Issuance Date:	April 28, 2017
RFA Clarification Questions Due & Time:	May 12, 2017 at 12:00 noon Local Nicaragua time
Closing Date and Time for Application Submission:	June 26, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. Local Nicaragua time

Subject: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NFO) Number: 524-17-000004
***Lifting Nicaraguan Voices* Program**

Ladies/Gentlemen:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking applications for a cooperative agreement from qualified U.S.non-profit Non-Governmental organizations and other qualified US organizations to fund a program entitled "Lifting Nicaraguan Voices" Please see Section C of this NFO for more detail on eligibility requirements.

Subject to the availability of funds an award will be made to that responsible applicant(s) whose application(s) best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity and the merit review criteria contained herein. While one Cooperative Agreement award is anticipated as a result of this notice of funding opportunity (NFO), USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

For the purposes of this NFO the term "Grant" is synonymous with "Cooperative Agreement"; "Grantee" is synonymous with "Recipient"; and "Grant Officer" is synonymous with "Agreement Officer". Eligible organizations interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this funding opportunity thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements and evaluation process.

Any resulting award will be subject to 2 CFR 700 and 2 CFR200- Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information as required in this NFO and meet eligibility standards in Section C of this NFO. This funding opportunity is posted on www.grants.gov, and may be amended. Potential applicants should regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this notice of funding opportunity. Applicants will need to have available or download Adobe program to their computers in order to view and save the Adobe forms properly. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the entire NFO has been received from the internet in its entirety and 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 NFO, please contact the Grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at support@grants.gov for technical assistance.

Applicants under consideration for an award that have never received funding from USAID will be subject to a pre-award survey to determine fiscal responsibility and ensure adequacy of financial controls. USAID encourages applications from potential new partners.

The successful Applicant will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives. Please read each section of the NFO. This NFO consists of this cover letter plus the following Sections:

Section I- Program Description
Section II-Award Information
Section III- Eligibility Information
Section IV- Application and Submission Information
Section V- Application Review Information
Section VI- Federal Award and Administration Information
Section VII- Federal Awarding Agency Contacts
Section VIII- Other Information

Please send any questions to the point(s) of contact identified in section D. The deadline for questions 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,

Ross Hicks
Agreement Officer

Table of Contents Page

Attachments

SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

LIFTING NICARAGUAN VOICES (LNV)

A. PURPOSE

USAID/Nicaragua is seeking assistance for a five-year activity to support the existence of an independent Nicaraguan civil society to effectively advocate for democratic principles, processes, and institutions.

B. BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Nicaragua's 16-year experiment with democracy starting with the electoral defeat of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in 1990, has experienced challenges since President Daniel Ortega returned to power in 2006. According to the 2016 Americas Barometer Latin America Public Opinion Poll (LAPOP) and other analyses, a majority of Nicaraguans fear discussing politics openly, and 39% of respondents said they either "agree strongly" (28%) or "agree" (11%) with the statement, "It is necessary to limit the voice and vote of the opposition to have progress in the country". Surveys show many Nicaraguans equate democracy to peace and security rather than to fiscal transparency, anti-corruption, citizen participation, or human rights. They also express belief in the need for strong handed political leaders for stability. Public support for democracy is eroding while indifference toward authoritarianism is increasing.

In December 2016, USAID/Nicaragua conducted a rapid assessment of civil society to explore the current state of affairs after the 2016 elections, focusing on urgent needs, opportunity, challenges and visions for the future. The rapid assessment combined with other consultations and a 2015 midterm performance evaluation of on-going civil society support activities enabled the team to determine the following problem areas are critical to address in the upcoming years.

Independent Civil Society in Crisis
Most of Nicaragua's venerable democracy and human rights Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) were founded in the late 1980s and early 1990s during the democratically elected government of President Violeta Chamorro. These organizations were critical in helping shape Nicaragua's nascent democratic experience, and are now in crisis. The formal processes and institutions of Nicaragua's democratic system – elections, representative parliament, independent media, and civil society organizations – have been eroded by effective executive power, and political, social, and economic exclusion. In an effort to consolidate power, authorities are increasing their selective regulatory control, and legal and administrative restrictions of the media (frequently resulting in self-censorship) and civil society organizations (CSOs). Additionally, since President Ortega's return to power in 2006, CSO funding has receded dramatically. The 2011 Presidential election, in which Daniel Ortega ran for and won a third term, was widely considered fraudulent – leading many donors to significantly reduce their bilateral assistance to Nicaragua.

Under the current regime, CSOs have been targeted in various ways: negative labeling and propaganda; legal and administrative restrictions hindering their participation; and direct prosecution and/or physical harassment and intimidation of activists, civil society, and media actors. A false dichotomy between security and order on the one side and respect for rights on the other too often finds a sympathetic ear in the general public where democratic culture is weak, and prioritizing order, stability, and growth is viewed more favorably, often at the cost of respect for rights.

Generational Divides and Fragmentation of Civil Society

Furthermore, these erosions of democracy are often met with resistance only by a few venerable national level democracy and human rights-oriented organizations that often lack a broad-based public support network. The established pro-democracy organizations struggle to connect with non-democracy focused organizations and younger generations who are viewed as apathetic by the civil war generation, minimizing the political costs of chipping away at basic freedoms and rights and further empowering the government.

In contrast, Nicaragua's young civil society has hope for the future and sees opportunities for democratic growth despite the current political situation in the country. They are creating social movements to impact change in the country, raising awareness of sensitive issues through unconventional forums, having discussions on social media about the state of the country, and looking for ways to get involved and make a change. They understand the need to tread lightly and find creative ways to address challenges without stepping across a line that would raise the ire of the government.

While many of the young people leading these efforts are not part of any formal or legal organization, some are exploring partnerships with well-established organizations to hold joint events and activities. In general, however, non-democracy advocacy organizations and younger populations do not find great value in the traditional democracy organizations which they tend to view as intellectual elites that are impractical, out of touch, and lack a strong base of constituency support.

Additionally, there are many young entrepreneurs that want to engage with civil society, but don't know how. These are young business leaders that have created new organizations outside of the "regular" Nicaraguan business organizations, and are looking for opportunities to engage.

Diminishing Funding Opportunities

At the same time that democratic political space is closing on civil society in Nicaragua, donor funding for traditional democracy promotion and human rights activities has decreased. Donor nations have either left Nicaragua or reduced their bilateral assistance to Nicaragua due to a combination of shrinking political space and financial or political crises at home. The handful of remaining donors must tread lightly by working on neutral topics such as tourism, health, and education, leaving USAID as one of the only remaining donors supporting the democracy and governance sector of Nicaragua.

The lack of access to funding has resulted in some of Nicaragua's most venerable civil society organizations reducing staff by 50%-80% within the last 5 years. In some of the most extreme cases, the organization exists only in name. These organizations spend precious remaining resources on trying to secure grants from a rapidly diminishing pool of funding, which creates incentives for competition between democracy focused organizations and reduced propensity for collaboration as these organizations struggle for their survival.

Most Nicaraguan CSOs operate with a philanthropic and traditional model, although many are trying to diversify their income sources. CSOs that have the ability to provide services for fees, such as health care, research and analysis, and digital security are finding some opportunities for income; however, they are concerned that the GON could claim they are breaching their non-profit status by making money. Other income generation activities include kickstarter campaigns to fund specific initiatives, exploring how to tap into individual remittances from abroad, and expanding their work to the region in hopes of receiving donor funds in other countries. Despite these efforts, most CSOs report they are operating on a month-by-month basis and are not sure how they will survive. The emerging field of market based approaches for civil society look to maximize impact and diversify funding streams to support their long term sustainability.

High Management Burden for Implementing Donor Funded Projects

Democracy focused organizations often draw increased scrutiny from the Government of Nicaragua in the form of audits and regulatory compliance. In addition, while donor funding levels have decreased in recent years, direct cost reimbursement grants often pose a high administrative burden and implementers/donors are often unwilling to cover overhead costs associated with these tasks, leaving CSOs with the unenviable task of utilizing technical democracy, governance, or human rights staff for reporting, monitoring, and evaluating activities, in which they may not have expertise. Grant agreements with local organizations often are structured in a way that lacks the necessary flexibility to promote adaptive programming if initial interventions prove to be insufficient or unsuccessful.

Lack of effective outreach

The significant decrease in staffing combined in some cases with a resistance towards embracing technological advances have left many venerable CSOs without effective outreach strategies for engaging younger generations and other potential constituents, or the ability to identify, track, and report on tangible outcome level results. The technology challenge also impacts their ability to protect the organizations and their employees against potential cyberattacks.

Lack of opportunities for talented and socially engaged youth to participate with CSOs due to diminished funding for core staffing positions

Given recent cutbacks in funding, professional development opportunities for youth within established civil society organizations is limited, leaving Nicaragua’s future generation of defenders of political space in a precarious state. Additionally, the challenge CSOs are facing with engaging energetic youth through relevant activities and effective outreach also threatens the potential future viability and relevance of existing organizations.

Lack of effective networking with other potential regional CSO allies and international organizations

Nicaraguan CSOs have had limited opportunities to form partnerships or alliances with other like-minded organizations in the region. The wave of authoritarian regimes in Latin America has created a cadre of experienced democracy oriented CSOs with expertise in remaining operational in closing political spaces, and Nicaraguan CSOs have limited opportunities to engage this resource.

Additionally, Nicaraguan CSOs presently have a low degree of visibility in the region and on the international stage due in part to the funding challenges. Nicaraguan CSOs have had limited access to key international fora where they can share their experience and highlight the realities in the country facing civil society and democracy writ large.

LINKAGE TO USAID/NICARAGUA CDCS

USAID/Nicaragua's 2013-2017 Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) was approved in August 2013, with the goal to prevent the erosion of national democratic governance and citizen insecurity along Nicaragua's Southern Caribbean coast. The CDCS recognizes that: a) local, municipal-level activities represent a key component of USAID's long-term democracy strategy in Nicaragua; b) USAID/Nicaragua municipal level activities help to improve local governance with a common goal of building a responsible and engaged citizenry at the local level; c) empowered and capable leaders working with a strong civil society together form the solid foundation for a culture of engagement and promotion of democratic and transparent governance; and d) support for civil society groups will ensure a greater competition of ideas, improved dialogue and advocacy for policy reform, and more effective oversight of government institutions. The concrete development objectives with corresponding measurable results include DO1: *Citizens' Ability to Engage in Democratic Governance Increased*, and Development Objective 2 (DO2): *Safety and Competitiveness of At-risk Children and Youth in Target Areas Improved*.

