Issue Date: **February 10, 2022**
Deadline for Questions: **March 3, 2022 12:00 hrs. Lebanon local time**
Closing Date and Time: **Apr 11, 2022 17:00 hrs. Lebanon local time**

Subject: USAID/Lebanon Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Number: **72026822RFA00001**

Program Title: Higher Education Scholarships Phase Two (HES-II)

Federal Assistance Listing Number:

Dear Interested Applicants:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking applications for a cooperative agreement from qualified entities to implement the program entitled Higher Education Scholarships Phase Two (HES-II). Eligibility for award is restricted to not-for-profit educational institutions in Lebanon that meet standards comparable to those required for American accreditation.

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID anticipates awarding up to two cooperative agreements to the applicant(s) who best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the merit review criteria described in this NOFO subject to a risk assessment. Eligible parties interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this NOFO thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements and selection process. Each cooperative agreement is expected to have a Total Estimated Amount (TEA) not to exceed **$29,800,000** in total USAID funding for a period of nine years. Subject to the availability of funds, USAID may decide to provide an additional, not to exceed **$200,000** per award for a "Crisis Modifier" (please refer to Section A for more information). If the additional Crisis Modifier funding is provided, each award will have a TEA of up to **$30,000,000** within the nine-year period.

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information as required in this NOFO and meet eligibility standards in Section C. This funding opportunity is posted on www.grants.gov, and may be amended. It is the responsibility of the applicant to regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this notice of funding opportunity and to ensure that the NOFO has been received from the internet in its entirety. USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion process. If you have difficulty registering on www.grants.gov or accessing the NOFO, please contact the Grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at support@grants.gov for technical assistance.

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements detailed in Section D.6.f. The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin registration early in the process.

Please submit your questions and application by email to the Regional Agreement Officer, Amy McQuade at amcquade@usaid.gov with a copy to Assistance Specialists, Rana El Jordi at reljordi@usaid.gov and Roman Ansonov at ransonov@usaid.gov. The deadline for questions and application submission is shown above. Responses to questions received prior to the deadline will be furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this notice posted to www.grants.gov.

Issuance of this notice of funding opportunity does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government nor does it commit the Government to pay for any costs incurred in preparation or submission of comments/suggestions or an application. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

Amy McQuade

Digitally signed by Amy McQuade
Date: 2022.02.10 09:12:37 +02'00'

Amy McQuade
Regional Agreement Officer
USAID/Middle East Regional Program

Annex I. HES-USP Fact Sheet
Annex II. Mandatory Budget Template
Annex III. USAID Partner Information Form

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION 4
SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION 33
SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION 37
SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION 38
SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION 51
SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION 54
SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S) 60
SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION 61

SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This funding opportunity is authorized under the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended. The resulting award will be subject to 2 CFR 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and USAID's supplement, 2 CFR 700, as well as the additional requirements found in Sections A, B, F and H.

I. PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

The Higher Education Scholarships Phase Two (HES-II) is one activity under the umbrella of the Higher Education Advancement and Development (HEAD) project.[1] The purpose of the HEAD project is to improve the effectiveness of educational institutions in order to enhance Lebanon's economic stability and prosperity through skill development opportunities and stronger higher education institutions.

Since 2010, USAID has provided approximately $150 million to fund full undergraduate scholarships for approximately 1,500 Lebanese secondary school graduates. These scholarships typically covered full educational costs including a housing/transportation allowance, when needed, and stipends to cover living expenses *for Lebanese and refugee students with high financial need to attend not-for-profit educational institutions in Lebanon that meet standards comparable to those required for American accreditation* that promote critical thinking, freedom, diversity and respect.

The Lebanon financial and economic crisis is likely to rank in the top 10, possibly top three, most severe crises episodes globally since the mid-nineteenth century[2]. This crisis has yielded rapid spikes in poverty (one third of the population lives on less than $1/day), youth unemployment (37 percent for people under age 35 years), low literacy, low women labor force participation (23 percent compared to Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) 63 percent average) and recent net job losses for women that are 5 percentage points higher for women than men. The Government of Lebanon's (GOL) spending on education is low at less than two percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2020, well below the OECD average of 4.4 percent and among the lowest in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. This has resulted in three-fold problems in the education delivery: access, learning and equity.

[1] **Note:** *The term "program" as used in 2 CFR 200 and this NOFO is typically considered by USAID to be an activity supporting one or more project(s) pursuant to specific Development Objectives. Please see 2 CFR 700 for the USAID specific definitions of the terms "activity" and "project" as used in the USAID context for purposes of planning, design, and implementation of USAID development assistance.*

[2] https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/lebanon/publication/lebanon-economic-monitor-spring-2021-lebanon-sinking-to-the-top-3

The HES-II consists of two components:

Component 1: The University Scholarship Program - Phase Nine (USP9)

The University Scholarship Program – Phase Nine (USP9) enables meritorious yet financially disadvantaged Lebanese secondary school graduates to access quality higher education to increase their job readiness and maximize their potential in supporting Lebanon's long-term political, economic, and social development. This effort supports USAID's objective to enhance Lebanon's economic stability and prosperity through skill development opportunities and stronger higher education institutions. This scholarship program will offer full scholarship coverage to assist male and female secondary school graduates to pursue undergraduate studies at local not-for-profit universities that have requirements similar to American accreditation as defined by the eligibility section below.

Component 2: Refugee Scholarship Support – Phase II (RSS-II)

The Refugee Scholarship Support – Phase II (RSS-II) will offer scholarships to refugees legally residing in Lebanon, to complete undergraduate programs at local not-for-profit universities that have requirements similar to American accreditation.

This Notice of Funding Opportunity provides a comprehensive and detailed technical approach based on lessons learned from past iterations of the University Scholarship Program since 2010, proven best practices, demonstrated cost control measures, and student feedback. USAID's substantial involvement throughout the activity will standardize key strategic and technical parameters amongst implementing partner(s) including selection criteria and conditions to maintain the scholarship.

The activity duration will be up to nine years to allow the recruitment of up to four student cohorts, i.e. the implementation of up to four cycles. Each cycle consists of the following:

- One year of recruitment, selection and enrollment. It is estimated that the first four years of the program are dedicated to outreach, dissemination, selection and enrollment, whereby each year targets one distinct cycle;
- Up to one preparatory year if needed;
- Up to four academic years per cycle only depending on the major of enrollment, accordingly five year majors may not be proposed, such as an architecture major.

Expected Results:

Upon completion of the HES-II activity, USAID expects at least the following:

- Up to four annual student cohorts of financially disadvantaged Lebanese school students, representing an appropriate gender-balance, and coming from diverse geographical locations will have been selected and received full scholarships to support their undergraduate education under USP9;
- Up to four refugee cohorts of financially disadvantaged refugees legally residing in Lebanon, subject to availability of funding under RSS II;

- All scholars will have engaged in extra-curricular activities geared towards leadership development and civic engagement;
- All scholars will have completed internships or USAID-focused research upon project completion;
- At least 70 percent of the scholars have demonstrated at least a sustained academic average throughout the activity lifetime as reflected in their cumulative averages or Grade Point Averages (GPA). For the purposes of this award, "sustained" means that the cumulative average remains the same or within a four percent (4 percent) margin upwards or downwards compared to the initial average earned during the first semester;
- At least 80 percent of the scholars have cumulative averages upon graduation over 80 percent;
- At least 50 percent of the scholars will have assumed at least once a prominent position in their university based leadership activities by the time of graduation (such as club president or vice president, committee team leader, project manager);
- At least 95 percent of the scholars will have actively participated in the completion of meaningful community-based service projects;
- At least 95 percent of the scholars will have graduated successfully within the project duration, and within their expected academic degree duration;
- At least 95 percent of the scholars will be prepared for the labor market through training and career guidance;
- At least 75 percent of the scholars must be employed or pursuing graduate studies within a period of six months post-graduation.

II. APPROACH

1. Component 1: USP9

The USP9 is a nine-year program to recruit, select and enroll up to four separate cohorts of Lebanese students, one potential cohort every year during the first four years of implementation. The process that requires the recruitment, selection, enrollment and follow-up of every cohort is referred to as a "cycle". Each "cycle" consists of a first year for recruitment, a second year for preparatory studies if needed, and up to four academic years depending on the student's major. USP(9) will support up to four cycles subject to the funding availability.

The applicant should account for the information below in the design of their approach.

1.1 Eligibility, Recruitment and Selection Processes

1.1.a. Student Eligibility

USP9 will recruit, select and enroll up to four distinct student cohorts, one cohort per year over the first four years of implementation. Accordingly, eligibility criteria reflected below apply to all four cohorts unless otherwise directed by USAID through substantial involvement during implementation.

Students recruited under the program must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Lebanese as determined officially by USAID in writing through substantial involvement during implementation. As per USAID Automated Directives System (ADS) Chapter 253

("USAID Policy"), citizens who are holders of both Lebanese and American citizenship are not eligible for this program. Similarly, asylum seekers to the United States of America (USA) and U.S. green card holders are not eligible.

- Graduates must be enrolled in Lebanese schools only, including public and private secondary schools, and earn their national Baccalaureate (BACC-II) during the year of recruitment into the activity. Graduates who earned their degree earlier than the year of recruitment into the activity will not be eligible for the scholarship.
- Graduates must demonstrate academic merit; i.e., have at least a cumulative combined average of 13.5/20 in their first two years of secondary schooling, and at least an average of 13.5/20 on their BACC-II;
- Candidates must have been enrolled at a secondary school in Lebanon - either public or private - for their last three years of secondary education (*seconde, premiere and terminale*). An exception is made to students who participated in a U.S. Government-sponsored education exchange program during their secondary school years, such as Youth Exchange and Study (YES) students, who spent a year in the U.S. The student must provide documentation that proves that their exchange program was funded by the U.S. Government. Students who spent less than their last three years of schooling in Lebanon are not eligible unless their transfer to Lebanon was substantiated by death of the breadwinner, or declaration of official bankruptcy. Otherwise, the candidates must satisfy the three-year secondary schooling in Lebanon.

Financial Need - Candidates must demonstrate high financial need as follows:

- Parents must not earn any substantial subsidy to cover educational costs. For purposes of USP9, parents must not earn an educational subsidy that covers at least 25 percent of the annual university tuition fee at the least expensive partner university. The tuition basis will be determined, similarly amongst all USP9 implementing partners, in coordination with USAID through substantial involvement.
- Financial need will be determined based on a detailed financial aid application that weighs family revenues against expenditures; number of family dependents and school and university age children and youth; and ownership of "hard" assets, i.e. a tangible asset or resource with value. The applicant must detail the criteria, their weights, justification and support documentation that it will use to assess student's financial need, in particular those enrolled in fee-paying private schools. The applicant should elaborate on any approaches, based on school tuition, or other objective criteria, that may help in further determining the financial need of private school students. The final set of required documentation will be unified and approved by USAID for all USP9 implementing partners.
- Candidates must define and justify through prevailing economic indicators total combined parental income for USP student eligibility. In addition, post award, USP9 implementing partners must provide a brief economic analysis conducted by an expert consultant to justify the threshold for the total annual parental income. The final threshold will be consistent across all implementing partners and subject to USAID approval through substantial involvement.

- Candidates and their parents must sit for separate interviews to determine financial need, validate information and complete additional due diligence as required by USAID to ensure funding is not channeled to ineligible candidates.
- Candidates must not have a sibling who was/is enrolled under USP or any other U.S.-funded undergraduate scholarship. Exceptions may be made when a sibling dropped or was dismissed from USP within one year of enrollment only.

Leadership Capability - Candidates must demonstrate leadership capabilities as follows:

- Students must demonstrate their potential for leadership and civic engagement through means identified by the applicant and elaborated upon in the student's essay and an interview before a qualified panel. The applicant must reflect illustratively in their application or its annexes how leadership potential will be assessed, which tools will be used, the type of questions that may be asked, and the weights and criteria that will be used to assess leadership potential. Finally, USAID, through substantial involvement during implementation, will approve the final leadership assessment tool and methodology to be used by all implementing partners.

1.1.b. Vetting and Due Diligence

To qualify for the scholarship, all students and their parents/guardians must be properly vetted through the USAID Partner Vetting System (PVS) and all publicly and internally available databases and other resources as required by USAID. The applicant must provide its illustrative strategy to vet applicants and their parents/guardians to ensure that activity benefits are not being provided, even inadvertently, to sanctioned individuals, including people or organizations who are not specifically designated by the U.S. Government but who may nevertheless be linked to sanctioned activities. The applicant must detail how and when vetting will be conducted and completed; specify the tools to be used; which certifications will be in place after enrollment; and procedures for vetting and due diligence from enrollment to graduation. USAID, through substantial involvement, will approve and unify the vetting and due diligence approach to be undertaken by all implementing partners through a vetting and due diligence guideline (refer to Section VI – reporting requirements, Technical Deliverables).

1.1.c. Program Dissemination, Shortlisting Procedures and Selection

Engagement - The scholarship opportunities must be disseminated in targeted schools including, at least, the following:

(1) seeking official approvals by school principals and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE);
(2) school visits including selection criteria to select schools to be visited, and ensuring consistency of messaging amongst various university recruiters, and between implementing partners;
(3) outreach to schools and/or students that are not visited;
(4) tools to leverage existing USP scholars to assist in recruitment during school visits or other outreach efforts;
(5) innovative and low-cost tools, including social media platforms (for example,

Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram), to maximize outreach; and
(6) other resources to be utilized such as sub-awards to local organizations that may assist in dissemination, fairs, or online application platforms.

Guiding Principles - The applicant must consider the following:

- There will be up to four consecutive annual rounds of program dissemination and recruitment, subject to USAID approval through substantial involvement based on funding availability. Each round targets one student cohort for enrollment by the beginning of the next academic year.
- All public secondary schools in Lebanon, including academic and technical students, must be duly informed of the program under each dissemination round.
- School visits are the most favored approach for public schools. Therefore, the applicant must reach at least 240 academic public schools per recruitment year through direct visits, and at least 30 technical public schools. The applicant must detail its approach to reach out to private schools including its selection criteria to avoid receiving a large number of ineligible applications submitted by ineligible students who do not meet financial need requirements. If in-person school visits are not possible due to any restrictions (security, weather, pandemic, etc...), a contingency plan must be in place.
- The applicant must define targets for each recruitment phase, e.g. how many schools will be reached, how many students, and how many schools visited.
- During the USP9 recruitment visits, the applicant must state that recruiters will fulfill the sole task of promoting USP and USAID funding. Recruiters may <u>not</u> promote, at any point during these visits, and/or through USAID funding, the university, its programs, financial aid offered to students, or ongoing programs. USP9 is <u>not</u> a platform to enable the host university to bolster its image, visibility, or outreach. Recruitment serves the purpose of promoting USAID funding solely in support of the USP. All non-USP related questions must be deferred to the implementing partner/host university and may not be addressed during the school visits. USAID will also unify and approve through substantial involvement a guideline to ensure the consistency of messaging amongst recruiters. All terms of substantial involvement must be acknowledged by the applicant in the application.

