations interested in applying for a Cooperative Agreement in response to this APS are invited to submit a concept paper and budget summary via e-mail to USAP@usaid.gov. In developing the submission, the applicant should carefully consider all information contained in this APS. The Application is to be submitted via internet email only with attachments (5MB limit) per email compatible with MS WORD, Excel, adobe acrobat in a MS Windows environment. There has been a problem with the receipt of *.zip files due to an Agency policy which blocks zip files at the gateway. Therefore, Offerors are discouraged from sending files in this format as we cannot guarantee their acceptance by the internet server. (Facsimile of the entire application is not authorized). It shall be typed on standard 8 1/2" x 11" paper (216mm by 297mm paper), single spaced, font Times New Roman, font size 10 with each page numbered consecutively. Graphics may be in a form and format of the offeror's choice with each page numbered consecutively. The Applications need to be submitted in MS Word/Excel and PDF format. Each page must be marked with the APS title and number.

For **Step One**, the applicant should submit the following:

1. Cover Page with full contact information including phone, e-mail and contact person (not to exceed 1 page).
2. Program Concept Paper including (not to exceed 4 pages):
 - a. Strategy - Explain the specific problem to be addressed, the expected goals to be achieved, how this program supports the area of interest in this APS, and a short description of the strategy to be used to achieve the proposed goals.
 - b. Beneficiary Population, Geographic Range of the Program, and Gender - Define the expected numbers and type of beneficiaries of this program. All concept papers should include a statement addressing any gender issues, such as how the program benefits or includes women or how the applicant proposes to address gender disparity.
 - c. Development Plan and Activity Description - Include a short description of the activities that will be undertaken to achieve the proposed objectives, and provide a general time line.
 - d. Expected Impact - Outline expected results and impacts and the mechanisms proposed to measure and monitor progress and achievement.

Note: If this section of the concept paper exceeds four pages, ONLY the first four pages will be considered when evaluating the concept paper.

3. Sample performance management plan (PMP) (not to exceed 1 page)

4. Concept Paper Budget Summary (not to exceed 1 page):

Provide a one-page budget summary which includes, at a minimum, the total funding requested from USAID and the cost share contribution (e.g. in cash, in-kind), if any, that may be contributed by the applicant from its own resources or other non-U.S. government sources. Budgets should be in US\$.

5. Technical/Administrative Capabilities in Proposed Work Area (not to exceed 1 page):

Describe your institutions's technical and administrative capabilities and past experience in conducting programs similar to the one proposed. Describe any partnership, consortium or coalition arrangements for the purposes of achieving the proposed program. List all contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving relevant (similar or related) programs conducted by the applicant (or consortium partners) over the past three years and include a brief statement of work performed. These other programs can be funded by any entity, public or private, and do not need to be USAID-funded programs.

Concept Paper Evaluation Factors

Concept papers will be evaluated based on the extent to which they convincingly describe how: 1) the applicant institution possesses the requisite capacity / capability to implement the activities efficiently and effectively; 2) the proposed program directly responds to the area of interest under this APS and meet a specific need; 3) the proposed activities will directly lead to the anticipated results and expected impacts; and 4) the proposed budget is realistic and consistent with the proposed activities and results.

B. Step Two: Full Application

If initial review by USAID/Lebanon indicates the concept paper merits further consideration for funding, USAID will request a full application. The full application must be in English. The full application should reflect full consideration of all the information provided in this APS. A full application consists of a Program Application and additional information described below. Please note that a request for a full application does not represent a USAID funding commitment.

1. Program Application (not to exceed 20 pages, excluding attachments) including:

To facilitate the review of the application, the applicant must organize the narrative sections of their technical applications in the same order as the Evaluation Criteria as follows:

- a. Table of Contents listing all page numbers and attachments.
- b. One paragraph Program Abstract (summary).
- c. Program Description/Technical Merit (see evaluation criteria): including detailed information on (i) the technical approach (including recruitment and selection process and support services for scholars) and estimated program timeline; ii) the proposed performance management and monitoring and evaluation plans and iii) any gender or diversity issues will be addressed.
- d. Management Capability and Past Performance (see evaluation criteria): including detailed information on i) the institution's effectiveness and any partnership arrangements for the purposes of achieving the program; ii) staffing plan and management approach; and iii) the institution's qualifications and past performance.
- e. Attachments should be titled (e.g. Attachment A), and can include the resumes of key personnel, letters of commitment of organizational partners or key personnel and past performance references. Attachments do not count towards the 20 page limit.