This project will focus on *Intermediate Result (IR) 1.1: Effectiveness of Local Governance Improved* and *IR 1.2 Advocacy for Democratic Processes Increased* of DO1, because although the access to democratic processes and governance is increasingly restrictive, USAID/Nicaragua sees the opportunity to have an impact and contribute to keeping political space open in several major areas. Programming focus will center on assisting CSOs at both the national and local level to better articulate their vision, aggregate citizen interests, practice internal democracy and enhance their advocacy skills. Programming will also focus on engaging the next generation of civil society leaders to enact positive social impact. In addition, efforts will be made to strengthen networks of civil society organizations, as well as inter-sectoral partnerships between civil society and other sectors of society (i.e., private sector institutions, media, and faith-based organizations) in order to identify opportunities for advancing joint reform agendas. Strengthening civil society organizations will also incorporate programming in USAID's support to the dissemination of independent information in Nicaragua (IR 1.3) as access to traditional and new independent media tools and increasing citizen access to information are essential to opening democratic spaces.

C. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The goal of this activity is to support and strengthen an independent Nicaraguan civil society to effectively advocate for democratic principles, processes, and institutions.

USAID's Democracy and Governance (DG) portfolio is implemented through a variety of cooperative agreements and contracts. The implementer will work in coordination with USAID/Nicaragua to achieve synergies and prevent duplication of efforts. USAID encourages applicants to propose initiatives to engage vulnerable populations (women, rural, indigenous, disabled, LGBTI, youth) in DG work. A minimum of 55% of the overall project budget must go to Nicaraguan civil society in the form of grants or in-kind support.

The implementer should achieve results under the following components:

<u>Component 1: Independent Voice and Effectiveness of Key CSOs Strengthened</u>

Result 1.1: Inventory and categorize Nicaraguan Civil Society Organizations
Result 1.2.: Support Core Democracy Stakeholders
Result 1.3: Support Civil Society Advocacy
Result 1.4: Implement Rapid Response Fund

<u>Component 2: Innovation to Support Nicaraguan Civil Society Promoted</u>

Result 2.1: Stage 1: Support testing of innovative concepts to solve civil society challenges
Result 2.2: Stage 2: Help pilot successful innovation concepts
Result 2.3: Stage 3: Transition proven innovative solutions to scale

<u>Component 3: Improved CSO Outreach and Results Oriented Programming</u>

Result 3.1: Strengthen CSOs capacity
Result 3.2: Increase opportunities for youth to engage in or work with civil society organizations
Result 3.3: Promote collaboration among domestic organizations to improve collective impact within Nicaragua
Result 3.4: Network with other Latin American CSOs
Result 3.5: Elevate Nicaraguan Voices in International Fora

<u>Component 1: Strengthen independent voice and effectiveness of key CSOs</u>

Dedicated CSO activity and organizational support is critical for maintaining effective human rights, democracy, transparency, and anti-corruption work in Nicaragua. To achieve this goal, USAID is seeking a creative grants structure to ensure well established democracy and human rights organizations have long-term support so they can focus on their missions rather than constantly seeking financial support, to engage new organizations in democracy and human rights work, and to respond to opportunities or challenges that may occur throughout the life of the project. The applicant should develop a grants portfolio that incorporates each of the following results:

Result 1.1: Inventory and categorize Nicaraguan Civil Society Organizations
This analysis should include: established organizations; new organizations that may or may not hold legal status; organizations that represent a variety of interests including but not limited to democratic governance, anticorruption, human rights, natural resource management, economic development, women's rights issues, and access to education; private family and business foundations; and, religious organizations. At a minimum, the analysis should produce a list of organizations to be considered "Core Democracy Stakeholders".

Illustrative activities:
- Market analysis and network mapping of all key independent CSO stakeholders operating in Nicaragua at a national, regional and local levels
- Interviews with key stakeholders at the national, regional and local levels

Result 1.2: Support Core Democracy Stakeholders.
Based on Result 1.1 the implementer will issue large scale, multi-year sub-awards through a competitive process for well established democracy and human rights civil society organizations with a national reach. The implementer should include a conceptual framework for the competition, including illustrative selection criteria. The recipients of these sub-awards should have dedicated technical support from the project. The implementer should include how the recipients of these sub-awards will receive support under Component 3.

Illustrative activities:
- Support democracy and human rights civil society organizations to carry out advocacy campaigns, promote public policy dialogue, and demand accountability of public resources.

Result 1.3: Support Civil Society Advocacy.
Based on Result 1.1, the implementer will issue medium scale, medium term sub-awards through a competitive process. While recipients for this component may include core democracy stakeholder support organizations, it should also be open to a variety of CSOs conducting advocacy, public policy dialogue, and accountability at the regional and local levels. The implementer should include a conceptual framework for the competition, including illustrative selection criteria. The recipients of these sub-awards may have dedicated technical support from the project; if so, the implementer should include a framework on how it will determine which of the recipients of these sub-awards will receive support under Component 3, and what kind of support.

Illustrative activities:

- Support a campaign to raise awareness on human rights according to Nicaraguan Law.

Result 1.4: Implement Rapid Response Fund.

The Rapid Response Fund (RRF) is a small, flexible mechanism that will allow this activity to respond to opportunities and/or crises that may emerge during the implementation of the technical components, which enhances the achievement of the project's components and expected results. The proposed funding level for the RRF should be around US$50,000 annually or US $250,000 during the period of performance of the Cooperative Agreement. USAID may adjust these figures depending on the number of requests and their amount, and the Applicant can propose other figures if they deem it necessary.

This RRF will give USAID and the Implementer the flexibility to quickly and efficiently respond to problems that have not been foreseen or anticipated but that offer high pay off within any of the components under this Agreement. A Manual for the use of the RRF shall be developed by the Recipient and approved by the AO. The fund should be managed by the Recipient in a separate line item. The use of these funds requires AOR prior written approval, and shall be reported in Quarterly and Annual Reports.

Illustrative activities:

- Support a public dialogue about a rapidly emerging issue that has far reaching impact on civil society.

[NOTE: The resources dedicated to the component should be in the range of $3.5 to $4.5 million dollars.]

Special Considerations:

1. The applicant should include an illustrative selection and implementation plan for the grants program, including USAID's role in developing the selection criteria.
2. The applicant should include a draft methodology for assessing which CSOs are capable of diversifying funding streams to reduce donor dependency, and discuss what kind of technical support those organizations would receive under component 3.1. using either the USAID's Organizational Performance Index (OPI), Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) or Human Institutional Capacity Development (HICD) approach. Whichever approach is selected by the implementer should include a description for long term sustainability past the life of the award.
3. The applicant should include a strategy demonstrating how grants awarded to CSOs should include an approach to build alliances between organizations that are normally competitors and/or between young civil society actors and venerable organizations.

Component 2: Promote Innovation to Support Nicaraguan Civil Society

Breakthrough solutions in Nicaragua can come from anyone, anywhere in the country. For that reason, USAID is committed to advancing a culture of innovation by engaging new people, ideas, and ways of solving development challenges. Open innovation, collaboration, and experimentation are at the heart of this component. Applicant should draw upon USAID's multi-tiered innovation grant model, which replicates the venture capital experience that invests comparatively small amounts in relatively unproven concepts, and continues to support only those that prove they work. The applicant will develop a three-tiered grant competition to find innovative solutions for the challenges facing Nicaragua's civil society.

(1) **Result 2.1 - Stage 1: Support testing of innovative concepts to solve civil society challenges.** Stage 1 grants should support the introduction of solutions to civil society's challenges to gain an early, real-world assessment of the solution. This includes testing for technical, organization, distribution, and financial viability. Key activities could include assessing user demand, willingness to pay, and correct usage of products and services, as well as documenting social outcomes and real world costs to implement the solution.

(2) **Result 2.2 - Stage 2: Help pilot successful innovation concepts.** Stage 2 grants support testing for social impact, improved outcomes and/or market viability, as well as operational refinement to build paths to sustainability and scale. Stage 2 applicants should have already met all the requirements of a Stage 1 project described above.

(3) **Result 2.3 - Stage 3: Transition Proven Innovative Solutions to Scale.** Stage 3 grants support transitioning proven approaches to scale, which could include adaptation to new contexts and geographies. Operational challenges for scaling should be identified and addressed, allowing refinement and iteration along defined pathways to scale. Stage 3 applicants must explain how they will use the funds in a catalytic fashion so that they can raise needed resources from sources other than Lifting Nicaraguan Voices.

Ideally the competition would be open year round, but the implementer needs to balance a rolling application process with staffing limitations. The competition should encourage all Nicaraguans to develop bold solutions to the challenges facing civil society. The innovative process will find both failures and successes: but when ideas fail, the lesson is learned quickly and at relatively low expense; and when ideas succeed, we find out how to reach millions of people at a fraction of the usual cost.

Illustrative Activities:

- Development of applications that track social conflicts at the community level

- Crowd-funding incentives to encourage citizen participation in issues of national interest
- Delivering community-based behavioral interventions for advocacy across a mobile platform in order to increase social auditing of government initiatives
- Empowering citizens with knowledge-based legal and democratic forecasts on affordable mobile platforms

[NOTE: The resources dedicated to the innovation component should be in the range of $1.5 to $2.5 million dollars.]

Special considerations:

1. The applicant should consider that good ideas may come from individuals without links to a business or organization, and discuss how the project will ensure anyone with a bold idea to help Nicaragua's civil society will have access to capital.
2. The applicant should include a description of its management approach to this component, including staffing to manage proposals and grants, how the grant application process will work, and how the applicant will monitor and evaluate the impact of the innovation grants.
3. The applicant should propose funding levels and timing for each innovation tier.
4. The applicant should discuss how challenges will be defined, by whom, and provide illustrative examples of selection criteria.

<u>Component 3: Improve CSO Outreach and Results-Oriented Programming</u>

Cross cutting organizational development activities developed in a comprehensive, yet targeted approach are critical to helping Nicaraguan CSOs become more effective, competitive, and relevant. Component 3 activities should prioritize supporting recipients in Results 1.2 and 1.3. The implementer should take advantage of this component as an opportunity to engage groups that may have limited experience working with donor funding and not currently receiving direct support assistance. The applicant may add additional results to the application, but those listed below must be included in the comprehensive approach:

Result 3.1: Strengthen CSOs capacity.

Implementer will provide customized technical assistance to improve performance and achieve organizational objectives of grant recipients under Component 1. Implementer should propose a process to determine which grant recipients from Component 1 will receive this assistance, and what kind of assistance they will receive. Technical assistance could include the following areas:

- Advocacy
- Mentoring/Coaching on motivation
- Diversification of income streams

- Communications/outreach
- Social Media

Illustrative activities:

- Training and/or technical assistance to develop the capacity for effectiveness and improve the governance of civil society groups
- Implementation of organizational performance assessments
- Completion of training implementation plans
- Targeted CSOs implement strategic plans
- Selected CSOs diversify their funding base
- Targeted CSOs implement communication plans

Result 3.2: Increase opportunities for youth to engage in or work with civil society organizations.
Separate from sub grant funding, applicant should detail how they will utilize project resources to create new opportunities for young professionals to engage with civil society organizations through professional or volunteer opportunities with organizations that are recipients of the program's Core Democracy Stakeholders Support (1.2), Advocacy Support (1.3), or Innovation Support grants (2.1, 2.2, 2.3).