Student Application Package - A specific USP9 application package, including admission and financial components, must be developed for the program. All students applying to the program must submit at least three essays in the application, including:
(1) Essay 1: Student reflection on their leadership qualities and why the student qualifies for the scholarship,
(2) Essay 2: Student rationale justifying the choice of major and career aspirations, and
(3) Essay 3: An overview in Arabic of the student's household financial situation, written by their parents/guardians as part of their financial aid application.

The applicant must reflect how the student application package will be made available to students physically and electronically, including the potential use of online application platforms or other tools that maximize outreach. USAID, through substantial involvement, will approve and unify the final USP9 application package amongst the implementing partner(s), and the direction to set up platforms for online application submission. The applicant must also reflect how the three

essays will be reviewed, evaluated, and used during the selection process. This process will be finalized through substantial involvement during implementation.

Risk Mitigation Plan - The applicant must also provide a risk mitigation plan, in a tabular format that will develop alternative approaches to dissemination to mitigate identified challenges and risks. The applicant must weigh all potential risks and propose alternative means addressing at least the inability to visit schools due to (1) weather conditions, (2) localized and temporary security incidents, (3) chronic security situation, (4) uncooperative school principals, (5) teachers' strikes, (6) pandemics, (7) absence of MEHE approval, (8) any other significant risk.

Shortlisting - The applicant must detail its procedures, steps, timeframe, methodology, staffing within the implementing partner(s), number targets, and criteria under each step to shortlist students and make a final selection addressing at least the following:

1- How preliminary shortlisting based on the initial admission and financial application review including review of the three essays is completed;
2- What university tests are to be considered, why and what the cut-off scores are;
3- Interview procedures, panel selection and composition;
4- Mitigation of conflict of interest and nepotism during the selection process;
5- How scores are generated under each step;
6- At least 40 percent of the total applicants per cycle should sit for initial university testing (subject matter and/or language). The 40 percent must not be considered a target but rather a minimum number that is encouraged to be exceeded to enhance the competition and transparency of the selection process;
7- At least 20 percent of the total initial applicants per cycle, who have successfully taken the university tests, must be invited for interviews. The 20 percent is not a cap but rather a minimum threshold that must be achieved and exceeded when possible. Illustratively, if 1,000 students applied to USP9's cycle one, at least 400 must sit for testing, of which at least 200 must sit for interviews after completing the testing and ranking.

Through substantial involvement, the applicant should reflect in its application that USAID will:

- Provide specific guidance concerning gender, geographic considerations, and other relevant eligibility criteria as deemed necessary by USAID after award;
- Review and approve the proposed selection by the implementing partner(s), including a proposed list of finalists and a waiting list of qualified and eligible students;
- Review, approve and standardize across implementing partner(s) the weights of the selection process including those allocated to academic merit, household financial situation, and leadership potential.

1.1.d. Selection Contingency Plan:

The applicant must provide a contingency plan including a description of triggering events, alternate approaches and potential impact on the selection process, at least, for the following circumstances:

1- Plans to accommodate students who were not able to participate in the interviews or university tests for reasons related to, specifically, the prevailing security situation, health, family death or documented incapacitation, and how the fairness of the competition will be maintained if such an accommodation is offered;
2- Delays in publishing the BACC-II exam results and how the final selection will be made;
3- Cancellation of BACC-II exams and how the final selection will be made; and
4- Shifting from face-to-face learning to online learning due to exigent circumstances.

The applicant must note that the selection contingency plan cannot be exercised without USAID approval during actual implementation. Through substantial involvement, USAID will approve and standardize across implementing partner(s) the contingency plans pertaining to the above, particularly those related to the cancellation of BACC-II exams.

1.2. Comprehensive Scholarships

USP9 will offer the following scholarship package: a full undergraduate scholarship for each scholar for the entire expected duration of studies as per university course catalogue; a housing or a lump-sum transportation allowance, a book allowance; a monthly stipend; medical insurance similar to regular students enrolled at the university; a laptop; and up to one preparatory year as needed. Scholars who do not receive housing must receive a transportation allowance.

1.2.a. Tuition

The actual tuition during implementation must be as follows:

- Tuition based on the 2021-2022 rates will be applicable for the duration of the program for all cycles;
- Annual tuition increases are not allowable on the Federal share and hence may be counted solely towards the cost-share;
- An upfront tuition reduction of 20 percent is required. Applicants to this solicitation may apply for Federal funds up to the set ceiling when they offer a 20 percent reduction upfront.

1.2.b. Housing and Transportation Allowance

Only up to 80 percent of the proposed students per cycle will be eligible for university housing; the remaining 20 percent will be eligible for a lump-sum transportation allowance. The 80 percent should be considered a maximum; accommodation will only be offered when needed.

University housing will be offered in gender-segregated, shared double rooms at university-sponsored housing only, whether on-campus or off-campus, subject to university supervision, policies, and security control. Housing in private apartments is not allowed unless otherwise forced due to a lockdown and/or closure of university dormitories and approved by USAID. Housing will be offered during semesters of actual enrollment only and during the USP mandatory internship month(s). The university must offer housing that has the lowest rental rates. Discounts on housing will be favorably considered during the application's financial evaluation and will count towards cost-effectiveness. A discount of at least 10 percent on housing is

mandatory. Students must be allocated low-cost, suitable dormitories at the university.

Housing priority will be given to scholars living far from campus. Therefore, scholars living in the same district as the university campus will not have priority for housing; such students will be prioritized for the transportation allowance.

The following considerations must be incorporated in the program description:

- The above conditions in the submitted technical application, highlighting the expected number of scholars who benefit from university housing and those who will receive transportation allowance;
- The housing arrangement to accommodate USP9 scholars by presenting a detailed account of maximum capacity available on campus, current occupancy and expected vacancy. The applicant must demonstrate that their dormitories can absorb the USP9 scholars without disruption to existing arrangements for other donor-funded scholarship programs;
- How the applicant will mitigate any parental concerns related to their children, particularly females, moving to the dormitories, including measures during the recruitment campaign and pre-enrollment;
- Innovative approaches to calculating the transportation allowance. The allowance is suggested to be as per applicable Government of Lebanon (GOL) rates. Nonetheless, the applicant may propose an alternate path where prorated allowances are paid based on the commute distance thus making it fair to students who live far from campus and are not eligible for dormitories. The rates must not substantially deviate from the GOL rates per month at all times. The applicant may not propose a transportation allowance amount without due justification and analysis.

1.2.c. Stipends and Book Allowances

Stipends may be paid to USP9 scholars as following:

- Stipends must be paid only during semesters when scholars are actually enrolled in and are taking classes;
- Stipends during the preparatory year may not exceed nine months per scholar irrespective of any exceptions or deviations that may be approved by USAID;
- Stipends should not exceed (in "fresh") $400 USD per month per scholar and will not be subject to any annual increase;
- Even programs that do not require mandatory summers will be offered a nine-month stipend only, irrespective of enrollment during summers;
- Scholars who are required to complete an internship mandated by USP9 (e.g. for computer science students), rather than an internship required academically (e.g. for engineering or nursing students), are eligible to receive an additional one-month stipend during the month of this internship. This additional stipend is only allowable when the student fulfills the following combined requirements: is actually enrolled in an internship; the internship takes place prior to graduation; the internship is approved by the project's management; and the internship takes place at a time when no other regular stipends are provided, such as during an unscheduled summer semester;

- Majors that require mandatory summers will be offered up to an eleven-month stipend only;
- Book allowances are offered twice per year for all programs that do not require mandatory summers; and up to three times per year for programs that require mandatory summers. The book allowance provided for summer semesters must not exceed (in fresh) $150 USD. The book allowance may not exceed (in fresh) $325 USD per regular semester (fall or spring).

1.2.d. Orientation and Integration

The applicant must describe the approach to orient enrolled students, prior to enrollment, to university life, city life, and scholarship requirements, and to mentor students on career pathways throughout the activity. The orientation may include "crash" technical workshops such as computer literacy, and should be done in a format where students will explore options to change their majors within USP9's allowable limits. The orientation must engage parents through a campus and dormitory visit and/or other means to help parents understand the scholarship requirements, the source of funding from the American people, and socialize the programmatic purpose and value to promote retention. This must be a standalone USP9 activity different from the usual university orientation conducted for regular students, and other venues where parents may be invited to the campus such as the parents' financial aid interviews. The applicant must provide a detailed annex to this application to USP9 presenting the various orientation sessions and/or workshops that will be offered defining the objective, approach, and target audience.

In addition to the orientation session, the applicant must ensure that students are integrated well into community life, have access to services, and are not subject to bias or discrimination for any reason during the duration of their studies. The applicant is expected to include tools, resources, and interventions that will assist in integration, including tools to help struggling students adapt to campus life to prevent drop-out. Therefore, it is not enough to reference that students will be part of the clubs and campus life based on students' volition; rather, a structured and deliberate approach, including means to regularly monitor student mental and social well-being, is required.[3]

1.2.e. Summer Semesters

Scholars must make adequate progress towards graduation within the fall and spring semesters. Enrollment in summer semesters is restricted as follows:

- Enrollment in the summer semester to complete the preparatory year is not allowed;
- Tuition, housing, stipend and book allowances for all mandatory summer semesters required under any major provided that the applicant submits upon request academic justification that the summer semesters are mandatory as per university catalogue. Majors that have mandatory summers will not benefit from the additional summer semesters stipulated below. Mandatory summers mean that the course curriculum includes obligatory enrollment during a number of summer semesters, such as engineering;

[3] Beyond Financial Assistance: Good Practices for Extracurricular Programming in USAID Scholarship may be a helpful resource in planning such student support.

- Tuition and housing may be paid for one summer semester only, only when needed, for majors that (1) require less than 95 credits and (2) do not require mandatory summers (not counting the preparatory year credits) as per the university course catalogue. This may only be done on a case-by-case basis to enable potentially academically deficient students to complete their degree on time. Stipends and book allowances during this summer semester are not paid;
- Tuition and housing may be paid for up to a two semester maximum for majors that (1) require more than 95 credits (not counting the preparatory year credits) and (2) do not require mandatory summers. Similar to the above, this is not a blanket approval; i.e. students may not enroll in two additional semesters automatically unless they have a justified reason for that;
- If students elect or need to enroll in a summer semester beyond the ones offered above, then costs of such semester must be covered by the student.

1.2.f. Remaining Balances, Drop-outs and Replacements

The remaining balances (cost-savings on both the Federal share and cost-share) will be regularly identified and communicated to USAID on a periodic basis, at least every six months. USAID will require the following order of priority to manage and efficiently utilize remaining balances, with USAID approval, which needs to be reflected in the application:

1- Enroll additional students during the same cycle, or in a subsequent cycle. Specific restrictions may not apply such as housing caps, geographic or gender restrictions; however, USAID reserves the right, through substantial involvement, to direct the selection of students through these savings. Remaining balances in the last cycle of enrollment must be identified and used in that last cycle only;
2- If funds are not sufficient to enroll additional students, the applicant must consider first if additional students may be enrolled by providing additional upfront tuition reduction that may count towards the cost-share, within the total expected cost-share level;
3- If funds are not sufficient to enroll additional students even post reasonable tuition reduction, then funding may be used to provide increased support to
    a. Community service projects;
    b. Seed funding for entrepreneurial projects that will enable academically meritorious students who have at least a business plan and a feasibility study to open their business;
    c. Providing housing to a limited number of students who are facing difficulties with their daily commute.

Remaining balances on the cost-share must be closely monitored at all times during implementation and should be used effectively towards advancing the program objectives.

The applicant must include an approach to mitigate drop-out students from the program and help students facing academic problems or students having non-academic issues including conduct on campus, psychosocial issues, adaptation, and integration. The applicant must delineate the plan for replacing students who drop-out, taking into consideration that all eligibility criteria of the program must apply. Taking into consideration that this is a multi-cycle scholarship program, drop-outs must be replaced in the subsequent cycle of enrollment. After the last cycle of

enrollment is completed, drop-outs may be replaced from the established waiting list for this last cycle, such as cycle four, allowing only students who may already be enrolled at a partner university to join USP9, subject to a second round of interviews and financial aid assessment.

1.2.g. Student Employment

Students are allowed to seek part-time employment of their choice at any time during the project's lifetime subject that the conditions to maintain the scholarship are met. The implementing partner(s) reserves the right to revoke this right of employment when the student performance, academically and in extra-curricular activities, is negatively affected. Employment may be on campus or outside, with a duly vetted organization, and must not exceed 15 hours per week.

1.3. Gender and Diversity Considerations

Gender and diversity must be taken into consideration during implementation, namely:

- How will dissemination, selection, and enrollment be done to reflect the diversity in the country?
- How will the selection be made to ensure that public school students are not under-represented in the proposed selection?
- How will people with disabilities be provided a fair opportunity to not only compete for the scholarship, but engage in all its aspects post-enrollment?
- How gender balance will be achieved including during (1) selection, (2) enrollment, and (3) leadership and extracurricular activities?
- How will gender stereotypes be addressed during the dissemination and orientation phases to overcome existing perceptions that certain majors are reserved for a particular sex?
- How will the applicant promote diversity in students' selection of majors to mitigate against gender stereotypes and cultural norms that confine men to the engineering profession and women to education?
- What sort of messaging during the recruitment phase and support services post-enrollment will be provided to mitigate gender sensitivities and help accommodate men and women who might face stress and disorientation moving to a city?
- How will the applicant tailor messaging to address matters of safety, security, and harassment for women, particularly from conservative areas, to secure parental consent?

1.4. Enrollment Approach

The enrollment approach must include all considerations below:

1.4.a. Proposed Majors

The applicant must include a detailed account of the academic majors that will be offered under the HES-II activity, along with a rationale for its choice, including relevant statistics demonstrating demand for the proposed major through a labor market or alumni survey. The proposed majors will constitute the initial list of allowable academic disciplines that will be further revised during implementation through USAID's substantial involvement. The proposed majors must take into consideration the following:

- Only Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) majors, business and its various emphases, education, and nursing are allowed under USP. To ensure that the STEM definition is consistent amongst all applicants, a list of STEM majors may be found at: https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/stem-list.pdf
- Offered majors must have prospects for meaningful employment, i.e. should enable students to acquire a job quickly upon graduation. STEM majors that have low prospects of employment may not be offered under USP;
- Scholarships will be offered at the undergraduate level only. Graduate studies for degree or for auditing purposes are not allowed under USP;
- Undergraduate degrees offered as mandatory prerequisites for graduate studies such as biology major as a prerequisite for medicine are not allowed;
- Any proposed major must have at least one functional current class that is not predominantly populated by currently enrolled USP scholars;
- Teaching diplomas may be offered as additional coursework and duration subject to student graduation occuring during the same cycle;
- To qualify as an allowable major under USP(9), at least five cohorts of students must have graduated from the specific major and concrete employment data must be available;
- All proposed majors should ensure that the student graduates at least three months prior to the award cycle completion.