Note: If the full application exceeds twenty pages (excluding annexes) **ONLY** the first twenty pages will be considered when evaluating the application.

2. Full Application for Funding: A budget and an accompanying budget narrative that provides in detail the total costs for implementation of the program your institution is proposing. The budget shall be submitted using SF 424 and other certifications and

assurances; other information may be required by USAID according to its policies and procedures and circumstances pertaining to the specific application. The budget detail will be required for both the USAID-funded portion of the program and cost share portions, if any, of the program. If the applicant proposes expending more than \$300,000 of USAID funding during a single fiscal year of the applicant, the applicant must include funds within the budget to contract an audit. The average cost of an audit is approximately \$10,000.

Certifications

Pre-Award Certifications, Assurances and Other Statements of the Applicant/Recipient as stated in ADS 303.3.8 and are available on the following web-site <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf> are required for full application submissions and can be found below:

1. Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing in accordance with AAPD 04-14. (Please note that this certification requires your organization to ensure that recipients of subcontracts and grants are not listed as Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons by the U.S. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control.);
2. Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs;
3. Restrictions of Lobbying (See 22 CFR 227);
4. Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for Key Individuals (See ADS 206);
5. Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number.

Other submission requirements for applications submitted in response to this RFA consist of:

- Detailed/itemized budget with budget narrative for each budget object class category, including explanation of how costs were estimated, for both the requested USAID funding and proposed cost share amounts. Participant training should be budgeted in a separate line item.
- Similar budget detail with narrative is requested for organizational partners teaming with the prime applicant.
- Current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) negotiated between the applicant and a Federal agency (if available). If a NICRA is not available, the following is required: 1) Copies of the applicant's financial reports for the previous 3-year period, which have been audited by a certified public accountant or other auditor satisfactory to USAID; 2) Projected budget, cash flow and organizational chart; 3) A copy of the organization's accounting manual.

Full Application Evaluation Factors

The criteria presented below have been tailored to the requirements of this particular APS. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters which applicants should address in their applications and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated.

Technical applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Technical Merit (60 Points)

- a. **Technical Approach:** The extent to which the proposed technical approach can reasonably be expected to produce the intended results in a specific timeframe. In addition, this section of the application should indicate how the proposed activities will be tracked, measured and reported. This section should highlight the incorporation of any lessons learned from similar programs or activities and the degree to which the approaches under Section 5 Approach of this APS have been addressed.
- b. An effective and sound Monitoring performance plan in meeting the proposed project goals.
- c. **Gender and Diversity:** Applications should include a description of gender and diversity issues pertaining to the proposed program and how the applicant proposes to address these issues. The technical approach in the application should also include gender considerations with a focus on the participation and benefits to each gender group.
- d. Branding Strategy and Marking Plan (see section D.1 below)

2. **Management Capability (25 Points)**

Adequate and effective management approach as evidenced by:

- a management approach that demonstrates an understanding of management challenges and how they will be effectively addressed.
- a cost effective staffing plan that includes an organizational chart illustrating the proposed staffing pattern and a table which shows the level of effort or number of person months for each position proposed.
- Qualified key personnel (CVs of key personnel need to be submitted).
- The effective capability of the institution in implementing the project.
- Effective partnership arrangements, as needed, that can help in implementing the project.