Illustrative activities:

- Fellowships
- Internships
- Exchanges

Result 3.3: Promoted collaboration among domestic organizations to improve collective impact within Nicaragua: Implementer should detail how they will incentivize collaboration between domestic civil society organizations that traditionally have been competitors in the democratic space.

Illustrative activities:

- Activities to build trust, information sharing, and collaboration between traditional and non traditional democratic actors, bridging generational gaps between newer and more established organizations
- Creative approaches to addressing resource limitations through potential sharing of physical spaces, technology, and staff
- Building incentives to provide grant funding to promote joint advocacy campaigns and utilizing technology

Result 3.4: Network with other Latin American CSOs: Implementer should propose creative ways for Nicaraguan CSOs to broaden their perspectives and learn new practices through engagement with CSOs throughout the region.

Illustrative activities:

- Online and in person learning exchanges
- Engage in cost effective opportunities to leverage the knowledge and experience of other regional organizations

Result 3.5: Elevate Nicaraguan Voices in International Fora.
Implementer should propose key international opportunities in which Nicaraguan CSOs can elevate the democratic issues facing the nation.

Illustrative activities:

- Participation of CSOs in international fora

Gender Considerations

The applicant should outline any gender issues that need to be considered during activity implementation. Implementer should identify gender-based constraints and propose strategies and activities on how to address these gaps during the implementation of the activity.

Progress and results for gender strategies proposed should be included in semi annual and final reports. These issues will reflect at minimum the consideration of the following questions:

1. Do women and men have the same opportunity to participate in the activity being undertaken?
2. If not, is it possible to adjust the activity to ensure equal opportunity?
3. Are women and men treated differently by the activity or the work to be undertaken?
4. Are women and men affected differently by the activity or the work to be undertaken?
5. If so, would this difference be an important factor in managing the activity to ensure sustainable program impact?
6. Can the activity be adjusted to help empower groups that otherwise might be disadvantaged in terms of decision-making and leadership roles?

The application must describe how the above concerns will be addressed, and how gender considerations can be mainstreamed into activity implementation. To increase the effectiveness of activities, the applicant should consider in its approach gender differences and constraints as identified when considering the questions above. The applicant may also propose adding indicators targeting gender issues.

People with Disabilities

USAID policy requires that disability issues be addressed as appropriate in all USAID-funded activities. The applicant should consider to the maximum extent feasible the concerns of people with physical and cognitive disabilities in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the USAID-funded activities.

E. Key Personnel
The key personnel for this Activity are as follows:

1. Chief of Party
2. Grants Manager
3. Advocacy and Civil Society Technical Expert
4. Innovation Specialist

The key personnel must have the appropriate qualifications and experience to work as a team to manage a complex U.S. Government activity, especially the ability to bring in international best practices in the program area. The personnel specified above are considered to be essential to the work being performed hereunder. Prior to replacing any of the specified individuals, the implementer must notify both the Agreements Officer and the Agreements Officer Representative (AOR) reasonably in advance and submit written justification (including proposed substitutions) in sufficient detail to permit evaluation of the impact on the activity. No replacement will be made by the recipient without the written approval of the Agreements Officer. Candidates for key personnel positions with an additional 10 years of experience in lieu of an advanced degree (Masters or PhD) will also qualify for the position.

Qualifications of Key Personnel:

1. **Chief of Party (COP):** The Chief of Party (COP) will be responsible for overall program management, including providing leadership to attain expected results , ensuring adequate communications with USAID, and identifying and mitigating program risks. This individual must be a professional who has a Master's Degree in Administration, Education, Public Policy or similar field. The candidate must have demonstrated experience in working with a range of stakeholders including CSOs, private sector, and the media, to support the program's objectives. S/he must have excellent written and spoken Spanish and English (English and Spanish at the FSI 4/4 level). The candidate must possess at least seven years of prior related management experience. Previous experience working with international cooperation agencies is highly desirable. The candidate must possess experience working with local CSOs and proven capacity to facilitate coordination amongst diverse sectors is required. Experience managing development programs in complex political settings would be preferred.

2. **Grants Manager:** The Grants Manager must have, at a minimum, a Bachelor's degree; an advanced degree (Masters or PhD) is desirable. The candidate must be an

experienced professional who has a minimum of five years of experience managing grants and working with local CSOs. S/he must have excellent written and spoken Spanish (English at the FSI 3/3 level; Spanish at the FSI 5/5 level). Experience in working with innovative grant making methodologies and social ventures is preferred. The Grants Manager must possess grants management experience of at least three years with strong management skills to work with a range of technical staff and develop professional relationships with CSOs, private sector, and other donors.

3. **Advocacy and Civil Society Technical Expert:** The Advocacy and Civil Society Technical Expert must have, at a minimum, a Bachelor's degree; an advanced degree (Masters or PhD) is desirable. The candidate must be an experienced professional who has a minimum of five years of experience working in advocacy or providing expert technical assistance to CSOs. S/he must have excellent written and spoken Spanish (English at the FSI 3/3 level; Spanish at the FSI 5/5 level). Experience in working with democracy, governance, and/or human rights advocacy organizations is preferred.

4. **Innovation Specialist:** The Innovation Specialist must have, at a minimum, a Bachelor's degree; an advanced degree (Masters or PhD) is desirable. The candidate must have a demonstrated knowledge of social innovation and ability to foster an environment for ideation, prototyping and production. S/he must have business acumen to shepherd ideas from design stage through implementation, and ideally scaling a concept. The candidate must have a passion for scouting unusual and high potential impact ideas and opportunities, and then linking these with academia, media, youth networks, private sector, religious groups, and local entrepreneurs towards solving development challenges. Expertise rolling out and analyzing effectiveness of initiatives that leverage multiplatform technologies is preferred. S/he must have excellent written and spoken Spanish (English at the FSI 3/3 level; Spanish at the FSI 5/5 level).

F. Recipient Responsibilities

Overview:

Recipient will retain overall management responsibility for all aspects of the program, including management of all sub-agreements and sub-contracts. (See also section on Substantial Involvement). In addition to adhering to the policies, laws, and regulations governing LAC assistance awards, recipients are also responsible for the following:

- General program management, including financial management, reporting, and provision of technical assistance to participating organizations.
- In consultation with USAID, developing appropriate working and coordination relationships with other program grantees.

- In consultation with USAID, finalizing the life-of-project and annual workplans, project-specific results framework, and performance management plan (PMP) covering all program components within 60 days of award.
- Identifying, managing, and supporting other essential programs and communications.
- Carrying out reporting and monitoring and evaluation responsibilities as described below.

[END OF SECTION A]

SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

Subject to funding availability, USAID intends to fund a program in an amount not to exceed $12,000,000 in total USAID funding over a five year period. The ceiling for this program is $12,000,000. Actual funding amounts are subject to availability of funds.

USAID intends to award one (1) Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity.

USAID reserves the right to fund any one or none of the applications submitted.

The Government will issue one award resulting from this RFA to the responsible applicant whose application conforming to this RFA are the most responsive to the objectives set forth in this RFA. The Government may (a) reject any or all applications, (b) accept other than the lowest cost application, (c) accept more than one application, (d) accept alternate applications, and (e) waive informalities and minor irregularities in applications received.

The Government may make award on the basis of initial applications received, without discussions or negotiations. Therefore, each initial application should contain the applicant's best terms from a cost and technical standpoint. The Government reserves the right (but is not under obligation to do so), however, to enter into discussions with one or more applicants in order to obtain clarifications, additional detail, or to suggest refinements in the project description, budget, or other aspects of an application.

Neither financial data submitted with an application nor representations concerning facilities or financing, will form a part of the resulting agreement(s).

The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed award may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed cooperative agreement or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

2. Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Awards

The period of performance anticipated herein is five years. The estimated start date will be upon the signature of the award, on or about. USAID anticipates that the successful recipient of the Agreement will begin activities immediately after signing the Agreement. The Agreement will provide support for five years from the date of the Agreement signature, subject to the availability of funds. All program activities are expected to be completed within that period.

3. Substantial Involvement

The intended purpose of the Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) involvement during the award is to assist the recipient in achieving the supported objectives of the agreement. USAID will be substantially involved during the implementation of this Cooperative Agreement in the following areas:

1. Approval of the Recipient's Annual Work Plans: The Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) will review and approve all annual work plans.
2. Approval of Specified Key Personnel: The Agreement Officer (AO) will approve key personnel.
3. Agency and Recipient Collaboration or Joint Participation:

- The Agreement Officer (AO) will approve the Sub-awards Manual
- The AOR will review and approve the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan; Annual and quarterly and performance reports; and biannual Activity Implementation Reviews (AIRs); and Final Report;
- The AOR will provide approval for sub-awards;
- The AOR will provide technical guidance on the use of rapid response funds and approve rapid response activities;
- The AOR will approve all international travel under this award.

4. Title to Property

Property title under the resultant agreement shall vest with the recipient in accordance with the Requirements of 2 CFR 200.313 "Equipment".

5. Authorized Geographic Code

The geographic code for this program is 937.

6. Purpose of the Award

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient and under the subject program is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of the Lifting Nicaraguan Voices (LNV) program which is authorized by Federal statute.

The successful Recipient 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 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.

The Recipient using its own unique combination of staff, facilities, and experience, has the primary responsibility for employing whatever form of sound organization and management techniques may be necessary in order to assure proper and efficient administration of the resulting award.

[END OF SECTION B]

SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The following types of entities are eligible to apply for funding under this NFO:

U.S. Non-Governmental non-profit organizations, US Private Voluntary Organizations (USPVOs) and US for profit organizations: U.S. Non-Governmental non-profit and U.S. private for- profit organizations may apply for funding under this NFO. U.S. potential for-profit applicants should note however that, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.400(g), profit, which is any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs, **is not an allowable cost for recipients of USAID awards, and cannot be part of the program budget.**

U.S Colleges and Universities: US colleges and universities may apply for funding under this NFO. USAID generally treats colleges and universities as NGOs, rather than governmental organizations; hence, both public and private colleges and universities are eligible, except public colleges and universities in countries that are ineligible for assistance under the FAA or related appropriations acts. Please note, however, that this NFO is focused on people-to people programming that addresses divisions within a community and is not intended to fund academic research.

New Partners: USAID welcomes applications from US organizations which have not previously received financial assistance from USAID. However, resultant awards to these organizations may be delayed because USAID generally must conduct pre-award surveys of these organizations in order to make a risk assessment/responsibility determination.