Additionally, the applicant must update its list of majors, within the first eighteen months of implementation, through a labor market survey that may be supported administratively and financially by USP9. The mandatory survey may be completed within the first eighteen months, however, the program is encouraged to complete the study earlier within the first six months to update its list of majors as of the first cycle of recruitment. The methodology of conducting the labor market survey must take in consideration the following:

- How employers, stakeholders and private/public sector key informants will be engaged through professional orders, chambers of commerce, relevant unions and syndicates, and major employers in the country;
- USAID will not cover the cost of alumni studies and surveys that are regularly updated by the universities' development and alumni relations offices. As such, the survey cannot be an alumni survey;
- USAID will not cover the cost to update past surveys; more recent data is required to reflect current labor market patterns;
- Commissioning of such surveys may be undertaken through sub-awards subject to USAID approval, or through specialized consultants working in the field.

The USAID supported "Key Approaches to Labor Market Assessment"[4] - an interactive guide - may be a helpful resource in implementing a labor market assessment.

Any newly-proposed major must satisfy the USP9 requirements with regard to prospects of employment, graduation requirements before the project ends, and must not require additional studies or internships. The applicant must also present its approach to inform students, update

[4] Key Approaches to Labor Market Assessment: An Interactive Guide may be accessed at https://www.youthpower.org/labor-market-assessment-module-1-economic-context

their applications, and advise after the study results that may lead to changes in the proposed list of majors. The applicant must note that USAID, through substantial involvement, will review and make a final determination of suggested changes to the list of majors based on the recommendations of the labor market survey. The results of the labor market survey will impact the list of majors as of cycle two, unless the report is completed prior to the enrollment of cycle one.

The applicant must explain in detail what safeguards will be in place to ensure that the university is not channeling scholarships to underpopulated majors or majors that the university is trying to promote. Moreover, the applicant must put in place safeguards to ensure that students are not requested by the university to change majors during the selection process to meet a given university's internal needs.

[SPACE LEFT BLANK INTENTIONALLY]

The proposed list of majors must include the following tabular information:

Major and date the University started offering the major	Total Number of Credits required for Graduation as per course catalogue	Normal Program Duration as per University Catalogue in years	Expected Number of Semesters based on normal progress as per university catalogue	Does the major require a mandatory internship?	Employability of the major (%) based on the labor market study?	Are summer semesters mandatory for this major?	Justification	Are students eligible to enroll in a TD (Teaching Diploma) under this field, if yes how many additional credits and semesters?	Current Gender Breakdown at the University (% Females)	Proposed means to address gender gap or stereotyping under USP when applying to this major
Major A	X credits	X years	Total of X semesters including X summer semesters	No		Yes	Provide rationale for including Major A under USP	No		
Major B	X credits	X years	Total of X semesters including 0 summer semesters	No		No	Provide rationale for including Major B under USP	Yes, 30 credits, 2 full semesters		

1.4.b. Admissions

The following USP9 conditions should be taken into consideration:

- Acceptance must be offered during the same year of recruitment. Illustratively, students who applied under cycle one may only be admitted during the same year of cycle one recruitment. Students may not be considered for cycle two as the applicant is expected to undertake program dissemination and seek new applications for cycle two;
- Admission into any major will take into consideration the academic requirements of the university, the program eligibility, and the justification provided by the student in support of their choice;
- Candidates may not be offered a scholarship for a major they did not explicitly select in their admission application, even if they qualify academically for it, unless proper career guidance and academic advising is done and documented during the selection process.
- Students must be enrolled as full-time students at all times. Part-time enrollment is not allowed;
- Students must make normal progress towards their graduation as per course plans set in the university catalogue. Delays are not allowable and will not be paid for under USP, except as detailed in the conditions to maintain the scholarship.

The total number of scholars expected to enroll under USP9 and for which academic programs must be clearly reflected in a tabular format. The below breakdown per academic program is illustrative for budgetary purposes. Adjustments to the number of students under each program category may be made during implementation depending on the number of qualified students in the recruitment/selection phase and the number of students targeted per cycle.

	Cycle 1	**Cycle 2**	**Cycle 3**	**Cycle 4**	**Total**
Minimum number of expected students, at least (must be at least met at all times):					
Total number of students in three-year academic programs:					
Total number of students in four-year academic programs, excluding the intensive year (must not exceed 25% of the total number of students for budgeting purposes):					
Total number of students enrolled in teaching diplomas (must not exceed 10% of the total number of students for budgeting purposes):					
Total number of students enrolled in a full-year university preparation, including intensive and remedial students (**must not exceed 50%** of the total number of students at all times):					

The program must include methodology, eligibility criteria, and any cost implication on USAID for the following:

- Major and minor degree options, taking into consideration that USAID will not cover the cost of additional semesters. The applicant must present as well if there are any cost implications on USAID for additional courses taken without extending the graduation date;
- Teaching diploma; and
- Double majors.

USAID will not cover the cost of any course that will not count towards the degree, such as, but not limited to pre-medical courses or the cost of any post-graduation academic such as internships, further studies, specific additional professional programs, graduate studies, colloquium preparation, registration in syndicates and orders.

1.4.c. Change of Major

The methodology must include considerations to advising and assisting students to change their majors in cases when (1) a student explicitly requests to do so, or (2) in the case of poor performance so that the student continues his or her studies until graduation subject to adhering to

other scholarship conditions. The following must be taken into consideration:

- Students may only change majors to disciplines already approved by USAID;
- Adequate academic justification must be provided;
- The change of major cannot take place beyond two academic years into the student's course of study. The applicant must detail how the costs of additional courses beyond the two per academic year will be covered within the approved budget. No other costs may be charged to USAID for changing majors;
- The change of major is allowed between academic programs of similar or less duration of study. Change of major from a shorter duration to a longer one is not allowable. For example, a student studying business, a three year program, cannot change his or her major to engineering, a four-year program;
- The expected graduation date of the student must remain the same as it was initially set upon acceptance under USP(9) and cannot be extended or delayed. However, when a student changes his or her major to one of similar or less duration, the revised expected graduation can be earlier than initially set.

1.4.d. Memoranda of Understanding

Students must sign a Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with the university, including USAID's required certifications, that define fully and clearly their rights and their responsibilities under this program, including the conditions to maintain the scholarship and management controls highlighted in sections henceforth. The program must include the approach to disseminate the terms of the MOU to students, explain its conditions, secure students' signatures and regularly remind students on a yearly basis of applicable terms.

1.3.e. Exchange Semesters:

Exchange semesters or cross-registration among local host universities of USP9 will be discussed and explored through direct facilitation by USAID based on prior experience and lessons learned. The applicable tuition must be the lowest one of either the cross-registration tuition rate or the upfront reduced rate to USAID USP9. Students may benefit from a semester abroad during the course of their studies only when they competitively secure such an opportunity subject to the semester abroad, and do not delay their graduation. The students may receive USP9 financial support covering tuition up to the level that would have been paid at the local host university under USP9, housing and stipend up to the approved USP9 levels, and only in cases when travel happens during a mandated USP9 semester. Other expenses associated with travel itself such as tickets, visas, travel insurance will not be paid by the USP9 program funds. In case of travel, the student will not be allowed to seek employment in the third country of study irrespective of the number of hours of work per week. Only internships that are academically required may be allowed.

1.4.f. Preparatory Year

Under each cycle, USP9 offers the opportunity to scholars to enroll in preparatory language training that covers intensive language training and/or remedial classes to improve students' academic preparation prior to enrolling in their actual field of study.

The applicant must include plans to test, assess, and enable scholars to enroll in intensive language/remedial classes as per following; all below conditions should be considered as USP9 specific conditions:

- At least 25 percent tuition reduction must apply to all preparatory studies;
- Intensive language and remedial classes may be offered to students only when needed for up to the first two semesters of enrollment at University. Exceptions may be considered on a case by case basis according to defined criteria set forth in the student application. USAID reserves the right to approve or reject any exceptions;
- Scholars who fail to complete the requirements of the intensive language/remedial classes within their set duration, i.e. one or two semesters, will be dismissed from the program;
- No additional remedial classes will be offered beyond this first preparatory year at the expense of USAID. Remedial classes may be offered as a no-credit course with no associated tuition fees;
- The approach and use of language placement exams to determine the language level of scholars must be clearly stated in the application. The program must include in a tabular format each preparatory level along with the corresponding number of required semesters for completion of this level and the basis for qualifying under each level such as test grades. The table must also reflect the applicable scores for USP9 on English tests to qualify for each level, and what the scores are usually for regular non-USP scholars. Finally, the table must also reflect any exceptions or deviations for USAID's review and determination.
- For budgetary purposes only, the number of scholars who may be considered for the full preparatory year, irrespective of the duration of enrollment whether one semester or two or remedial, must not exceed 50 percent of the total number of proposed students per cycle. Applicants may budget for a higher percentage than 50 percent when they offer an upfront tuition reduction of at least 25 percent, subject that the total proposed percentage of students does not exceed 60 percent of the total expected to be enrolled. During implementation, the program may offer the preparatory year to any percentage of students so long as the planned funds do not exceed those allocated to the preparatory budget, and saving balances are coordinated with the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) through substantial involvement.
- Support mechanisms that will be offered to potentially struggling scholars who may be at risk of failing their language preparation and eventually being dismissed from the program must be clearly described.

1.5 Leadership Training and Civic Engagement

The applicant must include a Leadership and Training Civic Engagement Plan to implement, evaluate, collaborate with other partners, learn and adapt, to help students develop their citizenship, become active members of their community and law abiding taxpayers, nurture their leadership, and improve their interpersonal skills. The presented approach is expected to offer at least the following:

1. Interpersonal skills training including team building, communication skills, public speaking, negotiation and networking, time management, stress management;

2. A structured approach to ensure that students are enrolled in university clubs, and in governance bodies as appropriate;
3. Civic engagement and advocacy workshops including at least workshops on: citizenship (citizen duties and rights), taxation in Lebanon in general (income, building, VAT, inheritance, etc.), income tax requirements, principles of transparency, accountability and governance, and essentials of the Lebanese public administration structure, and universal human rights. Workshops should include training that will build the students' ability to advocate, voice their concerns publicly, and join interest groups or non-governmental organizations (NGOs);
4. Community service projects (CSP) including project design and management workshops covering proposal writing, budgeting, and community assessment approaches. USP9 may offer at least (in "fresh") $1,000 USD per scholar to help students implement off-campus community service projects subject that these funds are not used to transfer commodities, procure restricted goods, or complete construction works. The projects must be implemented in the students' hometown in partnership with a civil society organization. When students are teaming up with another student and together implementing a joint community service project, then at least one student's community must be targeted. For budgeting purposes at this stage, the applicant is expected to account for $1,000 USD per scholar. During actual implementation, this amount may be increased subject to funding availability and management of remaining balances. Project income generated under community service projects, if any, must be recycled back into the project to expand its outreach. USAID will be substantially involved with the implementing partner during implementation to develop the required guidelines and applicable procedures to implement community service projects. The CSPs will not be subject to USAID approval prior to implementation but must comply with the applicable guidelines;
5. Voluntarism activities with the expectations that students complete at least sixteen hours of documented and approved voluntarism activities per month during semesters of enrollment;
6. Roundtables and seminars, offered outside of regular courses and usual seminars organized by the university, to help students interact with community and business leaders.

Collaboration - The applicant must include an approach to collaborate with implementing partner(s) of the current USP programs[5], including means and approaches to engage currently enrolled USP scholars with the expected USP9 students in a meaningful interaction.

Personal Growth - The approach must measure students' personal growth and development including potentially, annual aptitude tests or standardized university tests, longitudinal studies comparing students' performance to other scholarships and regular students at the university, individual student development plans (IDP) that are regularly updated from the date of enrollment through graduation. The methodology must include also how individual trainings will be monitored and evaluated including pre and post-training tests illustratively.

[5] USP Fact Sheet: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yZeGVMigOek4Qyo76J7MghIrmr7xTV3a/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=101654953997102582244&rtpof=true&sd=true

USP Competition - An approach to launch and manage a USP9 Competition for Excellence must be presented in the application. The competition will be offered on an annual basis starting year two of implementation, and will be open to all USP9 enrolled scholars irrespective of their phases and cycles of enrollment. In-kind prizes are allowable only within the limits of offered in-country training to the competition winners, graduate studies preparation such as the cost of one round of test preparation (GMAT, GRE, etcetera), or job-hunting services. USAID will be substantially involved during implementation to develop the required guidelines and applicable procedures and unify the approach amongst all USP9 implementing partner(s).

1.6 Job Readiness Training

Career Orientation - The applicant must include a plan to provide career guidance to shortlisted candidates during the recruitment phase to help them finalize their choice of major prior to the final USP(9) selection. The approach is also expected to include a plan to provide career guidance during the orientation session to help admitted students understand the prospects of their majors, and make last minute changes prior to the university's drop and add period.

Job Readiness - As for the post-enrollment phase, the approach must present a plan to implement, evaluate, collaborate, learn and adapt, to improve the job readiness of USP9 students and help them acquire the necessary skills for employment. The applicant is expected to include the following:

1. Participation in job fairs at the university and locally organized fairs in Lebanon;
2. Structured career guidance counseling, including possibly testing and personality profiling tests using Myers Briggs type tests or other tools, to help students refine their choice of major during their first year of enrollment;
3. Specific workshops including interview skills, resume writing, effective negotiation, employee rights in Lebanon, and job search techniques;
4. Internships of at least 120 hours. Mandatory academic internships under programs such as engineering or medical laboratory will count towards this USP9 requirement. The applicant must present its plans to engage students particularly those who do not have a mandatory academic one. Each USP9 scholar is required to complete at least a 120-hour internship;
5. Soft skills training tailored to the needs of the students depending on their majors, and identified based on labor market needs. The applicant must present its approach to identify students' interest and determine labor market needs through surveys or other data collection tools;
6. Entrepreneurship training that covers at least business planning, feasibility studies, cash flows, balance sheets, basics of accounting, basics of procurement, and marketing essentials. The applicant must present an approach also to link students to established vetted microfinance institutions and for purposes of expanding their resources when needed.

Tracking - Additionally, the applicant is expected to:

1- Track students' employment post-graduation for at least five years post-graduation;
2- Evaluate students' achievements in finding jobs and comparing these achievements to other scholarships at the university, and to regular students at large at the university.