3. **Past Performance: 15 points**

- (a) The applicant should provide an information sheet for all grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, or other programs that are similar to the program description in this application that have been performed by the applicant or by a member of the applicant's team over the past three years. For each program listed, please provide the following information:

- Award number;
- Agency or entity providing the funding;
- Description of the program including, but not limited to, a brief discussion of the complexity/diversity of activities;
- Primary location(s) of activities;
- Duration of the program;
- Skills/expertise required;
- Dollar value of the program;

- Contact information for two persons, including name, job title, mailing address, phone numbers and e-mail addresses.

(USAID recommends that you alert the contacts that their names have been submitted and that they are authorized to provide performance information concerning the listed awards if and when USAID requests it).

If extraordinary problems impacted any of the referenced programs, provide a short explanation and the corrective action taken in this section of the Technical Application.

(b) Performance information will be used for both the responsibility determination and best value decision. USAID may use performance information obtained from other than the sources identified by the applicant. USAID will utilize existing databases of past performance information and solicit additional information from the references provided by the applicant and from other sources if and when the Agreements Officer finds the existing databases to be insufficient for evaluating an applicant's performance.

(c) If the performance information contains negative information on which the applicant has not previously been given an opportunity to comment, USAID will provide the applicant an opportunity to comment on it prior to its consideration in the evaluation, and any applicant's comment will be considered with the negative performance information.

(d) USAID will initially determine the relevance of similar performance information as a predictor of probable performance under the subject award. USAID may give more weight to performance information that is considered more relevant and/or more current. The applicant's performance information determined to be relevant will be evaluated in accordance with the elements below:

- Quality of product or service, including consistency in meeting goals and targets;
- Timeliness of performance, including adherence to schedules and other time-sensitive project conditions, and effectiveness of home and field office management to make prompt decisions and ensure efficient completion of activities;
- Business relations, addressing the history of professional behavior and overall business-like concern for the interests of the customer, including coordination among team members and developing country partners, cooperative attitude in remedying problems, and timely completion of all administrative requirements;
- Customer satisfaction with performance, including end user or beneficiary wherever possible;
- Effectiveness of key personnel, including appropriateness of personnel for the job and prompt and satisfactory changes in personnel when problems with clients were identified; and
- Cost control, including forecasting costs as well as accuracy in financial reporting, ensuring that unnecessarily expensive technical assistance is not used when lower cost advisors are adequate, and pacing the expenditure of level of effort such that deliverables and outputs can be produced within budget.

Cost Evaluation:

The Cost Application will be evaluated for cost effectiveness and cost realism. Cost sharing contributions will be evaluated for cost realism. Applicants are encouraged to consider partnership arrangements that enhance the cost effectiveness of program implementation and provide other important benefits as well. A realistic commitment to cost share is generally viewed as enhancing the evaluated cost effectiveness of a program. **Please note that if cost share is included within a cooperative agreement, this will be specifically tracked by USAID during program implementation to ensure compliance.**

C. Step Three: Negotiation and Agreement of Cooperative Agreement

Application(s) which are deemed to offer the **best overall value** and meet USAID objectives will be selected for award. If USAID review of the full application (including a Program Application and Full Application for Funding) results in a recommendation for funding, then the organization and USAID/Lebanon will enter final discussions to ensure all pre-award requirements are met and significant cooperative agreement terms are negotiated and agreed. The exact details of this phase will vary according to the circumstances pertaining to each application; however, the following are common areas that require discussion and agreement prior to award:

1. Branding Strategy and Marking Plan

The Recipient will submit a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan that clearly outlines branding and marking issues associated with the program based on knowledge of the country. Refer to ADS 320, (<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/>) specifically 320.3.2.2 and 320.3.2.3 for more information. A helpful list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about branding and marking can also be found on the USAID website: http://www.usaid.gov/branding/marketing_faq.html

The recipient will comply with the requirements of the USAID “Graphic Standards Manual” available at www.usaid.gov/branding, or any successor branding policy.

The Branding Strategy and Marking Plan must be submitted and approved before awarding these cooperative agreements.

2. Payment terms
3. Procedures concerning administrative reporting and logistical requirements for the program including training components
4. Cost sharing terms, if /as applicable
5. USAID-desired involvement during the implementation of the award.

Other award terms including audit, special provisions and/or special award conditions.