Registration as Private Voluntary Organization (PVO): NGOs that meet the definition of a Private Voluntary Organization as defined in 22 CFR 203 http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title22-vol1-part203.xml are encouraged to register as a PVO with USAID. Applicants may find registration instructions here: http://www.usaid.gov/pvo

The eligibility requirement is restricted only to the prime Applicant but not to the sub-awardee which could be a Nicaraguan local organization. USAID definition of a local organization follows:

Only local organizations as defined below are eligible for award. USAID defines a local organization as one that:

- Is organized under the laws of the recipient country;
- Has its principal place of business in Nicaragua
- Is majority-owned by individuals who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of the recipient country or is managed by the governing body, the majority of whose members are citizens or lawful permanent residents of Nicaragua and
- Is not controlled by a foreign an entity or by an individual or individuals who are not citizens or permanent residents of Nicaragua

The term “control” or controlled by” in the above definition means having a majority ownership or beneficially interest, or the power, either directly or indirectly, whether exercised or exercisable, to control the election, appointment, or tenure of the organization’s managers or a majority of the organization’s governing body by any means, e.g., ownership, contract, or operation of law. The term “Foreign Entity” means an organization that fail to meet any part of the “local organization” definition.

Applicants must have established financial management, monitoring and evaluation processes, internal control systems, and policies and procedures that comply with established U.S. Government standards, laws, and regulations.

The Recipient must be a responsible entity. The AO may determine a pre-award survey for the successful applicant in order to conduct an examination that will determine whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls, 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.

In addition, all prospective partners must be organizations with a reputation for integrity and the highest standard of conduct, and a proven track record in their particular areas of expertise. They should be able to demonstrate a respect for human rights, gender sensitivity, and inclusion of people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, decent work conditions, environmental protection, and community involvement in their operational practices. They should also be able to provide evidence of a strong commitment to the proposed consortium and/or partnerships; and, ideally, experience in working in partnership with others.

Potential for-profit applicants should note that USAID policy prohibits the payment of fee/profit under assistance instruments. Forgone profit does not qualify as cost-sharing or leveraging.

To be eligible for award of a Cooperative Agreement, in addition to other conditions of this NFO, organizations must have a commitment to non-discrimination with respect to beneficiaries and adherence to equal opportunity employment practices. Non-discrimination includes equal treatment without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, gender, and political affiliation.

2. Ineligible Applicants

Public International Organizations (PIOs) and International Organizations other than US for the Prime Recipient are ineligible to apply.

USAID will not accept applications from individuals.

3. Cost Sharing or Matching

USAID has established a suggested cost share of 5% for the recipient of the award. Such funds may be mobilized from 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. For guidance on cost sharing in grants and cooperative agreements refer to 2 CFR 200.306 and ADS 303. To qualify as cost-share, the cost-share must be verifiable from the recipients' records.

4. Other

The applicant will only submit one application under this notice of funding opportunity. This limitation on the number of applications is on both submitting organization, the prime and potential sub-recipient.

[END OF SECTION C]

SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Agency Point of Contact

Name: Carla Vanessa Morales
Title: A&A Specialist
USAID/Nicaragua
Email: oaanicaragua@usaid.gov

Questions and Answers:

All questions regarding this NFO should be submitted in writing to Carla Vanessa Morales to the e-mail address above **no later than May 12, 2017 at 12:00 noon Local Nicaragua Time** to provide sufficient time to address the questions and incorporate the questions and answers as an amendment to this solicitation. **Any questions submitted after May 12, 2017 will NOT be responded**. Any information given to a prospective Applicant concerning this NFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective Applicants as an amendment to this NFO, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective Applicant.

Applicants are expected to review, understand, and comply with all aspects of the NFO.

2. Application submission procedures

Each applicant shall furnish the information required by this NFO in electronic form to oaanicaragua@usaid.gov. Applications shall be submitted in electronic forms in two separate parts: (a) Technical Application, and (b) Cost/Business Application.

All electronic files containing Technical and Cost Applications must be clearly marked on the subject line with the following words **"NFO-524-17-000004 – Lifting Nicaraguan Voices (LNV) Program".** Submit applications electronically (e-mail) in compliance with the following conditions:

- Internet e-mail with up to 3 attachments with 10 MB limit per e-mail compatible with MS Word, Excel and PDF (no zipped or compressed files). **Cover page must identify applications with NFO number, the name of the firm submitting the application and Unique Entity Identifier number.**

- Email applications must be submitted to: oaanicaragua@usaid.gov subject line of the email must contain the NFO number "**NFO-524-17-000004 – Lifting Nicaraguan Voices (LNV) Program".**

- Time of receipt of the email is the USAID email gateway time-stamp of the message header;

- For an application sent by multiple emails, please indicate in the subject line of the email whether the email relates to the technical or cost application, and the desired sequence of multiple emails (if more than one is sent) and of 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 which says: "[organization name], Cost Application, Part 1 of 2".

- Our preference is that the technical application and the cost application be submitted as single email attachments, e.g. that you consolidate the various parts of a technical application into a single document before sending them. 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. All applications received by the submission deadline will be reviewed for responsiveness to the NFO and the application format. No addition or modifications will be accepted after the submission date.

- After you have sent your applications electronically, immediately check your own email to confirm that the attachments you intended to send were indeed sent. If you discover an error in your 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.

It is the Applicant’s responsibility to ensure that all necessary documentation is complete and received on time.

USAID will acknowledge receipt of all applications received through email notification confirming receipt.

- **Unnecessarily Elaborate Applications:** Unnecessarily elaborated brochures or other presentations beyond those sufficient to present a complete and effective application in response to this RFA are not desired and may be construed as an indication of the applicant's lack of cost consciousness. Elaborate artwork, expensive paper and bindings, and expensive visual and other presentation aids are neither necessary nor wanted.

- **Authority to Obligate the Government:** The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the U.S. Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed agreement may be incurred before receipt of either an agreement signed by the Agreement Officer or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

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

- Applicants 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 title page with the following legend:

"This application includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the U.S. Government and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, a grant is awarded to this Applicant as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, the U.S. Government shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting grant. 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} and, mark each sheet of data it wished to restrict with the following legend:

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

Applicants should retain for their records one (1) copy of the application and all enclosures which accompany it.

3. Required Forms

All Applicants must submit the application using the SF-424 series, which includes the:

- SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance
- SF-424A, Budget Information - Nonconstruction Programs, and
- SF-424B, Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs

These forms can be found in the following links
- SF-424 http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SF424_2_1-V2.1.pdf
- SF-424A http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SF424A-V1.0.pdf
- SF-424B http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SF424B-V1.1.pdf

4. Required Certifications

In addition to the certifications that are included in the SF 424, applicants must check, complete and sign certifications, assurances and other statements for both U.S. and Non-U.S. organizations (**see Attachment)**.

1. Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs (This assurance applies to Non-U.S. organizations, if any part of the program will be undertaken in the U.S.);
2. Certification on Lobbying (22 CFR 227);
3. Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers (ADS 206);
4. Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing;
5. Certification Regarding Trafficking in Persons Implementing Title XVII of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013;
6. Certification of Recipient
7. Key Individual Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking (ADS 206.3.10);
8. Participant Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking (ADS 206.3.10).
9. Representations by Organizations Regarding a Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Criminal Conviction
10. Authorized Individuals
11. Taxpayer Identification Number
12. Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number
13. Letter of Credit (LOC) Number
14. Procurement Information
15. Past Performance References
16. Type of Organization
17. Estimated cost of Communication Products

Electronic copy of these certifications can be also found in the following link:
https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf

Past Performance Information: The Applicant must provide information on past performance in accordance with the format below. USAID may use performance information obtained from other than the sources identified by the Applicant/subrecipient. USAID may utilize existing databases of recipient performance information and solicit additional information from the references provided herein and contact the individual(s) indicated as well as others. If the performance information contains negative information on which the Applicant has not previously been given an opportunity to comment, USAID will provide the Applicant an opportunity to comment on it prior to its consideration in the evaluation.

Past Performance Information (PPI)

(To be completed by the applicant)

1.	**Award Number:**
2.	**Contractor/Recipient (Name and Address):**
3.	**Type of Award:**
4.	**Complexity of Work: Difficult ___________Routine ________**
5.	**Description, location, and relevancy of work:**
6.	**Dollar Value of Work : ______________________** **Status: Active _________Completed __________**
7.	**Date of Award: ________________** **Award Completion Date (including extensions): ______________________**
8.	**Type and Extent of Subawards, if any:**
9.	**POC Name, Telephone Number, and E-mail Address of the Awarding Contracting/Agreement Officer and/or the Contracting/Agreement Officer 's Representative (and other references as applicable):**

NOTE: USAID relies on the prime organization's review of partner/subrecipient institutions. However, if deemed necessary to ensure prudent use of USG funds, USAID may conduct its own past performance review of proposed partners/subrecipient institutions.

5. Technical Application Format

5.1. General

The technical application will be the most important factor for consideration in selection for award of the proposed Cooperative Agreement. The technical application should be specific, complete and presented concisely. The application should demonstrate the Applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this program. The application should take into account the requirements of the program and merit review criteria found in this NFO. Therefore, Applicants must organize the Technical Application to follow the technical evaluation criteria specified in Section E: Application Review Information.

It is USAID policy that English shall be the control language of all awards documents. As a result, it is required that the applications be in English and typed on standard 8 1/2" x 11" paper (216mm by 297mm paper), single spaced, font type Times New Roman 12, with each page numbered consecutively.

The technical application shall include the following sections:
(i) Cover Page
The Cover Page should include the following:
a. Program title;
b. Request for Applications reference number;
c. Name of organization (s) applying for the agreement and with Unique Entity Identifier number
d. Any partnerships; and
e. Contact person, telephone number, fax number, address, and types name(s) and title(s) of person(s) who prepared the application, and corresponding signatures.
(ii) Table of contents that follows the technical application format outlined herein.

Applicant should include a draft Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) plan with annual targets, performance indicators, and definitions in their application. Applicants should include a level of effort and funds to conduct a baseline assessment. A draft approach for the baseline assessment will be included as an appendix to the application.

5.2 Page Limitation.

The page length of the entire Technical Application shall NOT exceed 35 pages exclusive of Annexes and other pages not subject to the page limitation indicated below.

Therefore, technical applications must be organized as follows:

I. Executive Summary (limited to 2 pages)
II. Technical Approach (no more than 21 pages)
III. Project management (limited to 3 pages)
IV. Annexes - USAID will not review annexes that are not included below.
  i. **Draft Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL) Plan (limited to 5 pages)**
  ii. **Resumes (key personnel) (limited to 2 pages per resume per person)**
  iii. **Project Organizational Chart (limited to 1 page)**
  iv. **Past Performance Information and Summary Chart with POC name, telephone number and email address (no limit)**
  v. **Geographic Strategy (limited to 1 page)**

Any application OVER 35 PAGES WILL NOT BE EVALUATED. Additional documentation not requested above will not be reviewed.

5.3 Key personnel

The four key staff positions shall include:

i. Project Director/Chief of party
ii. Grants Manager
iii. Advocacy and Civil Society Technical Expert
iv. Innovation Specialist

Each of the four personnel must meet or exceed the qualification described below.