1.7 Alumni Chapters

The applicant must include its approach to enhance the work of existing USP alumni chapters, and/or establish vital links to these chapters if the university does not already have an established chapter. The approach must present a detailed methodology to increase enrollment of alumni in alumni chapters, prepare beneficiary scholars for enrollment in an alumni chapter upon graduation, and organize relevant activities that aim at maximizing the interaction of the USP alumni with their enrolled peers. USAID may provide minimal funding per year to help the implementing partner organize events aimed at maximized interaction of scholars and alumni. Such events must contribute to career guidance, helping enrolled students better understand the labor market, networking and media outreach to promote USP in the media. The applicant must demonstrate how it will leverage the alumni chapter, or other tools, to monitor the post-graduation status of all previous USP graduates across all phases and cohorts, for the duration of the award.

2. Component 2 Refugee Scholarship Support – Phase II (RSS-II):

Component two must be addressed in the same application as the preceding USP9, under a distinct section not exceeding five pages (in addition to the initial twenty pages allocated to USP9).

A detailed approach to solicit, disseminate, recruit, shortlist, select and enroll refugees in Lebanon through scholarship support must be included in the application. Consistent with the USP9 component, scholarships shall be for refugees with high financial need and academic merit enrolled in schools in Lebanon, including public, private, and United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) schools. The refugees must be legally residing in Lebanon by the first semester of enrollment under the activity. The HES-II project will offer degrees and/or certificates for refugees who have completed secondary education in Lebanon during the year of recruitment for this scholarship.

During implementation, RSS-II must be branded, disseminated to the public, and discussed with applicants as a separate standalone mechanism different from USP9. This component will have its separate application process than USP9, but that follows a similar pattern and requirements, and has its separate selection process and review. The USP9 and RSS-II must be presented to the public as two separate scholarship programs, although their internal management and oversight is one.

The program must be developed on the basis of recruiting/enrolling four cohorts subject to funding availability.

2.1 RSS-II Eligibility, Recruitment and Selection Processes

2.1.a Student Eligibility

Subject to the availability of funding, this NOFO is considering the recruitment, selection and enrollment of four cohorts to be enrolled over the implementation of the program. During implementation, the partner will be required to enroll at least one cohort, and as many cohorts as

directed by USAID through substantial involvement.

The applicant is expected to define the eligibility criteria in their application, including administrative criteria, academic and financial ones to be eligible for the scholarship, and the number of students expected in the first cohort. The applicant must define the selection criteria that will be adopted for undergraduate degrees. Through substantial involvement, USAID will unify eligibility criteria amongst partners during implementation. The applicant must also delineate its approach to vetting and due diligence, a matter that will be refined through substantial involvement during implementation.

The applicant must define how academic and financial need assessment of refugees, especially for those who may not have the necessary paperwork or proper documentation related to their status, will be evaluated. Consistent with USP9, all refugees must follow a similar, yet distinctly implemented, selection process as USP9, including separate financial aid interviews for students and parents and any additional measures to validate financial need that the applicant must propose.

USAID will be substantially involved in the final selection of the refugee cohort to ensure a gender balanced selection, if possible. Refugees of all nationalities are eligible, except asylum seekers to the United States of America. No quotas will be set to any particular nationality. Scholarships will be awarded on a competitive basis based on clear eligibility and selection criteria. However, USAID encourages applicants to provide creative approaches to reach out to the maximum number of refugee students who are eligible to apply for USP9.

2.1.b Enrollment Approach
The applicant must briefly describe which undergraduate majors are offered to refugees. Not more than 25 percent of the students should be enrolled in four-year programs. Similar to the USP9 requirements, majors must have been established, with at least five annual cohorts having graduated with at least one functional class enrolled. The list of proposed majors must be annexed to the program description including undergraduate degrees and certificate programs.

The four recruitment cycles are subject to funding availability and USAID guidance, will have:

- Four years of recruitment, selection and enrollment;
- Up to one preparatory year if needed;
- Up to four academic years per cycle only, depending on the major of enrollment. Accordingly, five year majors may not be proposed, such as architecture. All students must be enrolled on a full-time basis and make normal progress towards graduation. Delays are not allowable and will not be paid for under the program, except as detailed in the conditions to maintain the scholarship.

Similar to USP9, the applicant must delineate any opportunities for major/minor, teaching diplomas, and double majors, or other opportunities under certificate programs, keeping in mind that USAID will not cover the cost of any additional semester or courses that do not count towards the degree or any post-graduation activities.

The applicant must note and reflect that all conditions pertaining to change of major, memoranda of understanding, exchange semesters are similar to the ones applicable under USP9.

2.1.c Preparatory Year

The applicant must include plans to test, assess, and enroll students in intensive language/remedial classes as per following:

- At least 25 percent tuition reduction must apply to all preparatory studies, taking in consideration that the applicant may budget for up to two semesters for no more than 75 percent of the students;
- Intensive language and remedial classes may be offered to students only when needed for up to the first three semesters of enrollment at the university including fall, spring and summer;
- Scholars who fail to successfully complete the requirements of the intensive language/remedial classes within their set duration will be dismissed from the program;
- No additional remedial classes will be offered beyond this first preparatory year at the expense of USAID. Remedial classes may be offered as no-credit course with no associated tuition fees;
- The applicant must include the approach to test and place students in intensive English presenting information in a tabular format reflecting the various levels of intensive English, the required scores for refugees compared to those in regular programs and USP9, and the number of needed semesters.

The applicant should note that support mechanisms available under USP9 to enable students to complete their preparatory year successfully must be similarly available for refugees.

2.1.d Comprehensive Scholarships

RSS-II will offer a scholarship package similar to USP9 including: a full undergraduate scholarship including, per scholar for the expected duration of studies as per university course catalogue; housing or a lump-sum transportation allowance; books; a monthly stipend; medical insurance similar to other students enrolled at the university; a laptop; and up to one preparatory year as needed. Scholars who do not receive housing must receive a transportation allowance.

All of the USP9 conditions governing tuition, housing and transportation allowance, stipends and book allowances, orientation and integration, student employment, and summer semesters are applicable and must be followed under the refugee scholarship support component, except for the following:

- The expected tuition reduction should be at least 20 percent, similar to current reductions offered to some long-term residents in the country. This is intended to maximize the number of beneficiary refugees taking in consideration the magnitude of the refugee crisis in Lebanon. Higher tuition reductions are encouraged but will not be matched by additional USAID funding;
- The applicant may budget for up to 95 percent of students to receive housing rather than 80 percent subject that refugees will be offered housing only when needed and not as a complementary, automatic benefit;

- The orientation must include introduction to securing the residency permit and renewing it, university support provided to facilitate the residency permit, available psychosocial support throughout the duration of studies, and facilitation of adaptation to the local context. The applicant must provide its clear approach to providing psychosocial approach especially to refugees from war-torn countries, support to mitigate drop-out students, and means to facilitate the renewal of residency permits.

Any remaining balances, drop-outs and replacements will be managed in a similar manner as USP(9).

2.1.e Enrichment Activities

The applicant must note that all enrichment activities, including evaluation and assessment tools, available under USP9 must be made available under the refugee scholarship component, with the following exceptions:

- Civic engagement workshops should not address issues of citizenship building but rather address human rights and refugee rights in Lebanon;
- Community service projects may be implemented in the refugees area of residence rather than their hometown;
- The USP9 competition is not available to refugees;
- The career guidance must address opportunities and constraints of employment in Lebanon and possibly in the region.

The applicant must present its approach briefly reflecting how enrichment activities will be implemented.

3. Program Management

3.1.a. Key Personnel:
This section applies to components one and two. The program must include a clear management structure of the program, overseeing its two components, detailing functions and duration of tenure for each position. The applicant must submit Statements of Qualifications (SOQ[6]) for each key personnel position. The management plan must not create parallel structures within the host-university for monitoring the scholars. The following must be included as annexes:

- A detailed list of staff with their level of effort (LOE) and duration to serve on the program with starting and ending years, including all staff whether on the cost-share or the Federal share. The list must include as well their proposed position under this project;

[6] The SOQ lists prior positions and employers (including contact information for at least (3) recent references within the past seven years). The SOQ: (1) will clearly explain why the individual is suited for the proposed position; (2) will demonstrate that the proposed personnel possess the skills, knowledge and experience to function as proposed key personnel position on the project team; (3) will include items normally associated with CVs or resumes i.e. list of all previous employers & positions occupied, academic qualification, and main achievements; (4) provide market value determination of the proposed position.

- If the key personnel are engaged in other programs or activities, include a justification of how the proposed LOE for each position in HES-II is sufficient to implement the program. A detailed organizational chart for the program reflecting reporting lines must be included. The structure may include one dedicated position to the program once the scholars are enrolled. This dedicated person may be overseeing earlier phases of this program concurrently. Accordingly, the proposed expenditures related to this position must be cost effective.

3.1.b. Specific Management Considerations:

The program must take into consideration the following for the program management plans:

- Overall salary/personnel costs including direct, benefits, and indirect costs may not exceed **eleven percent** of the total USAID share of the total program funding covering all components. This does not apply to cost-sharing.
- Two positions are identified as key personnel subject to USAID approval through substantial involvement:

    - A Program Director in charge of overseeing overall program direction and performance, preferably 100% full-time to this program and capable of coordinating across all units and departments at the host university; and,
      - At least ten years of continuous work in a related field to scholarship management, grants management, or educational projects oversight.
      - At least seven years of experience directing projects and programs that require high-level communication skills and the ability to respond to program and donor's needs with a quick turnaround pace.

    - A Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer (associate director, project coordinator or equivalent level) in charge of monitoring students' performance and tracking relevant data who must be full-time staff on USAID funded scholarships program(s), and
      - At least five years of continuous work in monitoring and evaluation of programs and projects, including developing Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) plans with clear and measurable indicators.
      - At least three years of experience researching, collecting, analyzing and presenting data that was found to be accurate.

- Staffing during the first year of implementation when scholars are not recruited yet should be maintained to the minimum and duly justified.
- USAID will not cover the costs of any position related to academic activities, tracking of academic progress or advising students for instance, counseling them or supporting them academically. Accordingly, USAID will not cover the cost of any university designated personnel to provide academic advising for instance to the students. The program must reflect clearly how it will strengthen communication and exchange of information within existing departments to track students' progress, along the same ways that merit scholarships are offered by the university. This includes strengthening communication and coordination amongst the program management, financial aid office, admissions office, and registrar office. USAID may cover the cost of student tutoring as appropriate and when needed only.

3.1.c Management Controls:

The applicant must include a clear management plan to ensure that the scholarships under both components are provided transparently and fairly on the basis of established eligibility criteria only. The management plan must include the control plan to prevent deviations, and suggested remedies to mitigate any such occurrence under the program and every cycle. In all cases, the program must note that the scholarship ceases immediately in case a management control failure is identified.

Management Control Case	Control measures to prevent occurrence	Remedies to mitigate an occurrence
Vetting and due diligence issues		
Student fraud about financial need		
Student misrepresentation of any information in the application, and this information contributed to actually accepting the student as a USP scholar		
Deviation from established USAID selection and enrollment guidance		
Nepotism/favoritism in the selection process, including selection committee members' bias		
Conflict of interest to ensure that no selection committee member is advocating for any particular student applicant		
External pressure along the lines of nepotism, political leverage, or family networks, to promote/select a certain student applicant		
Division in decision making internally when applying the conditions for sponsorship		
Other (please specify…)		

USAID/Lebanon reserves the right during implementation to shorten the activity duration in case funding is not available to enroll up to four student cohorts. In all cases, the duration will not exceed nine years.

3.2. Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Approach

Approach - The MEL approach must demonstrate how close monitoring of the scholars under the two components to keep track of their achievements and challenges will be maintained. The program must not create parallel structures to those that already exist within the university, but rather reflect how internal communication within the university for instance might be harnessed to better serve the monitoring purposes of the higher education scholarships project. The approach must cover the various tools and processes that the implementing partner may use to monitor students at all times to prevent drop-outs and mitigate challenges including personal ones, psychosocial, academic, leadership engagement, and adaptation issues at the university. The approach must detail monitoring, evaluation and learning strategies to track students throughout their enrollment and post-graduation throughout the program implementation. The MEL approach will be used for the purposes of evaluation of the application and is separate from the required MEL Plan that is described under Substantial Involvement under Section B below.

Longitudinal Study - The approach must present a plan to collect baselines and annual aggregate data on each cohort to compare the achievements of the same cohort compared to the previous year, and compared to other students at the university. A detailed approach to a longitudinal study should be presented to determine the:

- Degree of improved interpersonal skills such as communication, teamwork, time management, and leadership for scholarship recipients in comparison to non-recipients;
- Degree of leadership engagement in the community for scholarship recipients in comparison to non-recipients;
- Degree of high academic achievement for scholarship recipients in comparison to non-recipients;
- Degree of improved employment prospects for scholarship recipients in comparison to non-recipients.

3.3.a. Conditions to Maintain the Scholarship

- The conditions for maintaining the scholarship applicable to all students must be presented in a tabular format as per below details, noting that USAID will unify through substantial involvement all conditions amongst all partner(s) during implementation. These conditions will govern the scholarships during implementation and therefore USAID will not authorize a deviation from these conditions nor approve exceptions. Students' dismissal will be governed by the conditions to maintain the scholarship and will not require USAID approval. USAID should be duly and proactively informed in the monitoring of these conditions.

Condition	Proposed Monitoring Tools	Terms	Illustrative Implication on Student	Cost Implication on USAID
Illustration: Academic Probation		Two semesters of repeated probation where the cumulative average falls	Student is dismissed from the program	…

		under 70%		

All conditions related to at least the following must be presented in the table above: academic probation, drop in the cumulative average, drop in the major cumulative average where applicable, failure to participate in leadership engagement and/or leadership workshops, absence without justified cause, temporary voluntary suspension of studies, justified absence under specific dire conditions to be defined, disciplinary actions, course withdrawals and course failures not exceeding two courses per academic year on the USAID share, successful preparatory year completion, change of major, other deviations such as registering courses that do not count towards the degree, failure to complete the mandatory internship, failure to participate in the career preparation workshops, cessation of co-funding by the parents towards the tuition, and inability to renew the residency permit. Irrespective of the set conditions, all students must graduate during the project's lifetime, and during their cycle of enrollment, unless explicitly approved by USAID in specific cases as per final agreed upon conditions to maintain the scholarship during implementation.

3.3.b Student Outreach Approach

The applicant must include its approach to maximize outreach to the general public to reach the maximum number of students for the duration of the award, including disseminating success stories, and regularly promoting the scholarships through print,audio-visual media and social media. The plan must include means to engage the scholarship recipients' parents in annual events. The applicant may specifically allocate a budget for outreach activities, subject that the requested funds do not exceed 1% of the total USAID funding. The Recipient may contribute additional funding through cost-sharing. Note that this Student Outreach Approach is separate from the Communications and Outreach Plan in Section F due after award.

4. Crisis Modifier

This program will include a Crisis Modifier. The following must be included in the Program Description and detailed budget submitted by the applicant:

Opportunities or emergencies may entail implementing activities with new locations, goals, partners, or other emerging stakeholders, the Crisis Modifier is designed to rapidly respond to crises to limit and mitigate humanitarian issues and to maintain development gains in the face of a crisis. As needed and as directed by the Agreement Officer in consultation with the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR), the Recipient must be able to deploy to newly identified priority areas in Lebanon.

The changes in geographical focus, types of activities, or partners could be activated at any time during the period of the award, including within the first year of the award. Therefore, included in this agreement is a Crisis Modifier as a budget item that will allow the release of separate, rapid response funds to the Recipient and its partners responding to urgent needs and/or windows of opportunity activities.

The expenditure of funds from the Crisis Modifier will be dependent on rapid review and approval of the emergency plans from USAID Lebanon, and the total shall not exceed $200,000 for the life of the award. The plans will be defined in collaboration with USAID.

5. Cross-Cutting Considerations

The applicant must consider and include the following cross-cutting considerations in their application:

Gender equality: The applicant must address gender integration during implementation of the award and demonstrate in its application how it would integrate gender equality into core approaches, incorporating the principles outlined in USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy. Incorporating gender considerations into these interventions involves an in-depth analysis of all of the dimensions of gender inclusion, equality, and empowerment, including employment, access to property and resources, health, education, governance, gender-based violence, and LGBTI rights. Each intervention must be gender sensitive and responsive to ensure women, men, male and female youth, minorities, disabled, ethnic, religious, and transgender persons are an integrated part of interventions.

Addressing Factors of Instability Impacting Programming: During the past year, Lebanon has been rocked by several episodic factors of instability, including -- in chronological order -- large scale political protests; a debilitating financial crisis that prevented individuals and organizations from accessing bank funds (dollars in particular) and led to shortages in a number of imported goods; the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in significant interruptions in day-to-day life through periodic lockdowns; and the destruction of the Beirut Port in August 2020, which has exacerbated access to imported goods. The applicant must incorporate strategies for addressing these challenges in proposed activities, so that continuity in programming can be achieved in the face of these challenges.

Localization: USAID emphasizes the importance of the utilization of localization. 'Localization' is defined as USAID's processes, partnerships, and programs creating an enabling context in which local actors define priorities and lead their communities' and countries' development agendas, and are enabled through effective and inclusive local systems, sufficient resources, and strong local capacity to sustain outcomes over time. This will create the conditions whereby local actors and systems own and value efforts to save lives, reduce poverty, strengthen democratic governance, and emerge from humanitarian crises, through an equitable and inclusive development process that ensures results are locally sustained. Activities under HES-II should create an enabling context in which local actors define priorities and lead their communities' and countries' development agendas, and are enabled through effective and inclusive local systems, sufficient resources, and strong local capacity to sustain outcomes over time. Local actors and systems should own and value efforts through an equitable and inclusive development process that ensures results are locally sustained.

[END OF SECTION A]

SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

USAID intends to award two cooperative agreements pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity. Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency, USAID intends to provide **$29,800,000** in total USAID funding per award for up to two awards for a period of nine (9) years. Subject to the availability of funds, USAID may decide to provide an additional **$200,000** in USAID funding for a "Crisis Modifier" (see Section A for more information) per award, for a total estimated amount of up to **$30,000,000** within the 9-year period.

2. Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Awards

The anticipated period of performance is nine years from the date of award execution. The estimated start date will be in/or about May 2022.

3. Substantial Involvement

USAID's substantial involvement under this cooperative agreement shall be limited to approval of the following:

A. Approval of the recipient's annual implementation plans; and annual monitoring, evaluation and learning plans.

i. **Annual Work Plan:**

The first year work plan is due sixty (60) days after the award execution date. Modifications that respond to changed conditions may be made; however, major modifications to each annual work plan are subject to the approval of the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR).

Subsequent annual work plans are due thirty (30) days before the end of the fiscal year (i.e. by September 1st) for review by the AOR. The AOR will review and provide edits to the Recipient within fifteen (15) days after receipt. The Recipient must revise and submit the revised Annual Work Plan no later than fifteen (15) days after receipt of comments. If acceptable, the USAID AOR will provide a written approval of the final work plan to the Recipient. Failure to have an approved work plan in place may be viewed as a failure to comply with essential terms and conditions of the award.

The annual work plan must:

a) Include clear and concise language identifying the specific strategy and package of activities to be implemented. This must include a description of planned activities and tasks and an estimated budget organized by component and, as appropriate, by sub-components. The work-plan will serve as a reference point for progress reporting, and updating the prospective annual work-plans. The work-plan will permit monitoring of the award performance and costs. It will also be one of the progress performance monitoring tools for USAID. The initial work-plan, and subsequent annual work-plans, must include a

section reflecting outreach activities that the implementing partner will undertake to promote the scholarships to the general public based on the terms of the branding strategy and marking plan. This includes activities beyond the mandated year-one recruitment activities and must reflect initiatives to promote the activity publicly, including media tools, appearances and other means. The proposed activities' timing must be realistic and should factor the time required for USAID clearances of all public promotions.

b) Include separately a detailed itemized budget, as per the approved award budget and per component, in addition to a pipeline analysis of costs already incurred and projections of costs for the life of the award reflecting detailed cost-shares and USAID funding separately and per year. The budget projection should reflect on a yearly basis the funds allocated for that specific year, actual expenditures, balance and yearly projection in the future. Remaining balances (cost-savings) must be clearly identified in the budget on the Federal and cost-share portions.

c) Provide a summary of the progress to date on the indicators and targets in the MEL plan and the projected evolution over the next year of implementation.

d) Provide a clear and concise rationale for deviation or modification of activities from those originally proposed or selected in prior work plans.

e) The annual work plan will include a narrative analysis of project responsiveness to changes in the operational context.

The format and content of this document will be established by the AOR and the Recipient.

ii. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan:

The draft MEL plan must be submitted within thirty (30) days after the award effective date. The MEL plan must include proposed qualitative and quantitative indicators, including but not limited to intermediate results, outputs, and baselines indicators. This plan must include, based on Mission guidance, at least a narrative explaining the monitoring, evaluation and learning process, reflect relevant indicators with the necessary targets for the life of project and for the first year of implementation, detailed performance indicators reference sheets (PIRS) and other requirements as stipulated in ADS 201. The prospective plans include baseline data about the students to be compared to yearly performance measures reflecting academic performance, leadership, employment and other critical aspects of the project. The MEL plan must also include data collection reflecting key indicators at the host university, namely enrollment, retention, drop-out, employment, leadership engagement of regular students. The MEL plan must utilize the MEL template to be provided by USAID. The AOR will provide comments/edits to the Recipient within 10 days of receipt of the draft MEL plan. The final MEL plan is due 60 days after AOR approval. Along with the work-plan, the recipient must submit an initial draft MEL plan to measure progress under the program.

iii. a Data Quality Analysis (DQA):

The DQA is due after the first reporting period that follows the approval of the MEL Plan. Data Verification in response to the DQA is due following one reporting period after the completion of the DQA.

B. Approval of specified key personnel

Minimum qualifications for the key personnel:

- Program Director:
  - At least ten years of continuous work in a related field to scholarship management, grants management, or educational projects oversight.
  - At least seven years of experience directing projects and programs that require high-level communication skills and the ability to respond to program and donor's needs with a quick turnaround pace.

- Monitoring and Evaluation Officer:
  - At least five years of continuous work in monitoring and evaluation of programs and projects, including developing Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) plans with clear and measurable indicators
  - At least three years of experience researching, collecting, analyzing and presenting data that was found to be accurate.

C. Approval of subawards. In accordance with 2 CFR 200.308(c)(6), unless described in the application and funded in the approved budget of the resulting award, the subaward, transfer or contracting out of any work under the award will require prior approval.

D. Agency and recipient collaboration or joint participation, such as when the recipient's successful accomplishment of program objectives would benefit from USAID's technical knowledge. USAID will be substantially involved in the development of key strategic and technical parameters amongst implementing partner(s) including selection criteria and conditions to maintain the scholarship. USAID will incorporate all substantial involvement parameters and requirements as described in Section A of this NOFO into the final award under this section.

E. Agency monitoring to permit specific kinds of direction or redirection of the work because of the interrelationships with other projects or activities.

F. Agency activation of the crisis modifier(s) to implement additional interventions based on USAID's need to address emergencies or seize opportunities, subject to availability of funding and invoked at the discretion of USAID.

5. Authorized Geographic Code

The geographic code for the procurement of commodities and services under this program is **937.**

6. Nature of the Relationship between USAID and the Recipient

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient(s) and under the **Higher Education Scholarships Phase Two** is to transfer funds to accomplish program's objectives which are authorized by Federal statute. The applicant will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices. The Recipient(s) will assume responsibility for administering Federal funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, program objectives, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.

[END OF SECTION B]

SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligibility for this NOFO is restricted to not-for-profit educational institutions in Lebanon that meet standards comparable to those required for American accreditation.

USAID welcomes applications from organizations that have not previously received financial assistance from USAID.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

USAID has established a recipient cost share contribution of 20% of the total Federal amount or $6,000,000. Such funds may be provided directly by the recipient; other multilateral, bilateral, and foundation donors; host governments; and local organizations, communities and private businesses that contribute financially and in-kind to implementation of activities at the country level. This in kind contribution may include staff level of effort, office space or other facilities or equipment which may be used for the program, provided by the recipient. For guidance on cost sharing in grants and cooperative agreements see 2 CFR 200.306

All cost-sharing contributions must be allocable to scholarships, reasonable, allowable and verifiable through independent financial audits.

In addition to the above, cost sharing must include:

- An upfront tuition reduction of at least 20% for all tuition charges including preparatory or language training semesters is mandatory under USP9;
− An upfront tuition reduction of 25% for all tuition charges during the preparatory year;
− The tuition for all programs and certificates must be based on the 2021-2022 rates only as per published rate online and applicable for the duration of the program for all cycles;
− Annual tuition increases are not allowable on the Federal share and hence may be counted solely towards the cost-share.

3. Other

An applicant is required to submit only **one** set of technical and cost applications.

[END OF SECTION C]

SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Agency Point of Contact

Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA)
USAID/Lebanon
Attention: Amy McQuade
Regional Agreement Officer
E-mail: amcquade@usaid.gov with copy to the Acquisition and Assistance Specialists, Rana El Jordi at reljordi@usaid.gov and Roman Ansonov at ransonov@usaid.gov .

2. Questions and Answers

Questions regarding this NOFO should be submitted electronically no later than the date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment to this NOFO, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant.

3. General Content and Form of Application

Preparation of Applications:

Each applicant must furnish the information required by this NOFO. Applications must be submitted in two separate parts: the Technical Application and Cost Application. This subsection addresses general content requirements applying to the full application. Please see subsections 5 and 6, below, for information on the content specific to the Technical and Cost applications. The Technical application must address technical aspects only while the Cost Application must present the costs, and address risk and other related issues.

Both the Technical and Cost Applications must include a cover page containing the following information:

- Name of the organization(s);
- Identification and signature of the primary contact person (by name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number and email address) and the identification of the alternate contact person (by name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number and email address);
- Activity title;
- Notice of Funding Opportunity number; and
- Name of any proposed sub-recipients or partnerships (identify if any of the organizations are local organizations, per USAID's definition of 'local entity' under ADS 303).

Any changes to the application must be initiated by the person signing the application. Application signed by an agent on behalf of the Applicant must be accompanied by evidence of that agent's authority, unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.

Applications must comply with the following:

- USAID will not review any pages in excess of the page limits noted in the subsequent sections. Please ensure that applications comply with the page limitations.
- Written in English.
- Use standard 8 ½" x 11", single sided, single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1" margins, left justification and headers and/or footers on each page including consecutive page numbers, date of submission, and applicant's name.
- 10 point font can be used for graphs and charts. Tables however, must comply with the 12 point Times New Roman requirement.
- Submitted via Microsoft Word and PDF formats, except budget files which must be submitted in Microsoft Excel.
- The estimated start date identified in Section B of this NOFO must be used in the cost application.
- The technical application must be a searchable and editable Word and PDF format as appropriate.
- The Cost Schedule must include an Excel spreadsheet with all cells unlocked, with visible cell formulas intact, and without hidden formulas or sheets. A PDF version of the Excel spreadsheet may be submitted in addition to the Excel version at the applicant's discretion, however, the official cost application submission is the unlocked Excel version.

Applicants must review, understand, and comply with all aspects of this NOFO. Failure to do so may be considered as being non-responsive and may be evaluated accordingly. Applicants should retain a copy of the application and all enclosures for their records.

4. Application Submission Procedures

Application must be submitted by email to Agreement Officer, Amy McQuade at amcquade@usaid.gov , with copy to Acquisition and Assistance Specialists, Rana El Jordi at reljordi@usaid.gov and Roman Ansonov at ransonov@usaid.gov.

Email submissions must include the NOFO number and applicant's name in the subject line heading. In addition, for an application sent by multiple emails, the subject line must also indicate whether the email relates to the technical or cost application, and the desired sequence of the emails and their attachments (e.g. "No. 1 of 4", etc.). For example, if your cost application is being sent in two emails, the first email should have a subject line that states: "[NOFO number], [organization name], Cost Application, Part 1 of 2".

USAID's preference is that the technical application and the cost application each be submitted as consolidated email attachments, e.g. that you consolidate the various parts of a technical application into a single document before sending it. If this is not possible, please provide instructions on how to collate the attachments. USAID will not be responsible for errors in compiling electronic applications if no instructions are provided or are unclear.

After submitting an application electronically, applicants should immediately check their own email to confirm that the attachments were indeed sent. If an applicant discovers an error in

transmission, please send the material again and note in the subject line of the email or indicate in the file name if submitted via grants.gov that it is a "corrected" submission. Do not send the same email more than once unless there has been a change, and if so, please note that it is a "corrected" email.

Applicants are reminded that email is NOT instantaneous, and in some cases delays of several hours occur from transmission to receipt. Therefore, applicants are requested to send the application in sufficient time ahead of the deadline. For this NOFO, the initial point of entry to the government infrastructure is the USAID mail server.

There may be a problem with the receipt of *.zip files due to anti-virus software. Therefore, applicants are discouraged from sending files in this format as USAID/Lebanon cannot guarantee their acceptance by the internet server. File size must not exceed 10MB.

5. Technical Application Format

5.1 Technical Application

The technical application will include the following sections and will adhere to the total page limit noted in parentheses below.

A. Cover Page (1 page limit - not included in Technical Application Body page limit)
B. Table of Contents (no page limit - not included in the Technical Application Body page limit)
C. Acronym List (no page limit - not included in the Technical Application Body page limit)
D. Technical Application Body (25 pages maximum)
    D.1 Technical Approach
    D.2 Program Management Approach
    D.3 History of Past Performance (maximum of three pages per project) (not included in the Technical Application Body page limit).
E. Attachments (60 pages limit) (not included in the Technical Application Body page limit).