The key personnel must have the appropriate qualifications and experience to work as a team to manage a complex U.S. Government activity, especially the ability to bring in international best practices in the program area. The personnel specified above are considered to be essential to the work being performed hereunder. Prior to replacing any of the specified individuals, the implementer must notify both the Agreements Officer and the Agreements Officer Representative (AOR) reasonably in advance and submit written justification (including proposed substitutions) in sufficient detail to permit evaluation of the impact on the activity. No replacement will be made by the recipient without the written approval of the Agreements Officer. Candidates for key personnel positions with an additional 10 years of experience in lieu of an advanced degree (Masters or PhD) will also qualify for the position.

Qualifications of Key Personnel:

1. Project Director/Chief of Party (COP): The Chief of Party (COP) will be responsible for overall program management, including providing leadership to attain expected results , ensuring adequate communications with USAID, and identifying and mitigating program risks. This individual must be a professional who has a Master's Degree in Administration, Education, Public Policy or similar field. The candidate must have demonstrated experience in working with a range of stakeholders including CSOs, private sector, and the media, to support the program's objectives. S/he must have excellent written and spoken Spanish and English (English and Spanish at the FSI 4/4 level). The candidate must possess at least seven years of prior related management experience. Previous experience working with international cooperation agencies is highly desirable. The candidate must possess experience working with local CSOs and proven capacity to facilitate coordination amongst diverse sectors is required. Experience managing development programs in complex political settings would be preferred.

2.**Grants Manager:** The Grants Manager must have, at a minimum, a Bachelor's degree; an advanced degree (Masters or PhD) is desirable. The candidate must be an experienced professional who has a minimum of five years of experience managing grants and working with local CSOs. S/he must have excellent written and spoken Spanish (English at the FSI 3/3 level; Spanish at the FSI 5/5 level). Experience in working with innovative grant making methodologies and social ventures is preferred. The Grants Manager must possess grants management experience of at least three years with strong management skills to work with a range of technical staff and develop professional relationships with CSOs, private sector, and other donors.

3.Advocacy and Civil Society Technical Expert: The Advocacy and Civil Society Technical Expert must have, at a minimum, a Bachelor's degree; an advanced degree (Masters or PhD) is desirable. The candidate must be an experienced professional who has a minimum of five years of experience working in advocacy or providing expert technical assistance to CSOs. S/he must have excellent written and spoken Spanish (English at the FSI 3/3 level; Spanish at the FSI 5/5 level). Experience in working with democracy, governance, and/or human rights advocacy organizations is preferred.

4.Innovation Specialist: The Innovation Specialist must have, at a minimum, a Bachelor's degree; an advanced degree (Masters or PhD) is desirable. The candidate must have a demonstrated knowledge of social innovation and ability to foster an environment for ideation, prototyping and production. S/he must have business acumen to shepherd ideas from design stage through implementation, and ideally scaling a concept. The candidate must have a passion for scouting unusual and high potential impact ideas and opportunities, and then linking these with academia, media, youth networks, private sector, religious groups, and local entrepreneurs towards solving development challenges. Expertise rolling out and analyzing effectiveness of initiatives that leverage multi platform technologies is preferred. S/he must have excellent written and spoken Spanish (English at the FSI 3/3 level; Spanish at the FSI 5/5 level).

Technical applications must not make reference to specific costs or detailed pricing data.

6. Cost Application Format

The Applicant must sign and submit the cost application standard form number SF-424 and SF-424A. Standard Forms can be accessed electronically at www.grants.gov.

The Cost or Business application is to be submitted under a separate cover from the Technical application. The Cost/Business application is also to be submitted in Microsoft Excel 2000 or Excel 2003. The Applicant is requested to submit a budget broken down by program years with an accompanying detailed budget narrative (in Word 2000 or Word 2003 text accessible) which provides in detail the total costs for implementation of the program as further detailed below.

Certain documents are required to be submitted by an Applicant in order for the Agreement Officer to make a determination of responsibility. Information on the cost application must be in enough detail for the Agreement Officer to determine that the proposed costs for the Applicant's program are allocable, allowable and reasonable. However, it is USAID policy not to burden Applicants with undue reporting requirements if that information is readily available through other sources. There is no page limit on the Cost Application. However, unnecessarily elaborate brochures or other presentations beyond those sufficient to present a complete and effective application in response to this NFO is not desired. Elaborate art work, expensive paper and bindings, and expensive visual and other presentation aids are neither necessary nor wanted.

If the Applicant has established a consortium or another legal relationship among its partners, the Cost/Business application must include a copy of the legal relationship between the parties. The agreement should include a full discussion of the relationship between the Applicant and Sub-Applicant(s) including identification of the Applicant with whom USAID will work with for purposes of Agreement administration, identity of the Applicant which will have accounting responsibility, how Agreement effort will be allocated and the express agreement of the principals thereto to be held jointly and severely liable for the acts or omissions of the other.

The following sections describe the documentation that the Applicants must submit to USAID prior to award. While there is no page limit for this portion, Applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible, but still provide the necessary details to address the following:

1. The budget must have an accompanying budget summary as well as a detailed budget narrative and a complete budget narrative that provides in sufficient detail the total program amount for implementation of the program your organization is proposing. The budget narrative should provide information regarding the basis of estimate for each line item, including reference to sources used to substantiate the cost estimate (e.g. organization's policy, payroll document, and vendor quotes, etc.).

2. A budget for each program year with an accompanying detailed budget narrative which provides in detail the total costs for implementation of the program. The budget must be submitted using Standard Form 424 which can be downloaded from the following web site at: http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15

3. A breakdown of all costs associated with the program according to the costs of, if applicable, headquarters, regional and/or country offices.

4. Applicants who intend to utilize contractors or sub-awardees should indicate the extent intended and a complete cost breakdown. Extensive contracts/agreement financial plans should follow the same cost format as submitted by the primary Applicant. A breakdown of all costs

according to each partner organization, contract or sub-awardee involved in the program should be provided.

Pursuant to 2 CFR 200 Contract means a legal instrument by which the Applicant purchases property or services needed to carry out the project or program under a resulting award. The term does not include a legal instrument when the substance of the transaction meets the definition of a Federal award or sub-award (see § 200.92 Sub-award), even if the Applicant considers it a contract. The Applicant must describe the work to be performed, the risk borne by the contractor, the contractor's investment, the amount of subcontracting proposed by the contractor, and the quality of its record of past performance for similar work. For-profit contract organizations that work under the award and do not meet the above definition of a sub-awardee are eligible for profit/fee.

The cost/business application should contain the budget categories as shown on the SF-424A.

Applicants shall provide this information through the use of detailed spreadsheets, budget narratives and footnotes. The following standard cost elements shall be included in the submission when applicable and include costs for each year. Individual subcontractors should include the same cost element breakdowns in their budgets as applicable.

Cost Elements	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
1. Salaries and Wages						
2. Fringe Benefits						
3. Consultants						
4. Travel and Transportation						
5. Equipment and Supplies						
6. Sub-contracts						
7. Sub-grants						
8. Rapid Response Fund						
9. Other Direct Costs						
10. Indirect Costs						
11. TOTAL AWARD BUDGET						

Note: Individual sub-awards proposed as part of application should include the same cost element break-downs in their budget as applicable

Illustrative description of the cost elements are provided below:

1. <u>Salary and Wages</u> – must be proposed in accordance with the applicant’s personnel policies and must include as much as possible information about the personnel’s name, position, salary rate, level of effort and salary escalation factors. Escalation factors must be in accordance with the applicant’s personnel policies duly supported by documentation.

2. Fringe Benefits – If the applicant has a fringe benefit rate approved by an agency of the U.S. Government, the applicant must use such rate and provide evidence of its approval. If an applicant does not have a fringe benefit rate approved, the application must propose a rate and explain how the applicant determined the rate; in this case, the narrative must include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits (e.g., unemployment insurance, workers compensation, health and life insurance, retirement, FICA, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in U.S. dollars and as a percentage of salaries.

3. Consultants – If applicant proposes for short-term expert services rendered by persons who are members of a particular profession or possess a special skill and who are not officers or employees of the Awardee/Recipient. Costs of consultants must be broken down by person months or days.

4. Travel, Transportation and Per Diem – The applicant must indicate the number of trips, domestic and international, estimated as necessary to carry out the proposed activities, 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. Per Diem must be based on the applicant's normal and current travel policies that do not exceed the published U.S. Government per diem rates for the localities concerned.

5. Equipment and Supplies – must include information on estimated types of equipment, models, supplies, and the cost per unit and quantity. The Budget Narrative must include the purpose of the equipment and supplies and the basis for the estimates.

6. Sub-Contracts – Any goods and services being procured through a sub contract mechanism.

7. Sub-grants – The applicant should identify the activities to be implemented through sub grants. The Applicant shall describe its approach to, and how it will manage, the competition and award of sub-awards in line with USAID best practices and the Nicaraguan context. A minimum of 55% of the overall program budget must go to Nicaraguan Civil Society in the form of grants or in-kind support.

8. Rapid Response Fund (RRF) – Per instructions in Section A Program Description, the applicant is required to reserve $250,000 during the period of performance of the Cooperative Agreement for implementation of the RRF mechanism.

9. Other Direct Costs – Applicants must 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, baseline assessment, branding and marking costs, etc.

10. Construction– Construction is NOT anticipated under the resulting award.

11. Indirect Costs – The applicant must support the proposed indirect cost rate with a letter from a cognizant, U.S. Government audit agency, a Negotiated Indirect Cost Agreement (NICRA). The Budget Narrative should clearly explain the base and the calculation for the indirect costs.

The Applicant and/or Major Sub-Applicant must also provide the organization's negotiated indirect cost agreement if it has one. If not, applicant is requested the following reports as a substitute for the NICRA:

Reviewed financial statements that provide the user with comfort that, based on the accountant's review, the accountant is not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the financial statements for the statements to be in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework. During a review engagement, the Accountant obtains limited assurance that there are no material modifications that should be made to the financial statements. Therefore, the objective of a review of the financial statements is to obtain limited assurance that there are no material modifications that should be made to the financial statements. A review does not contemplate obtaining an understanding of the entity's internal control; assessing fraud risk; testing accounting records; or other procedures ordinarily performed in an audit. The CPA issues a report stating the review was performed in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services; that management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework and for designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation.

Audited financial statements that provide the user with the auditor's opinion that the financial statements are presented fairly, in all material respects, in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework. In an audit, the auditor is required by auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS) to obtain an understanding of the entity's internal control and assess fraud risk. The auditor also corroborates the amounts and disclosures included in the financial statements by obtaining audit evidence through inquiry, physical inspection, observation, third-party confirmations, examination, analytical procedures and other procedures. The auditor issues a report that states that the audit was conducted in accordance with GAAS, the financial statements are the responsibility of management, provides an opinion that the financial statements present fairly in all material respects the financial position of the company and the results of operations are in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework (or issues a qualified opinion if the financial statements are not in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework. The auditor may also issue a disclaimer of opinion or an adverse opinion if appropriate).

The application should NOT include:

<u>Compiled financial statements</u> shall not be accepted because the Accountant does not obtain or provide any assurance that there are no material modifications that should be made to the financial statements. That is, you have no assurance that the organization is misrepresenting their costs on compiled financial statements which puts the agency at risk. the objective of compiled financial statements is to assist management in presenting financial information in

The Applicant must submit a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement NICRA if the organization has such an agreement with an agency or department of the U.S. Government. If no NICRA the Applicant should submit the following:

<u>Reviewed Financial Statements Report</u>: a report issued by a Certified Public Account (CPA) documenting the review of the financial statements was performed in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services; that management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework and for designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation. The account must also state the he or she is not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the financial statements; or

<u>Audited Financial Statements Report</u>: An auditor issues a report documenting the audit was conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS), the financial statements are the responsibility of management, provides an opinion that the financial statements present fairly in all material respects the financial position of the company and the results of operations are in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework (or issues a qualified opinion if the financial statements are not in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework.

Cost Sharing: The Applicants should estimate the amount of cost-sharing resources to be mobilized over the life of the agreement and specify the sources of such resources, and the basis of calculation in the budget narrative. Applicants should also provide a breakdown of the cost share (financial and in-kind contributions) of all organizations involved in implementing the resulting Cooperative Agreement. Cost sharing may be also demonstrated either through direct funding, beneficiary contributions, in-kind assistance, or a combination thereof. USAID shall make the final determination and assess whether or not the Applicants cost share contributions (e.g. categories or items) meet the standards set in 2CFR 200. A cost-share plan will be requested from the **Apparent Successful Applicant**.

The business section of the cost/business application should include:

1. Required assurances, certifications and representations which could be found at https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf

2. Evidence of responsible the Agreement Officer can use to determine the Applicant

a. Has adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain such resources as require during the performance of the award;
b. Has the ability to comply with the award conditions, taking into account all existing and currently prospective commitments of the Applicant;
c. 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;
d. Has a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics; and
e. Is otherwise qualified and eligible to receive a Cooperative Agreement under applicable laws and regulations (e.g., EEO).

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).

4. Potential Request for Additional Information: Upon consideration of award or during the negotiations leading to an award, Applicants may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to make an affirmative determination of responsibility. Applicants should not submit the information below with their applications! The information in this section is provided so that Applicants may become familiar with additional documentation that may be requested by the Agreement Officer:
Other areas of review and discussion will vary according to the circumstances pertaining to the application. The following areas commonly require discussions and agreement prior to award:

1.**The apparent successful applicant** may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to make an affirmative determination of responsibility, including a pre-award financial survey. Details on USAID pre-award risk assessment policy and procedure can be found on our agency website, it is automated directive system (ADS) Chapter 303, Section 303.3.9 http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf.
2.Final program and budget plans
3.Payment terms
4.Procedures containing administrative reporting and logistical requirements, as applicable.
5.Cost-sharing terms
6.Other award terms including audit, special provisions and or/special award conditions, as applicable.

The information submitted should substantiate:

1. Bylaws, constitution, and articles of incorporation, if applicable.
2. Whether the organizational travel, procurement, financial management, accounting manual and personnel policies and procedures, especially regarding salary, promotion, leave, differentials, etc., submitted under this section have been reviewed and approved by any agency of the Federal Government, and if so, provide the name, address, and phone number of the cognizant reviewing official. The Applicant should provide copies of the same.

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

USAID will **Not** award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements. Each applicant is required to:

(i) Be registered in SAM at www.sam.gov before submitting its application. SAM is a 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.;

(ii) Provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and

(iii) 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.

It is the Applicant's responsibility to ensure that all necessary documentation is complete and received on time.

8. Funding Restrictions

USAID will not reimburse for any pre-award costs.

USAID policy is not to award profit under assistance instruments. However, all reasonable, allocable and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the agreement program and are in accordance with applicable cost principle under 2 CFR 200 Subpart E. of the Uniform Administrative Requirements may be paid under the anticipated award.

[END OF SECTION D]

SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

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

The technical applications will be evaluated in accordance with the Technical Evaluation Criteria set forth below. Thereafter, the cost application of the Apparent Successful Applicant submitting a technically acceptable application will be evaluated for general reasonableness, allowability, and allocability. To the extent that they are necessary (if award is made based on initial applications), negotiations may then be conducted with the Apparent Successful Applicant whose application, after discussion and negotiation, have the best chance of being selected for award. Awards will be made to the responsible applicant whose application offer the greatest value, cost and other factors considered. The government reserves the right to make award without discussions.

2. Review and Selection Process

A Selection Committee established under the direction of the Agreement Officer will evaluate applications. The Selection Committee and the Agreement Officer will use "Best Value" criteria to determine the Application most advantageous to the U.S. Government. **Technical Approach, and Management & Staffing Strategy when combined are significantly more important than cost or price.** The award shall be made to the responsive and responsible applicant whose combined technical and cost factor offer the best value to the U.S. Government.

All applicants who meet the eligibility and program requirements and conform to the application preparation and submission instructions will be reviewed and scored by a Selection Committee of USAID Nicaragua in strict conformity with the evaluation criteria set forth in this section.

USAID will use the numerical evaluation system in order to evaluate applications as shown below:

Scoring	Merit Review Criterion
90-100	An application scored 90-100 has the following characteristics: • A comprehensive and thorough application of exceptional merit. • Application meets and fully exceeds the Government expectations or exceeds NFO objectives and presents very low risk or **no** overall degree of risk of unsuccessful performance. • Strengths **significantly outweigh** any weaknesses that may exist.
80-89	An application scored 80-89 has the following characteristics**:** • An application demonstrating a **strong** grasp of the objectives. • Application meets NFO objectives and presents a **low** overall degree of risk of unsuccessful project performance. • **Strengths significantly outweigh any weaknesses that exist.**
70-79	An application scored 70-79 has the following characteristics: • An application demonstrating a reasonably sound response and a **good** grasp of the objectives. • Application meets NFO objectives and presents a **moderate** overall degree of risk of unsuccessful project performance. • **Strengths outweigh weaknesses.**
60-69	An application scored 60-69 has the following characteristics: • The application shows a **limited** understanding of the objectives. • Application meets some or most of the NFO objectives, but presents a **significant** overall degree of risk of unsuccessful project performance. • Weaknesses **equal or outweigh** any strength that exists.
59 and below	An application scored 59 and below has the following characteristics: • The Application **does not meet** the NFO objectives or requires a major rewrite of the application. • Presents an **unacceptable** degree of risk of unsuccessful project performance. • Weaknesses demonstrate a **lack of understanding** of the Government's needs. • Weaknesses **significantly outweigh** any strength that exists.

3.A. Technical Evaluation

USAID will conduct a merit review of all applications received that complies with the instructions in this NFO. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the following criteria listed in descending order of importance.

CRITERION	CRITERION NAME
Criterion 1	Technical Approach
Sub Criterion 1.1	Innovative Technical Approach
Sub Criterion 1.2	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan
Criterion 2	Management and Staffing Strategy
Sub Criterion 2.1	Management and Staffing Plan
Sub Criterion 2.2	Key Personnel

1)Technical Approach:

CRITERION 1	**CRITERION NAME:**	Technical Approach	Importance of Weight: 60

SUB CRITERION 1.1	**SUB CRITERION NAME:**	Innovative Technical Approach	Importance of Weight: 50

a. Instructions to Applicant: The technical approach will be partly evaluated based on the submission of an innovative technical approach responding to the Program Description and expected results outlined in Section A- Program Description

b. Evaluation Criterion: The approach must be based on a clear conceptual framework to meet the objectives and achieve the programmatic results outlined in the Program Description (Section A). Applicants should describe the proposed approach and methodology for each objective, demonstrating how the objectives complement each other or will work together to achieve the overall Activity goal. Applicants should demonstrate a firm understanding of the challenges facing Nicaragua's civil society ranging from venerable organizations to young leaders. Applicants should demonstrate knowledge and experience with best practices and evidence-based strategies for working in politically closing spaces. Applicant should address the "special considerations" for each component in the technical application.

Applicants should integrate innovation throughout the application, particularly its role in engaging youth throughout the approach. Additionally, Applicants should clearly integrate cross-cutting principles of gender and the empowerment of other marginalized populations throughout their approach. Finally, the Applicants should identify a strategy to continue interventions after USAID funding ends, focusing on the relationship between the integration of innovation and the sustainability of interventions, particularly those outlined in Component 2 and in Component 3.

SUB CRITERION 1.2	**SUBCRITERION NAME:**	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning	Importance of Weight: 10

a. Instructions to Applicant: The technical approach will be partly evaluated based on the proposed Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan.

b. Evaluation Criterion: Applicants should provide a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan as part of the response to this NFO. The MEL Plan will give USAID a tool for gauging performance and understanding any unforeseen changes in strategy needed to achieve intended results. In this plan, the applicants should describe how it will use different methods for monitoring; how it will make learning continuous throughout Activity's life; how results at the local level relate to broader systemic changes; and how it will engage sub-awardees as much as possible in the learning process. The MEL Plan should specify performance indicators that will be used to objectively measure progress towards achieving each of the Activity's outputs and outcomes, utilizing Foreign Assistance Standard Indicators while also proposing additional ones, as necessary, including context indicators. Finally, the MEL Plan should include specific language to describe how Result 2.1 and 2.2 grants will be measured for "success" or "failure".

2) Management and Staffing Strategy:

CRITERION 2	**CRITERION NAME:**	Management and Staffing Strategy	Importance of Weight: 40

SUB CRITERION 2.1	**SUBCRITERION NAME:**	Management and Staffing Plan	Importance of Weight: 10

a. Instructions to Applicant: The Management and Staffing Strategy will be partly evaluated based on the proposed Management and Staffing Plan.

b. Evaluation Criterion: The Management and Staffing Plan should be responsive and comprehensive, including staffing/recruitment plans and ability to assemble technical assistance teams appropriate for achieving the Activity's objectives and expected results. The Plan should include a clear description of roles and responsibilities among the home office and office(s) in Nicaragua, organizational chart, timeframe for mobilization, and a comprehensive nondiscrimination policy. Additionally, Applications should include lines of reporting and decision making between the prime, local partners, and headquarters. USAID encourages the inclusion of marginalized populations in the staffing plan. Finally, Applicants will be evaluated on the extent to which proposals demonstrate adaptive management approaches through staffing skills, structure, culture, business processes, and stakeholder engagement.

SUB CRITERION 2.2	**SUB CRITERION NAME:**	Key Personnel	Importance of Weight: 30

a. Instructions to Applicant: Key personnel should be identified in the Management and Staffing Strategy.

b. Evaluation Criterion: Key personnel should convincingly demonstrate the ability to successfully and effectively implement the proposed activity. Applicants should describe how the proposed personnel will contribute holistically to both the technical and administrative needs of an Activity of this description, size and sensitivity. USAID will also evaluate whether proposed personnel composition achieves gender equity and incorporates marginalized populations, like youth, in the staffing plan. Key personnel must have appropriate technical area experience; relevant management experience; experience in closing political environments and in the region more broadly; and fluency, as needed, in English and Spanish. Applicants should propose a team that meets all of these requirements, and provide at least three professional references for each of the key personnel proposed. Finally, Applicants should make every effort to recruit Nicaraguans for key leadership and technical positions and for other long-term positions as warranted by its application, to contribute to strengthening local capacity.