The application must address all of the above technical items as well as their respective components listed below. Pages in excess of stated limitations will not be considered. To facilitate the review of applications, narrative portions of applications should be organized in the same order as they appear below.

Technical Application – This section must follow the following format:

A. Cover Page (1 page)

The cover page must include: the NOFO number; the name of organization(s) submitting application; the name of a contact person and title or position with the organization; the e-mail address, telephone and fax numbers (if applicable), and the postal and physical addresses of the organization(s).

Applicants should also state clearly whether the identified contact person has the authority to negotiate on behalf of the applicant, or, if not, the contact information for the appropriate person with the authority to negotiate.

B. Table of Contents listing all parts of the technical application, with page numbers and attachments

C. Acronym List

D. Technical Application Body (25 pages)

The technical application body shall be organized using the same headings as the merit review criteria and addressing the relevant sections in the Program Description. The sections are listed and further described below:

D.1 Technical Approach

The application must leverage existing resources (centers, tools, and personnel) to implement all requirements to recruit, shortlist, enroll, follow-up and monitor, civically engage and prepare diverse Lebanese students for the labor market. The application must include the proposed technical approach to accomplishing the objectives in the Program Description while relying primarily on existing resources within the host universities to coordinate, implement and follow-up on students throughout the entire steps from recruitment to post-graduation follow-up.

Component 1: The University Scholarship Program – Phase Nine:
Applicants must describe in detail the proposed program and its technical approach with relevant attachments how they intend to achieve the program objectives and how the program will significantly contribute towards accomplishing the program's proposed expected results. The program description must include all technical aspects related to students' eligibility, vetting, program dissemination, outreach, selection and contingency plans, risk management, gender and diversity, enrollment approach and its subsections, the comprehensive scholarship and its subsections, the leadership and civic engagement training, the job readiness training and the alumni section.

Component 2: Refugee Scholarship Support -Phase Two :
Applicants must describe in detail the proposed program and its technical approach with relevant attachments how they intend to achieve the program objectives and how the program will significantly contribute towards accomplishing the program's proposed expected results. The program description must include all technical aspects related to students' eligibility, vetting, program dissemination, outreach, selection and contingency plans, risk management, gender and diversity, enrollment approach and its subsections, the comprehensive scholarship and its subsections, the leadership and civic engagement training, the job readiness training and the alumni section.

Component 2 must present the applicant's approach to recruit refugees of diverse nationalities, shortlist, follow-up and monitor, civically engage and prepare refugee students for the labor market.

D.2 Program Management: This section shall include:

Applicants must describe their program management approach (see Program Description Section 3.1.a) that relies primarily on existing resources within the host universities to coordinate, implement and follow-up on students throughout the entire steps from recruitment to post-graduation follow-up. The program management approach must include the key personnel, the specific management considerations, the management controls and reflection on the program duration, the initial Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) approach and quantified expected results based on the requested funding, the illustrative conditions to maintain the scholarship that will be unified during implementation, the outreach plan in support prospectively of the branding strategy and marking plan (the latter not required at the time of submission of application).

D.2.1 The proposed key personnel must meet the minimum qualifications as follows:

Program Director

- At least ten years of continuous work in a related field to scholarship management, grants management, or educational projects oversight.

- At least seven years of experience directing projects and programs that required high-level communication skills and the ability to respond to program and donor's needs with a quick turnaround pace.

Monitoring and Evaluation Officer

- At least five years of continuous work in monitoring and evaluation of programs and projects, including development of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) plans with clear and measurable indicators

- At least three years of experience researching, collecting, analyzing and presenting data that was found to be accurate.

D.3. History of Past Performance (maximum of three pages per project)

Applicants must submit past performance of up to three (3) relevant programs that were completed within the past three (3) years only. The most relevant indicators of performance are projects of similar scope of work in challenging operating contexts, magnitude of budget, complexity/diversity of tasks, and skills/ expertise required.

Note 1: USAID may use past performance information obtained from other than the sources identified by the Recipient.

Note 2: In cases where the Applicant lacks relevant performance history or information on performance is not available, then the Applicant will not be evaluated favorably or unfavorably on performance and receive a "neutral" rating.

The Applicant must provide a Matrix of up to three (3) of its contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs during the past three (3) years. The reference information for these awards must include:

- ➢ The performance location;
- ➢ Award number (if available);
- ➢ Duration, size, value;
- ➢ A brief description of the work performed;
- ➢ Results achieved; and
- ➢ A point of contact list with current telephone numbers, e-mail address, name and title of someone, outside of the Applicant's organization, who supervised/oversaw the activity.

E. Attachments (Not to exceed 60 pages in total)

Technical attachments:

1. Draft illustrative work-plan overview for the duration of the project in a chart format such as GANTT or any tabular format that projects activities against a timetable reflecting specific milestones to be achieved covering both components. The work plan must not be in a narrative format;
2. Detailed timetable and/or work plan reflecting activities and milestones of the program dissemination and recruitment phases per cycle per component in a chart format;
3. Detailed list of orientation activities and workshops that will help the student integrate in student life on campus per cycle and per component;
4. Detailed timetable and/or work plan reflecting all structured leadership activities in a chart format. The list must highlight which organization will be responsible for completing the activities, whether the applicant or a proposed sub-awardee;
5. Detailed list of leadership trainings and workshops including brief description and objective, number of workshops and expected participants per workshop in a tabular format, for each component. The list must highlight which organization will be responsible for completing the activities, whether the applicant or a proposed sub-awardee;
6. Detailed timetable and/or work plan of the career counseling and guidance activities in a chart format per cycle for each component. The list must highlight which organization will be responsible for completing the activities, whether the applicant or a proposed sub-awardee;

Supportive annexes:

7. Detailed list of program staff including, name, position, level of effort per month, number of months of service per year, number of years, justification for the position, level of effort under other activities or programs and duration of this level of effort,

and an indication whether the staff is proposed for USAID-share or applicant cost share (percentage);
8. Detailed organizational chart for the program reflecting reporting lines and actual names of the incumbents under each position; in addition to coordination lines with relevant departments and offices within the host university;
9. SOQs of key personnel not exceeding two pages each;
10. Letters of commitment from key personnel;
11. Letters of commitment from any proposed sub-awardee(s) reflecting very briefly the scope of their engagement, total budget allocation, any cost share contributions and duration of their engagement.

Administrative documents:

12. Confirmation of the applicant's status (NGO, not for profit, 501(c)(3)) - For example, a copy of the articles of incorporation or other documentation which substantiates the legal character/registration of the entity in the country/region of operation;
13. Confirmation of the University accreditation status with Ministry of Education and Higher Education;
14. Confirmation of current accreditation status and analysis to reflect similar qualifications to American accreditation (an additional 20 pages may be allowed for the detailed analysis when actual American accreditation is not in place);
15. Confirmation of legal status of the host university(ies) if different than applicant (e.g. as a university, not for profit, NGO, etc.);
16. Detailed list of available dorms including their capacity and current occupancy and plan to house the scholarship recipients scholars over the duration of the program;
17. Copies of audited financial statements for the last three years, prepared by a Certified Public Accountant or other auditor.

6. Business (Cost) Application Format

The Business (Cost) Application must be submitted separately from the Technical Application. The business (cost) application must illustrate the entire period of award, using the budget format shown in the SF-424A.

The cost application should include budget information as well as other documentation needed to support a determination of responsibility. The cost application shall conform to the following:

1) SF 424: Complete and sign the Application for Federal Assistance. The form can be accessed here: https://www.grants.gov/forms/sf-424-family.html

2) SF-424A Budget Information: Include a budget detailing the budget on the Standard Form 424A. This form is available at: https://www.grants.gov/forms/sf-424-family.html

The cost application must contain the following sections (which are further elaborated below this listing with the letters for each requirement):

A. Required Certifications and Assurances:

The applicant must complete the following documents and submit a signed copy with their application:

(1) "Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient" ADS 303mav document found at https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mav
(2) Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
(3) Certificate of Compliance: Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA).

B. Mandatory Budget Template and Budget Narrative

In support of the SF-424A, please include a detailed budget and narrative that describes the basis for cost estimates among the major budget categories. These should be supported by detailed breakdowns of each major budget category. In the budget narrative, include adequate cost or historical unit pricing data to establish a reasonable cost and provide assurance that the recipient will realize no increment above actual cost. The Applicant's proposed budget should provide estimates of the program based upon the total estimated amount for the cooperative agreement. Applicants should minimize their administrative and support costs for managing the project to maximize the funds available for project activities.

The budget and budget narrative must detail all direct costs associated with the implementation and completion of activities, as well as any indirect costs and program costs such as those related to any subawards as detailed below:

a) The breakdown of all costs associated with the program according to costs of, if applicable, headquarters, regional and/or country offices,
b) The breakdown of all costs according to each partner organization (or sub- Recipient) involved in the program,
c) If the Applicant is a consortium, the cost application must include documents that reflect the legal relationship among the parties. The document(s) should include a full discussion of the relationship among the applicants, including the identity of the applicant that the USG will treat for purposes of administration of any cooperative agreement or grant, identity of the applicant that will have accounting responsibility, how the applicant proposes to allocate effort under any cooperative agreement or grant, and the express agreement of the principals of the Applicant organization to be held jointly and severally liable for the acts of omissions of the other.

The management structure must be clearly reflected in the budget and budget narrative. Levels of effort per month, number of months and the monthly remuneration must be clearly reflected for all personnel including key and admin/support staff. The applicant must use the below format in the budget presentation for personnel costs. A similar table must be provided reflecting the proposed level of effort (LOE) under this and duration of this LOE, and LOE of the proposed personnel under other USPs and duration of the corresponding LOE.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
						Year 1			Year 2		
Position	Number of staff	Proposed Monthly Salary	Number of months	% Level of Effort per Month	Total Amount per year	USAID Share	Cost Share	Total	USAID Share	Cost Share	Total
					=BxCxDxE						

The detailed budget must contain the following budget categories and information, at a minimum:

a) Personnel – Applicants must propose direct salaries and wages in accordance with their personnel policies. Indicate the name, annual salary, and expected level of effort of each person charged to the project. Provided SOQs must include prior positions and employers (including contact information for at least (3) recent references within the past seven years). The SOQ: (1) will clearly explain why the individual is suited for the proposed position; (2) will demonstrate that the proposed personnel possess the skills, knowledge and experience to function as proposed key personnel position on the project team; (3) will include items normally associated with CVs or resumes i.e. list of all previous employers & positions occupied, academic qualification, and main achievements; (4) provide market value determination of the proposed position.

b) Fringe Benefits – These benefits are non-wage compensation that an organization can provide to its employees in addition to their salaries. If the Applicant has a fringe benefit rate approved by an agency of the U.S. Government, the applicant should use such rate and provide evidence of its approval. If an Applicant does not have a fringe benefit rate approved, the application should propose a rate and explain how the Applicant determined the rate; in this case, the narrative should include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits by personnel (e.g., unemployment insurance, workers compensation, health and life insurance, retirement, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in U.S. dollars and as a percentage of salaries.

c) Travel and Transportation – The Applicant should indicate the number of trips, domestic and international, estimated as necessary to carry out the proposed program description, and their estimated costs. Applicants must specify the origin and destination for each proposed trip, the duration of travel, and number of individuals who would be traveling. If applicable, applicants should base per-diem calculations on current, published U.S. Government per diem rates for the localities concerned.

d) Equipment – Specify all equipment to be purchased and the expected geographic source.

e) Contractual/Subaward – Applicants should detail any costs associated with subcontracted or subgranted costs, including consultants (external, expatriate technical assistance and those

associated with external, local in-country technical assistance). Please note that for all proposed major sub-grants and major subcontracts (major is defined as 20% of the total prime award), they must have the same format and level of detail as those of the Applicant.

f) Other Direct Costs – Applicants should detail any other direct costs, including the costs of communications, report preparation, passport issuance, visas, medical exams and inoculations, insurance (other than insurance included in the applicant's fringe benefits), equipment, office rent, etc.; Branding and Marking Costs in accordance with ADS 320.3.7.3.

g) Indirect Costs – These are costs that are incurred by an organization overall but that cannot be attributed directly to a specific project it is working on. The applicant should support the proposed indirect cost rate with a letter from a cognizant, U.S. Government audit agency, a Negotiated Indirect Cost Agreement (NICRA). If the organization has never received a NICRA then a 10 percent de minimus indirect cost rate will be applicable.

h) Cost Sharing: Cost share is defined by USAID as "contributions, both cash and in-kind, which are necessary and reasonable to achieve program objectives and which are verifiable from the recipient's records." Cost sharing also refers to that portion of a project or program cost not borne by the USG. Cost share or match is normally associated with contributions from the same prime and sub-recipients sources that also receive USAID funds. Examples of cost share for this program may include the provision of technical assistance, commodities, distribution networks and other sources of support. Cost share must be verifiable from the recipient's records, is subject to the requirements of 2 CFR 200.306, and is subject to audit. A recipient's failure to meet its cost share requirement can result in questioned costs.

According to USAID policy, cost sharing is an important element of the USAID-recipient relationship. Cost Share is required as part of this program, see Section C. Applicants must be aware that all cash contributions and non-Federal third party in-kind contributions must meet all the criteria set forth in 2 CFR 200.306 and the applicable OMB cost principles. Applicant cost share may be in any combination of in-kind support, staff salaries, tuition reduction, waiver of overhead, etc. Awards will be made to responsible applicants whose applications offer the greatest value, cost and other factors (i.e. technical evaluation criteria) considered.

USAID has established a recipient cost share contribution of 20% of the total Federal amount or $6,000,000. Such funds may be provided directly by the recipient; other multilateral, bilateral, and foundation donors; host governments; and local organizations, communities and private businesses that contribute financially and in-kind to implementation of activities at the country level. This in kind contribution may include staff level of effort, office space or other facilities or equipment which may be used for the program, provided by the recipient. For guidance on cost sharing in grants and cooperative agreements see 2 CFR 200.306

All cost-sharing contributions must be allocable to scholarships, reasonable, allowable and verifiable through independent financial audits.

In addition to the above, cost sharing must include:

- An upfront tuition reduction of at least 20% for all tuition charges including preparatory or language training semesters is mandatory under USP9;
− An upfront tuition reduction of 25% for all tuition charges during the preparatory year;
− The tuition for all programs and certificates must be based on the 2021-2022 rates only as per published rate online and applicable for the duration of the program for all cycles;
− Annual tuition increases are not allowable on the Federal share and hence may be counted solely towards the cost-share.

Applicants may propose cost share in cash, in-kind, or a combination of both, and can include contributions from the university, local counterpart organizations and other donors (not other USG federal funding sources). Cost share refers to the resources an applicant contributes to the total cost of an agreement. The cost share must be verifiable from the recipient's records; for U.S. organizations it is subject to the requirements of 2 CFR 200.306, and for non-U.S. organizations it is subject to the Standard Provision "Cost Share"; and can be audited. Cost share is the portion of project or program costs not borne by the United States Government (USG). 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 USG 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, general and administrative costs or any other costs. Applicants should review 2 CFR 200.306 in determining cost share contribution. Cost share will be considered as an element of cost effectiveness under USAID regulation 2 CFR200 and of applicable USAID policy and procedure: http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf

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 must be discussed in the Budget Notes to the extent necessary to determine its feasibility and realistic access to the sources and funds

All cost-sharing contributions must be allocable to scholarships, reasonable, allowable and verifiable through independent financial audits.

i) Applicants should submit additional evidence of responsibility they deem necessary for the Agreement Officer to make a determination of responsibility. The information submitted should substantiate that the Applicant:

1. Has adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain such resources as required during the performance of the award.
2. Has the ability to comply with the award conditions, taking into account all existing and currently prospective commitments of the Applicant, nongovernmental and governmental.
3. Has a satisfactory record of performance. Past relevant unsatisfactory performance is ordinarily sufficient to justify a finding of non-responsibility unless there is clear evidence of subsequent satisfactory performance.

4. Has a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics; and,
5. Is otherwise qualified and eligible to receive a fixed amount award under applicable laws and regulations (e.g., EEO).

j) The Applicant is reminded that U.S. Executive Orders and U.S. law prohibits transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. It is the legal responsibility of the Applicant/Recipient to ensure compliance with these Executive Orders and laws. This provision must be included in all subawards (contracts and grants) issued under this Agreement that results from this NOFO.

k) Applicants that have never received a cooperative agreement, grant or contract from the U.S. Government are required to submit a copy of their accounting manual. If a copy has already been submitted to the U.S. Government, the Applicant must advise which Federal Office has a copy and provide a point of contact with contact information (e.g., phone number). Alternatively, applicants may file a self-certification of compliance with USAID standards.

7. Approval of Subawards

The Applicant must submit information for all subawards that it wishes to have approved at the time of award. For each proposed subaward the Applicant must provide the following:

- Name of the sub-awardee;
- Subaward total estimated amount;
- Type of subaward: grant or contract;
- Period of Award;
- Place of Performance;
- Summary of the subaward (program description or scope of work);
- Documentation on how the subaward was competed;
- Documentation on how the subaward was negotiated based on the applicable cost principle standard of "reasonable, allowable, and allocable;"
- Documentation on the sub-awardee responsibility; as defined in ADS 303.3.9.1(d) Risk Assessment, and FAR 9.104-1 for contractors;
- List of commodities, equipment, and/or technical services (consultants) procured and the authorized source of each;
- Requirement of sub-awardee's Audit when the sub-award total amount exceeded the $750,000 threshold (or the current threshold at the time of award) as set forth in 2 CFR 200.501;
- Any required prior approvals and/or waivers obtained;
- Compliance with vetting (in accordance with Mission specific vetting procedures); and
- Additional considerations related with the sub-award process must be in accordance with the stipulations included under 2 CFR 200.331.

8. Dun and Bradstreet and SAM Requirements

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier (DUNS number) and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements. Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency

that is exempted from requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

1. Provide a valid DUNS number for the Applicant and all proposed sub-recipients;
2. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. SAM is streamlining processes, eliminating the need to enter the same data multiple times, and consolidating hosting to make the process of doing business with the government more efficient (www.sam.gov).
3. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, Applicants are encouraged to begin the process early. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements above by the time USAID is ready to make an award, USAID may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

DUNS number: http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform
SAM registration: http://www.sam.gov

Non-U.S. applicants can find additional resources for registering in SAM, including a Quick Start Guide and a video on how to obtain an NCAGE code, on www.sam.gov, navigate to help, then to International Registrants.

9. Branding and Marking

The apparently successful applicant will be asked to provide a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan to be evaluated and approved by the Agreement Officer and incorporated into any resulting award.

10. Funding Restrictions

Profit is not allowable for recipients or subrecipients under this award. See 2 CFR 200.330 for assistance in determining whether a sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor.

Construction will not be authorized under this award.

USAID will not allow the reimbursement of pre-award costs under this award without the explicit written approval of the Agreement Officer (AO).

Except as may be specifically approved in advance by the AO, all commodities and services that will be reimbursed by USAID under the resulting award must be from the authorized geographic code specified in Section B.5 of this NOFO and must meet the source and nationality requirements set forth in 22 CFR 228.

[END OF SECTION D]

SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

The merit review criteria prescribed here are tailored to the requirements of this particular NOFO. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters which the applicants should address in their applications, and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated.

Technical and other factors will be evaluated relative to each other, as described here and prescribed by the Technical Application Format. The Technical Application will be scored by a Selection Committee (SC) using the criteria described in this section

1 Review and Selection Process

USAID will conduct a merit review of all applications received that comply with the instructions in this NOFO. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the following criteria shown below all of equal importance.

A. Technical Application

A.1 **Technical Approach [see Section D.5, Technical Application Format, Subsection D.1]:**

Extent to which the applicant will leverage existing resources (centers, tools, and personnel) to implement all requirements to recruit, shortlist, enroll, follow-up and monitor, civically engage and prepare diverse Lebanese students for the labor market.

Component 1: Extent to which the applicant proposes an approach with relevant supporting attachments (work plan, orientation activities and workshops, leadership training and workshops, career counseling and guidance activities) that is clear and feasible to achieving the program objectives including all aspects related to students' eligibility, vetting, program dissemination, outreach, selection and contingency plans, gender and diversity, risk mitigation, enrollment approach and its subsection, the comprehensive scholarships and its subsections, the leadership training, the job readiness training and the alumni section.

Component 2: Extent to which the applicant proposes an approach with relevant supporting attachments (work plan, orientation activities and workshops, leadership training and workshops, career counseling and guidance activities) that is clear and feasible to achieving the program objectives including all aspects related to students' eligibility, vetting, program dissemination, outreach, selection and contingency plans, gender and diversity, risk mitigation, enrollment approach and its subsection, the comprehensive scholarships and its subsections, the leadership training, the job readiness training and the alumni section. The extent to which the applicant's approach to recruit refugees of diverse nationalities, shortlist, follow-up and monitor, civically engage and prepare refugee students for the labor market, is attainable.

A.2 **Program Management [see Section D.5, Technical Application Format, Subsection D.2]:**

Extent to which the applicant proposes a clear and feasible program management approach relying primarily on existing resources within the host universities to coordinate, implement and follow-up on students throughout the entire steps from recruitment to post-graduation follow-up.

Extent to which the applicant proposes specific management considerations, management controls, and the initial Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) approach, which are clear and achievable within the duration of the program.

Extent to which the key personnel meet or exceed the qualifications as described in Section D.5, Technical Application Format, Subsection D.2.1.

A.3 **History of Past Performance [see Section D.5, Technical Application Format, Subsection D.3]:**

Extent to which the past performance records demonstrate successful past performance in achieving results on similar programs, including the past performance of its teaming partners.

B. Business (Cost) Review [see Section D.6, Business Application Format]

The Agency will evaluate the cost application of the applicant(s) under consideration for an award as a result of the merit criteria review to determine whether the costs are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.

The Agency will also consider Effectiveness, Realism and Reasonableness of Total Estimated Amount: Although the cost application will not be scored, a cost realism analysis will be conducted. The cost realism analysis is intended to meet the following goals:
a) Verify the Applicant's understanding of the requirements and regulations;
b) Assess the degree to which the cost application reflects the approaches in the technical application; and,
c) Assess the degree to which the cost included in the cost application accurately represents the work effort included in the technical application with reasonable economy and efficiency.
d) Whether any special conditions relating to costs should be included in the award.

Proposed cost share will be reviewed for compliance with the standards set forth in 2 CFR 200.306, 2 CFR 700.10, and the Standard Provision "Cost Sharing (Matching)" for U.S. entities, or the Standard Provision "Cost Share" for non-U.S. entities. Awards will be made to responsible applicants whose applications offer the greatest value, cost and other factors (i.e. technical evaluation criteria) considered.

The Agreement Officer (AO) will perform a risk assessment (2 CFR 200.206). The AO may determine that a pre-award survey is required to inform the risk assessment in determining whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organizational, experience, accounting and operational controls, financial resources, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award.

Depending on the result of the risk assessment, the AO will decide to execute the award, not execute the award, or award with "specific conditions" (2 CFR 200.208).

[END OF SECTION E]

SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

Award of the agreement contemplated by this NOFO cannot be made until funds have been appropriated, allocated and committed through internal USAID procedures. While USAID anticipates that these procedures will be successfully completed, the applicant is hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for the award.

2. Administrative & National Policy Requirements

The award will be administered in accordance with the following applicable standard provisions:

For U.S. organizations, 2 CFR 700, 2 CFR 200, and ADS 303maa, Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-governmental Organizations are applicable.

For non-U.S. organizations, ADS 303mab, Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations will apply. Full copies of the 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700 are incorporated hereby by reference. Please refer to ADS 303.4 and 303.5 for guidance. However, the applicable standard provisions will be attached to the final award document.

3. Reporting

a) Financial Reporting:

I. The Recipient must submit the Federal Financial Form (SF-425) on a quarterly basis within 30 calendar days after the end of each USG fiscal quarter (i.e. October 30, January 30, April 30, July 30) to the Agreement Officer (AO) and Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR).

The Recipient must submit all final financial reports no later than 90 calendar days after the end of agreement to the Agreement Officer, and the AOR.

Electronic copies of the SF-425 can be found at https://www.usaid.gov/forms/sf-425.

Line item instructions for completing the SF-425 can be found at: https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/636mab.pdf.

The report must be supported with a detailed budget breakdown reflecting USAID expenditures and cost share per line item for the quarter and the projected costs for the next reporting period.

II. Accruals Reporting: Accruals are the value of the liability recognized during the period for goods and/or services received but not disbursed, or goods and/or services invoiced but not recorded.

USAID performs a quarterly accrual exercise at the end of each quarter; i.e. December 31, March 31, June 30, and September 30. Awardees are required to submit four quarterly accrual expenditures reports 15 days before the end of a quarter per year. The Recipient must submit a spreadsheet showing cumulative disbursements and estimated (un-disbursed) accruals to the AOR.

b) Performance Reporting

I. Semi-Annual Progress Report:

The awardee must submit two semi-annual detailed narrative progress reports per year. Each report will cover two quarters and should be submitted by the end of October (covering Q3 & Q4) and the end of April (covering Q1 & Q2) from every fiscal year. These progress reports will reflect progress in relation to agreed-upon benchmarks contained in the award and approved annual work-plan. The report will specify any problems encountered and indicate resolutions or proposed corrective actions. It will be a comprehensive narrative report summarizing the previous period activities and accomplishments using the annual work plan as a starting point and will serve as the tool by which USAID/Lebanon monitors the performance of the Recipient. The semi-annual reports will reflect on recent achievements and overall project accomplishments under each component.

Detailed supporting documentation reflecting progress, challenges and achievements of the various activities and program activities must be annexed to the report. The report will include status of project activities and will summarize services delivered and progress towards achieving results identified in USAID's Program Areas. It will document both successes and failures of the interventions, and discuss reasons for shortcomings and recommend actions to overcome them. For each action, the Recipient will designate responsible parties and establish a timeframe for completion. The Recipient shall use the approved work plan as basis to track activities.

II. Recipient Final Report:

Ninety (90) days after the award completion date, the Recipient will submit final technical and financial reports to the AOR which will summarize implementation progress of all tasks including achievements of strategic results, shortfalls, problems, recommended solutions, and Recipient's assessment of Award work completed. The report shall provide quantitative representation. Accomplishments will need to be documented by data and not anecdotal reporting for the analysis and conclusions must be submitted with the final report. However, success stories must be duly documented and reported.

4. Other Reports and Plans

I. Communication and Outreach Plan:

The draft Communication and Outreach Plan must be submitted within 30 days of the date of award execution. The AOR will provide comments/edits to the Recipient within 10 days of receipt of the draft Plan. The purpose of the communication and outreach plan is to highlight the recipients plan on outreach, events, communication with USAID, other projects, other donors and external stakeholders.

II. Semi-Annual Report and Pipeline Analysis

Applicable only to the post-recruitment/selection phase under each cycle and per component: Starting with the second year of implementation, when the students are actually enrolled, the recipient must submit two semi-annual detailed narrative progress reports per year. These progress reports will reflect progress in relation to agreed-upon benchmarks contained in the award and approved annual work-plan and monitoring, evaluation and learning plan. The report will specify any problems encountered and indicate resolutions or proposed corrective actions. It will be a comprehensive narrative report summarizing the previous period activities and accomplishments using the annual work plan as a starting point and will serve as the tool by which USAID/Lebanon monitors the performance of the recipient. The semiannual reports will reflect on recent achievements and overall project accomplishments under each component. The first report is due by the end of April of the second implementation year.

Detailed supporting documentation reflecting progress, challenges and achievements of the various activities and program activities must be annexed to the report. The report and all supporting documentation must be submitted no later than one month post expiry of two successive quarters. The semi-annual report must also include information related to ME&L tracking of the longitudinal study, specific indicators pertaining to regular students at the university and as defined by USAID (enrollment, graduation employment, drop-outs…) and baselines collection and follow-up. This must include as well information related to postgraduation follow-up as applicable.

The report will include status of project activities and will summarize services delivered and progress towards achieving results identified in USAID's Program Areas. It will document both successes and failures of the interventions, and discuss reasons for shortcomings and recommend actions to overcome them. For each action, the Recipient will designate responsible parties and establish a timeframe for completion. The recipient shall use the approved work plan as basis to track activities.

The implementing partner shall provide a detailed line item Excel budget reflecting unit costs and total costs as per approved award budget, per component, and presenting the initial budget, actual expenditures, and balance per year and per share separately, for the duration of the award. This budget will serve as basis to discuss issues related to management and use of any remaining balances (cost savings). The planned use of remaining balances must be approved by the AOR, and the AO if needed as per terms of 2 CFR 200.308. At least two reports are required per implementation year starting in July of the first implementation year: the first report is due with the first selection proposal made to USAID, typically in July of the first implementation year, identifying any potential remaining savings resulting from the enrollment of the student cohort. The second semi-annual projection is due by the end of April with the technical semi-annual report. These reports are due annually for the duration of the implementation. USAID may request additional reports as needed, particularly in cases of student drop-outs or student replacement, or interim student selection proposals. With every submission to USAID, the implementing partner must present to USAID an efficient and effective approach to manage remaining balances on the Federal and cost shares, especially towards enrollment of additional scholars.

Annually, the recipient must update no later than thirty days after the beginning of each implementation year, a detailed work plan reflecting activities that will be completed during the forthcoming year. The work plan is subject to the AOR review and approval.