B. Cost Evaluation

Cost is less important than technical and is not weighted. Only the cost application(s) of the apparently successful technical application(s) will be evaluated for cost effectiveness and cost realism, including the level of proposed cost share. Other considerations are the completeness of the application, adequacy of budget detail, easy to follow and consistency with elements of the technical application. In addition, the organization must demonstrate adequate financial management capability, to be measured for a responsibility determination.

The application with the lowest estimated cost may not be selected if award to a higher priced technical application offers a greater overall benefit for the program. All evaluation factors other than cost or price, when combined, are significantly more important than cost. However, estimated cost is an important factor and the estimated cost to the Government increases in importance as competing applications approach equivalence and may become the deciding factor when technical applications are approximately equivalent in merit.

Cost estimates will be analyzed as part of the application evaluation process. Proposed costs may be adjusted, for purposes of evaluation, based on results of the cost analysis and its assessment of reasonableness, completeness, and credibility.

4.BRANDING STRATEGY AND MARKING PLAN

Pursuant to ADS 303.3.6.3.f and ADS 320.3.1.2, the **apparently successful applicant** will be requested to submit a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan that will be negotiated and finalized as part of the assistance award. These plans shall be prepared in accordance with the guidance in ADS 320.3.3 and the references therein. Please note that the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan shall not be included with the original application but shall be provided only after a written request of the Agreement Officer.

The Agreement Officer evaluates and approves the Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan (including any request for exceptions) of the apparently successful applicant, consistent with the provisions “Branding Strategy”, “Marking Plan”, and “Marking of USAID-funded Assistance Awards” contained in **ADS 303, 2 CFR 700**, and **ADS 320**.

[END OF SECTION E]

SECTION F: AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

Notice of Award signed by the Agreement Officer is the authorizing document, which shall be transmitted to the Recipient for countersignature to the authorized agent of the successful organization electronically.

Award of the agreement contemplated by this NFO 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, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for the award. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed Agreement or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

2. Administrative & National Policy Requirements

The resulting award from this NFO, will be administered by USAID in accordance with the following:

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.

For further reference, please see ADS 303.4 and 303.5. The applicable Standard Provisions will be attached to the final award document.

3. Reporting Requirements.

3.1 Fiscal Year Annual Implementation Plans (Work Plans)

The recipient shall submit an Annual Implementation Plan for the first year of work 30 days upon award signature and must include life-of-project timeline of activities, milestones, and deliverables for each year and a break-down of activities to be achieved for the first year of work, after the mapping/assessment phase. Detailed content of the work plan will be finalized with the USAID AOR after award.

The Recipient will work closely with resource partners and the AOR during the startup phase and may propose changes to the Implementation Plan as required throughout the award period. The Annual Implementation Plan will, in addition of a detailed budget, include:

- Description of activities to be undertaken, by objective, (including activities covered by cost-sharing or leverage), detailing how activities will be implemented.
- Proposed accomplishments for the fiscal year and expected progress toward achieving results that are linked to the Monitoring & Evaluation plan.
- A description of any information, communication, education and training and instructional/learning materials planned. These materials will be submitted to the AOR for approval at the design stage prior to printing, reproducing, disseminating or airing. AOR approval will focus on the materials' technical content, presentation, and compliance with the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan. The Recipient must ensure that all branding and marking specifications laid out in the Branding Strategy and Marking plan have been followed prior to submitting the materials for AOR approval.
- A timeline for implementation of the year's proposed activities, including target completion dates.

The Fiscal Year Annual Work Plan should include life-of-project timeline of activities, milestones, and deliverables for each year. The recipient will provide a more detailed draft first year workplan for the first year of the project, which provides a break-down of activities to be achieved for the first year of work, after the mapping/assessment phase. Detailed content of the work plan will be finalized with the USAID AOR after award.

All activities implemented under the award will be subject to evaluation by a USAID-funded evaluator, and recipient is expected to work closely with the evaluator(s) to effectively monitor program implementation and performance.

Annual Implementation Plans for subsequent fiscal years will be submitted for USAID review and approval two months before the first Annual Implementation Plan is scheduled to end.

3.2 Financial Reporting

In Accordance with 2 CFR 200.327: (1) The recipient must submit the Federal Financial Form (SF-425) on a quarterly basis via electronic format to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (http://www.dpm.psc.gov). The recipient must submit a copy of the FFR at the same time to the Agreement Officer and the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR).

(2) The recipient must submit the original and two copies of all final financial reports to USAID/Washington, M/CFO/CMPLOC Unit, the Agreement Officer, and the AOR. The recipient must submit an electronic version of the final Federal Financial Form (SF-425) to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in accordance with paragraph (1) above.

Electronic copies of the SF-425 can be found at:
http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/standard_forms/ff_report.pdf
and http://www.forms.gov/bgfPortal/docDetails.do?dId=15149
Line item instructions for completing the SF-425 can be found at:
http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/standard_forms/ffr_instructions.pdf.

The recipient will submit quarterly accruals electronically no later than the 15th day of the month before the end of each quarter and shall be presented using a format to be provided by USAID.

3.3 Performance Reporting

a. The Recipient must submit quarterly reports to the AOR, thirty days after the end date of the quarter, in accordance with standard USAID quarters (i.e. October-December, January-March, April-June, and July-September). Each quarter, the Recipient shall submit a report in electronic format. The quarterly reports should include progress measured against results. Quarterly reports must include at minimum pertinent information that demonstrates the major impact that the activity/program has had during the reporting period on the beneficiaries' lives through materials such as stories, photos, quotes and facts about their work, leverage report and summary of success stories. It will also include reports on all consultancies ended within the quarter. The Quarterly reports due October 30th shall include an annual summary report of indicators agreed upon with the AOR and be submitted in English and Spanish.

Reports shall include a discussion, supported with quantitative and qualitative evidence, (which evidence shall remain auditable under the terms of the agreement and USAID program implementation procedures), of progress against indicators and/or impacts achieved to date. This shall include clear identification of which impacts achieved were within the manageable interests of the recipient and which were likely catalyzed by recipient-supported initiatives, leading to substantial, sustained achievement of results. This discussion will be instrumental in helping the Mission to complete mandatory reporting to Washington such as the Performance Plan Report (PPR) and the Operational Plan (OP).

Reports must include the following information:

- Table of contents
- Acronyms
- Executive Summary
- Narrative Description and Achievements
- Gender considerations
- Management and Implementation
- Financial report
- Cost-share report (including resource partners), as applicable
- Planned activities
- M&E
- Communications- Branding & Marking & Success Stories
- Training delivered during the fiscal year (could be in an annex)
- Annexes

Reporting will need to correspond to USAID required indicators.

b. On occasion, USAID may require informal updates or provision of data that correspond to demands for information from Congress, Missions or other stakeholders.

3.4 Participant Training Reports

For all training activities financed under this Cooperative Agreement, conducted in-country, in the U.S., or in third countries, the Recipient must comply with the following Automated Directives System (ADS) chapters:

- Chapter 252 – Visa Compliance for Exchange Visitors; and
- Chapter 253 – Training for Development[1]

Additionally, the Recipient will comply with other USAID/Nicaragua specific policies and procedures governing the effective, efficient planning, design, and implementation of such training programs. For training in the U.S. or in third countries, the Recipient will coordinate with USAID/Nicaragua's Training Specialist to ensure compliance with regulations. Also, the Recipient must record all trainees in TraiNet, software designed to keep track, monitor, and control USAID-funded training activities[2]

The Recipient will submit to the USAID AOR the following reports:

1. In September of each year, a training action plan for the following fiscal year (October-September) including planned participant training interventions in Nicaragua, the United States, and in third countries.
2. In January of each year, a report of participant training interventions carried out during the last calendar year.

3.5 Close-Out Plan

The recipient will submit a close-out plan to the AOR at least three months before the end of the Cooperative Agreement.

3.6 Final Report

The final performance report shall contain the information contained in 2 CFR 200.328(b)(2). The Recipient shall prepare a Final Report that reviews accomplishments of the work, benchmarks, issues and weaknesses encountered, lessons learned, and priority areas identified for future work. The scope and format of the Final Report will be agreed to between the Recipient and the AOR at least one (1) month prior to the expiration of the award. USAID requires the Recipient shall submit one (1) original, two (2) copies, and one (1) electronic version of the Final Report to the AOR in English and Spanish within ninety (90) calendar days after the expiration of the award. One electronic version of the Final Report must also be uploaded to USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) at http://dec.usaid.gov. The AOR will provide the Final Report to the AO.

The Final Report must include the following:

---

[1] ADS Chapters 252 and 253 may found at **www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/200/**
[2] TraiNet program may be downloaded for use from **http://beta.trainetweb.devis.com**

- Describe accomplishments in accordance with the specific paragraphs of the project description.
- A comparison of actual activities and results with the plan established for the life of the project (presented in narrative and table format).
- Describe reasons why targets were not achieved or surpassed and why activities were delayed or not carried out, if appropriate.
- Success stories, including examples of synergy and collaboration with partners.
- A summary of progress made in achieving indicator targets during the program (based on valid data collection and analysis and credible baseline).
- Reports on how gender was incorporated into activities, specific gender results, any success stories, any lessons learned or obstacles faced and how they were addressed.
- Other pertinent information, including recommendations with-in depth- analysis and lessons learned, related to the overall program results.

3.7 Development Experience Clearinghouse Requirements

SUBMISSION OF FINAL REPORT TO DEC

The Recipient shall submit an original to the Washington AOR, one copy to the Agreement Officer, and one electronic copy of the final report to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC). Documents submitted to the DEC should be sent in original format via

● Online: DEC Submissions E-mail (the preferred means of submission): docsubmit@usaid.gov

● By mail (for pouch delivery):
USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse
U.S. Agency for International Development
M/CIO/ITSD/KM/DEC RRB M.01-010
Washington, DC 20523-6100

*Note: Mail sent to USAID via the US Postal Service undergoes security and irradiation processing. To send sensitive items, like CDs or DVDs, please contact the DEC team at ksc@usaid.gov to arrange delivery.

For questions on DEC submissions, contact: M/CIO/ITSD/KM/DEC Telephone: +1 202-712-0579 Email: ksc@usaid.gov

Please reference web site http://dec.usaid.gov/ or call (202) 712-0579 concerning any questions your organization may have on the reporting requirements.

In accordance with ADS 540, the following grant reports are development experience materials:

• Performance reports (quarterly, semi-annual, or annual).
• Annual, semi-annual, or quarterly reports describing the progress and accomplishments of the USAID-funded activity or project.

• Final performance reports submitted 90 days after the expiration or termination of the grant.