Moreover, the recipient is required to update, for AOR approval, a detailed monitoring, evaluation and learning plan annually no later than thirty days after the beginning of each implementation year. The Annual Monitoring, Evaluation and learning plan will be a standalone document. The monitoring, evaluation and learning plan provides output, outcome and impact indicators for all activities detailed in the work plan, including life of project indicators and targets as per USAID expected outcomes. Accurate measurement is done against established targets and baselines, which the recipient provides to the AOR by the beginning of each implementation year. The monitoring, evaluation and learning plan must include a detailed performance indicator reference sheet as per approved USAID templates, in addition to the MEL narrative and indicators table.

III. Annual Nonexpendable Property Report:

Within 30 calendar days from the end of each reporting year of the award, the Recipient shall submit the soft copy of the Annual nonexpendable property report to the AO and AOR in USAID/Lebanon. This report shall include all Nonexpendable property such as office equipment for the Recipient's office and any other type of equipment provided as part of this activity's interventions during the reporting period.

IV. Recipient Exit Plan:

Ninety days prior to the award completion date, the recipient will submit to USAID a detailed plan describing all actions to be completed to demobilize the recipient's operations. The plan will designate dates for all actions. It must include, in addition to the demobilization plan, the following:

1. The plan will include, at a minimum, an illustrative property disposition plan addressing all requirements under contractual and local law a for the transfer of property;
2. A plan for the phase out of in-country operations;
3. A delivery schedule for all reports or other deliverables required under the awards;
4. A timeline for completing all required actions in the demobilization plan, including submission date of the final property disposition plan to the Agreement Officer;
5. Describe how all required prime and sub-award audits will be conducted after the demobilization of the Recipient. The demobilization plan shall be approved in writing by the AOR;
6. Any plans to support students who failed to graduate on time during the project lifetime including cost-sharing schemes to support student graduation post project expiry;
7. Plans to follow-up on alumni activities;
8. Plans to follow-up on employment and enrollment in universities for graduate studies.

V. Financial Need Assessment Guideline

Ninety days post-award, the Recipient must submit to USAID a draft document that includes at least the proposed income threshold to be used for financial need assessment under each component, the supportive documents required for financial need assessment, the sort of interviews to both students and parents separately, the interview questions to determine financial need, the tuition basis to determine the educational subsidy based on the tuition of the cheapest university. The document will be reviewed by the AOR, edited and aligned to present a uniform approach amongst all implementing partners, and ultimately approved by the AOR. This document shall become the main reference guiding the implementation of the financial need assessment of USP applicants.

VI. Leadership Potential Assessment Guideline

Ninety days post-award, the Recipient must submit to USAID a draft document that includes the proposed leadership questions under each component in the admissions application, the composition of the interview panel, the interview questions and the interview scoring methodology. The document will be reviewed by the AOR, edited and aligned to present a uniform approach amongst all implementing partners, and ultimately approved by the AOR. This document shall become the main reference guiding the implementation of the leadership assessment of USP applicants.

VII. Final Selection Scoring

Ninety days post-award, the Recipient must submit to USAID a draft document that proposes the weights and scores that will be attributed to each selection criterion under each component, namely: school grades, university testing grades, interview results, Bacc-II results, financial need, and any other considerations. The document will be reviewed by the AOR, edited and aligned to present a uniform approach amongst all implementing partners, and ultimately approved by the AOR. This document shall become the main reference guiding the implementation of the leadership assessment of USP applicants.

VIII. List of Majors and Supportive Documents

Ninety days post award, the Recipient must submit a detailed list of majors, as approved in the award, in addition to plans to conduct any proposed labor market survey in specific fields of study, and plans to hold discussions with professional orders. Within eighteen months of implementation, the Recipient must submit the results, findings and recommendations of the initial labor market surveys if any, the conclusions from the discussions with the professional orders and any recommendations affecting the proposed list of major. The AOR will review and make a final determination of allowable majors under USP. The recipient is encouraged to complete the labor market survey within the first nine months of implementation.

IX. Vetting and Due Diligence Guideline

Ninety days post-award, the Recipient must submit to USAID a draft document that proposes the vetting and due diligence approach under each component to be adopted for both students and, as applicable, their parents/legal guardians. The document will be reviewed by the AOR, edited and aligned to present a uniform approach amongst all implementing partners, and ultimately

approved by the AOR. This document shall become the main reference guiding the implementation of vetting and due diligence for the duration of the activity.

X. Recruiters Guideline

Sixty days post-award, the Recipient must submit to USAID a draft document that proposes the guideline that governs the messaging school recruiters will adopt under each component. The document will be reviewed by the AOR, edited and aligned to present a uniform approach amongst all implementing partners, and ultimately approved by the AOR. The guideline will be used to train recruiters prior to school visits to ensure consistent messaging and a unified approach to addressing public inquiries and questions. The guideline will include controls to ensure that the school visits are restricted to promoting the scholarships and USAID funding only and are not used as tools to promote the university or any of its regular programs.

XI. Institutionalization Plan

Within one year of implementation, the Recipient must finalize the institutionalization plan initially and illustratively proposed in the application in response to the NFO, that will provide all details needed to institutionalize specific components of the scholarship, including any intended use of possible funding provided by USAID for that purpose. The document will be reviewed, edited and ultimately approved by the AOR.

5. Environmental Compliance and Climate Risk

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 117 requires that the impact of USAID's activities on the environment be considered and that USAID include environmental sustainability as a central consideration in designing and carrying out its development programs. This mandate is codified in Federal Regulations (22 CFR 216) and in USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) chapters 201 and 204 (http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ADS/200), which, in part, require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all activities. The HES-II Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) has not been finalized by the time of the issuance of this NOFO. As soon as the IEE is approved, the applicants will be be notified. The Recipient must incorporate the IEE findings into their implementation to ensure environmental risks and mitigation measures are followed.

In addition, the recipient must comply with host country environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. In case of conflict between host country and USAID regulations, the latter shall govern.

As part of annual work plan development, the recipient, in collaboration with the USAID AOR and Mission Environmental Officer, will review all ongoing and planned activities to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation. If the recipient plans new activities outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, it shall prepare an amendment to the documentation for USAID review and approval. No such new activities shall be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments. Any ongoing activities found to be outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation shall be halted until an amendment to the documentation is submitted and written approval is received from USAID.

[END OF SECTION F]

SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

1. NOFO Points of Contact

Please refer to Section D.

1. Acquisition and Assistance Ombudsman

The A&A Ombudsman helps ensure equitable treatment of all parties who participate in USAID's acquisition and assistance process. The A&A Ombudsman serves as a resource for all organizations who are doing or wish to do business with USAID. Please visit this page for additional information: https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/acquisition-assistance-ombudsman

The A&A Ombudsman may be contacted via: Ombudsman@usaid.gov.

[END OF SECTION G]

SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION

USAID reserves the right to fund or not to fund the applications submitted. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. Any award and subsequent incremental funding will be subject to the availability of funds and continued relevance to Agency programming.

Applications with Proprietary Data

Applicant who include data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation purpose, should mark the cover page with the following:

> "This application includes data that must not be duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, an award is made as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, the U.S. Government will have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting award. This restriction does not limit the U.S. Government's right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in sheets {insert sheet numbers}."

Additionally, the Applicant must mark each sheet of data it wishes to restrict with the following:

> "Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this application."

1. Partner Vetting Information

I. Partner Vetting Pre-Award Requirements

(a) USAID has determined that any award resulting from this assistance solicitation is subject to vetting. An applicant that has not passed vetting is ineligible for award.

(b) The following are the vetting procedures for this solicitation:

(1) Prospective applicants review the attached USAID Partner Information Form, USAID Form 500-13, and submit any questions about the USAID Partner Information Form or these procedures to the agreement officer by the deadline in the solicitation.

(2) The agreement officer notifies the applicant when to submit the USAID Partner Information Form. For this solicitation, USAID will vet prior to award but not with the submission of the initial application. Within the timeframe set by the agreement officer in the notification, the applicant must complete and submit the USAID Partner Information Form to the vetting official. The designated vetting official is:
Vetting official: Lebanon VSU Email: lebanonaidvsu@usaid.gov.

(3) The applicants must notify proposed subrecipients and contractors of this requirement when the subrecipients or contractors are subject to vetting.

Note: Applicants who submit using non-secure methods of transmission do so at their own risk.

(c) Selection proceeds separately from vetting. Vetting is conducted independently from any discussions the agreement officer may have with an applicant. The applicant and any proposed subrecipient or contractor subject to vetting must not provide vetting information to anyone other than the vetting official. The applicant and any proposed subrecipient or contractor subject to vetting will communicate only with the vetting official regarding their vetting submission(s) and not with any other USAID or USG personnel, including the agreement officer or the agreement officer's representatives. The agreement officer designates the vetting official as the only individual authorized to clarify the applicant's and proposed subrecipient's and contractor's vetting information.

(d) (1) The vetting official notifies the applicant that it: (i) is eligible based on the vetting results,
(ii) is ineligible based on the vetting results, or (iii) must provide additional information, and resubmit the USAID Partner Information Form with the additional information within the number of days the vetting official specified in the notification.

(2) The vetting official will coordinate with the agency that provided the data being used for vetting prior to notifying the applicant or releasing any information. In any determination for release of information, the classification and sensitivity of the information, the need to protect sources and methods, and the status of ongoing law enforcement and intelligence community investigations or operations will be taken into consideration.

(e) Reconsideration: (1) Within 7 calendar days after the date of the vetting official's notification, an applicant that vetting has determined to be ineligible may request in writing to the vetting official that the Agency reconsider the vetting determination. The request should include any written explanation, legal documentation and any other relevant written material for reconsideration.
(2) Within 7 calendar days after the vetting official receives the request for reconsideration, the Agency will determine whether the applicant's additional information merits a revised decision.
(3) The Agency's determination of whether reconsideration is warranted is final.

(f) Revisions to vetting information: (1) Applicants who change key individuals, whether the applicant has previously been determined eligible or not, must submit a revised USAID Partner Information Form to the vetting official. This includes changes to key personnel resulting from revisions to the technical portion of the application.
(2) The vetting official will follow the vetting process of this provision for any revision of the applicant's Form.

(g) Award. At the time of award, the agreement officer will confirm with the vetting official that the apparently successful applicant is eligible after vetting. The agreement officer may award only to an apparently successful applicant that is eligible after vetting.

II. Partner Vetting, Award Requirements

(a) The Recipient must comply with the vetting requirements for key individuals under this award.

(b) Definitions: As used in this provision, "key individual," "key personnel," and "vetting official" have the meaning contained in 22 CFR 701.1.

(c) The Recipient must submit within 15 days a USAID Partner Information Form, USAID Form 500-13, to the vetting official identified below when the Recipient replaces key individuals with individuals who have not been previously vetted for this award. Note: USAID will not approve any key personnel who are not eligible for approval after vetting. The designated vetting official is:
Vetting official: Lebanon VSU
Email: lebanonaidvsu@usaid.gov

(d) (1) The vetting official will notify the Recipient that it -

(i) Is eligible based on the vetting results,
(ii) Is ineligible based on the vetting results, or
(iii) Must provide additional information and resubmit the USAID Partner Information Form with the additional information within the number of days the vetting official specifies.

(2) The vetting official will include information that USAID determines releasable. USAID will determine what information may be released consistent with applicable law and Executive Orders, and with the concurrence of relevant agencies.

(e) The inability to be deemed eligible as described in this award term may be determined to be a material failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the award and may subject the Recipient to suspension or termination as specified in the subpart "Remedies for Noncompliance" at 2 CFR part 200.

(f) Reconsideration:

(1) Within 7 calendar days after the date of the vetting official's notification, the Recipient or prospective subrecipient or contractor that has not passed vetting may request in writing to the vetting official that the Agency reconsider the vetting determination. The request should include any written explanation, legal documentation and any other relevant written material for reconsideration.

(2) Within 7 calendar days after the vetting official receives the request for reconsideration, the Agency will determine whether the recipient's additional information merits a revised decision.

(3) The Agency's determination of whether reconsideration is warranted is final.

(g) A notification that the Recipient has passed vetting does not constitute any other approval under this award.

(h) When the prime recipient anticipates that it will require prior approval for a subaward in accordance with 2 CFR 200.308(c)(6) the subaward is subject to vetting. The prospective subrecipient must submit a USAID Partner Information Form, USAID Form 500-13, to the vetting official identified in paragraph (c) of this provision. The agreement officer must not approve a subaward to any organization that has not passed vetting when required.

(i) The Recipient agrees to incorporate the substance of paragraphs (a) through (i) of this award term in all first tier subawards under this award.

III. SUB-AWARDEES VETTING

Prior to the provision of funding by the Recipient to its sub-awardees, the Recipient shall conduct all screening procedures and due diligence on sub-awardees and key individuals of the sub-awardees, including a check of sub-awardees and such key individuals not screened at the time of award by the Agreement Officer to ensure compliance with Executive Order 13224 and U.S. law prohibiting transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. The Recipient will screen names of its sub-awardees and the key individuals of such sub-awardees against the Specially Designated Nationals List ("SDN" list) administered by the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control ("OFAC") http://www.ustreas.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac/sdn/; UN's 1267 Committee List on Al-Qaida and the Taliban and Associated Individuals and Entities: https://www.un.org/sc/suborg/en/sanctions/1267/aq_sanctions_list; and that the applicant has active exclusions in the System for Award Management (SAM) on this web-site: https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/.

"Key individual" means (i) principal officers of the organization's governing body (e.g., chairman, vice chairman, treasurer and secretary of the board of directors or board of trustees); (ii) the principal officer and deputy principal officer of the organization (e.g., executive director, deputy director, president, vice president); (iii) the program manager or chief of party for the USG-financed program; and (iv) any other person with significant responsibilities for administration of the USG-financed activities or resources."

4. Covered Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Equipment or Services:

Effective August 13, 2020, a recipient may not procure covered telecommunication equipment or services for the implementation of their program using award funds.

2 CFR 200.216, applicable to US organizations, and the standard provision "Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment" applicable to non-US NGOs, implement Section 889(b) of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2019 (Pub. L. 115-232) that prohibits the use of award funds, including direct and indirect costs, cost share and program income, to procure covered telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment. The statute covers certain telecommunications equipment and services produced or provided by Huawei Technologies

Company or ZTE Corporation, Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, or Dahua Technology Company (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities).

Such covered telecommunication equipment or services must not be reimbursed to the recipient as a direct or indirect cost or accepted as part of cost share under this award. Additionally, the recipient must not use any program income generated under the award to purchase covered telecommunication equipment or services under this award.

5. Special Award Requirement Relating to the Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment (November 2020)

USAID has been granted a temporary waiver under Section 889(d)(2) that will allow the recipient to use award funds through September 30, 2022, to procure certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment as specified in 2 CFR 200.216. Based on this waiver, all costs incurred for covered telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment will be allowable through September 30, 2022, without regard to the cost principle at 2 CFR 200.471. Procurements made on or after October 1, 2022, will be unallowable in accordance with 2 CFR 200.471.

[END OF SECTION H]