3.8 Monitoring Results and Tracking Indicators:

The recipient will be required to comply with all USAID policy and requirements related to performance monitoring, reporting, and evaluation, including the new USAID Evaluation Policy, which can be found at www.usaid.gov/evaluation/. The recipient will be expected to work and coordinate with USAID Mission staff on a regular basis.

Upon completion of the mapping/assessment phase and the determination of targets, the life-of-project workplan, a fiscal year-based annual work plan, and final Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) plan will be reviewed in consultation with the assigned AOR from USAID. The MEL plan must be submitted to the AOR for final written approval within 45 days of acceptance of the award.

The final MEL should include the following elements:

- Project components~~s~~, expected results and planned outputs
- A list of performance indicators that the recipient plans to use in measuring performance
- Performance Indicator Reference Sheets detailing but not limited to unit of measure; data source; justification/management utility; baseline values if available; annual targets; frequency and schedule for data collection; and detailed plans for data analysis, review, and reporting
- Indicators shall be disaggregated by sex as appropriate.

Recipients will be responsible for developing and tracking program activity targets, outputs, and outcomes. Recipients' post-award consultation with the appropriate AOR will also include discussion of USG foreign policy directives and sensitivities. Recipients should routinely monitor, track, evaluate, and report on program activities using the agreed-upon indicators. Recipients must differentiate sex when collecting indicator data.

3.9 Other Reporting Requirements:

- Weekly written updates on activities to AOR
- Monthly Reports summarizing program highlights, achievements, and major activities; funds obligated and disbursed; problems encountered and proposed remedial actions.
- Quarterly technical and financial reports, including accruals reports
- Initial work plan submitted within 4 weeks of award
- Annual work plan using the fiscal year
- Annual report (which also serves as the fourth quarterly report)
- Semi-annual Implementation Review report
- Final report evaluating achievements, challenges, and projections for future outcomes

Report format and content will be finalized with the technical office upon award. The fourth quarterly report of each year will serve as an annual report. The reporting cycle will be on a Fiscal Year model. Each report will be reviewed and approved by the technical office through the AOR.

In addition, the following reports may be requested from time to time, depending on specific needs:

A. Ad Hoc Reports: As requested by or through the AOR, reports elements include, but are not limited to: cost data, work plans, schedules, subcontractor usage, Ambassador or Mission Director site visits, and progress or results reports.

B. Oral Briefings: USAID/Nicaragua may ask the recipient to brief U.S. Embassy Managua colleagues.

C. Other Special Reports: The implementer will be required to submit to USAID/Nicaragua all special reports, as requested by USAID, or as determined by the Annual Work Plan. These reports will include, in an illustrative manner for example, management reports, trip and consultant reports, technical reports, seminar reports and evaluation, needs assessments and diagnostic rules, and training course models.

4. Other Administrative Information:

Environmental Compliance

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) Parts 201.5.10g and 204 (http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/agency-policy/series-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. Applicant environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs of this NFO.

In addition, the recipient must comply with host country environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID.

No action funded under this award will be implemented unless an environmental threshold determination, as defined by 22 CFR 216, has been reached for that activity, as documented in a Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE), Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) duly signed by the Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO). As part of its initial Work Plan, and all Annual Work Plans thereafter, the recipient, in collaboration with the USAID AOR and MEO, REA or BEO, as appropriate, shall review all ongoing and planned activities under this award to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation."

The following Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) is being amended for this NFO:

LAC-IEE-16-37: Development Objective 1 (DO1): “Citizen’s Ability to Engage in Democratic Governance Increased.”

[END OF SECTION F]

SECTION G: AGENCY CONTACT(S)

The Point of Contact for this NFO is:

USAID/Nicaragua
Carla Vanessa Morales
A&A Specialist
Email:oaanicaragua@usaid.gov

[END OF SECTION G]

SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION

USE OF PROJECT VEHICLES

In accordance with USAID policy, all vehicles shall be used only for the purpose of work concerning project objectives. Use of vehicles acquired under this cooperative agreement for private use is not authorized. At no time shall a project vehicle be used for home-office transportation and all project vehicles shall be parked in a secure area overnight, preferably at field office sites.

Recipient agrees that, in the event any vehicle financed by USAID for use by Recipient in conducting activities under this instrument is registered in the name of the U.S. Government, it will be the responsibility of recipient to indemnify and hold the U.S. Government harmless from any damages or liability assessed against it because of the negligence of recipient or its agents or employees.

The recipient must be responsible to follow USAID/Guatemala requirements to return MI plates of project vehicles as part of the closeout process.

RECIPIENT'S STAFF SUPPORT, ADMINISTRATIVE AND LOGISTICS ARRANGEMENTS AND LEGAL REGISTRATION IN THE COOPERATING COUNTRY

In accordance with Standard Provision entitled "Regulations Governing Employees", the Recipient shall be responsible for all administrative support and logistics required to fulfill the requirements of this Agreement. These shall include all travel arrangements, appointment scheduling, secretarial services, report preparations services, printing, and duplicating.

In addition, the recipient is responsible to comply with all applicable local laws regarding fringe benefits for its local employees, local business operations, including but not limited to the registration of its offices in the local country, etc.

STANDARD PROVISIONS

The following Standard Provisions will apply to the resulting award:

- **U.S. organizations** - Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients – can be found at the following link https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303maa.pdf

- **Non-U.S. organizations** - Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients – can be found at the following link: https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mab.pdf

ATTACHMENT

Certifications, Assurances, Other Statements of the Recipient and Solicitation Standard Provisions (June 2012)

NOTE: When these Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of Recipient are used for cooperative agreements, the term "Grant" means "Cooperative Agreement".

Part I – Certifications and Assurances

1. Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Non-Discrimination in Federally Assisted Programs
Note: This certification applies to Non-U.S. organizations if any part of the program will be undertaken in the United States.

(a) The recipient hereby assures that no person in the United States shall, on the bases set forth below, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under, any program or activity receiving financial assistance from USAID, and that with respect to the Cooperative Agreement for which application is being made, it will comply with the requirements of:

(1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Pub. L. 88-352, 42 U.S.C. 2000-d), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin, in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance;

(2) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance;

(3) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (Pub. L. 95-478), which prohibits discrimination based on age in the delivery of services and benefits supported with Federal funds;

(4) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681, et seq.), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance (whether or not the programs or activities are offered or sponsored by an educational institution); and

(5) USAID regulations implementing the above nondiscrimination laws, set forth in Chapter II of Title 22 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) If the recipient is an institution of higher education, the Assurances given herein extend to admission practices and to all other practices relating to the treatment of students or clients of the institution, or relating to the opportunity to participate in the provision of services or other benefits to such individuals, and must be applicable to the entire institution unless the recipient establishes to the satisfaction of the USAID Administrator that the institution's practices in designated parts or programs of the institution will in no way affect its practices in the program of the institution for which financial assistance is sought, or the beneficiaries of, or participants in, such programs.

2. Certification Regarding Lobbying

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal Cooperative Agreement, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned must require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients must certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, United States Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

“The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that: If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned must complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement willll be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure."

3. Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for Covered Countries and Individuals (ADS 206)

USAID reserves the right to terminate this Agreement, to demand a refund or take other appropriate measures if the Grantee is found to have been convicted of a narcotics offense or to have been engaged in drug trafficking as defined in 22 CFR Part 140. The undersigned shall review USAID ADS 206 to determine if any certifications are required for Key Individuals or Covered Participants.

If there are COVERED PARTICIPANTS: USAID reserves the right to terminate assistance to or take other appropriate measures with respect to, any participant approved by USAID who is found to have been convicted of a narcotics offense or to have been engaged in drug trafficking as defined in 22 CFR Part 140.

4. Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing, Implementing Executive Order 13224

By signing and submitting this application, the prospective recipient provides the certification set out below:

1. The Recipient, to the best of its current knowledge, did not provide, within the previous ten years, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it does not and will not knowingly provide, material support or resources to any individual or entity that commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated, or participated in terrorist acts, as that term is defined in paragraph 3.

2. The following steps may enable the Recipient to comply with its obligations under paragraph 1:

> a. Before providing any material support or resources to an individual or entity, the Recipient will verify that the individual or entity does not (i) appear on the master list of **Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons** http://sdnsearch.ofac.treas.gov, which is maintained by the U.S. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), or (ii) is not included in any supplementary information concerning prohibited individuals or entities that may be provided by USAID to the Recipient.
>
> b. Before providing any material support or resources to an individual or entity, the Recipient also will verify that the individual or entity has not been designated by the United Nations Security (UNSC) sanctions committee established under UNSC Resolution 1267 (1999) (the "1267 Committee") [individuals and entities linked to the Taliban, Usama bin Laden, or the Al Qaida Organization]. To determine whether there has been a published designation of an individual or entity by the 1267 Committee, the

Recipient should refer to the consolidated list available online at the Committee's website: **http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/1267/1267ListEng.htm**.

c. Before providing any material support or resources to an individual or entity, the Recipient will consider all information about that individual or entity of which it is aware and all public information that is reasonably available to it or of which it should be aware.

d. The Recipient also will implement reasonable monitoring and oversight procedures to safeguard against assistance being diverted to support terrorist activity.

3. For purposes of this Certification-

a. "Material support and resources" means currency or monetary instruments or financial securities, financial services, lodging, training, expert advice or assistance, safehouses, false documentation or identification, communications equipment, facilities, weapons, lethal substances, explosives, personnel, transportation, and other physical assets, except medicine or religious materials."

b. "Terrorist act" means-

(i) an act prohibited pursuant to one of the 12 United Nations Conventions and Protocols related to terrorism (see UN terrorism conventions Internet site: **http://untreaty.un.org/English/Terrorism.asp**); or

(ii) an act of premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents; or

(iii) any other act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or to any other person not taking an active part in hostilities in a situation of armed conflict, when the purpose of such act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act.

c. "Entity" means a partnership, association, corporation, or other organization, group or subgroup.

d. References in this Certification to the provision of material support and resources must not be deemed to include the furnishing of USAID funds or USAID-financed commodities to the ultimate beneficiaries of USAID assistance, such as recipients of food, medical care, micro-enterprise loans, shelter, etc., unless the Recipient has reason to believe that one or more of these beneficiaries commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated or participated in terrorist acts.

e. The Recipient's obligations under paragraph 1 are not applicable to the procurement of goods and/or services by the Recipient that are acquired in the ordinary course of business through contract or purchase, e.g., utilities, rents, office supplies, gasoline, etc., unless the Recipient has reason to believe that a vendor or supplier of such goods and services commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated or participated in terrorist acts.

This Certification is an express term and condition of any agreement issued as a result of this application, and any violation of it will be grounds for unilateral termination of the agreement by USAID prior to the end of its term.

5. Certification Regarding Trafficking in Persons, Implementing Title XVII of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013

Note: This certification must be completed prior to receiving an award if the estimated value of services required to be performed under the award outside the United States exceeds $500,000. This certification must also be submitted annually to the Agreement Officer during the term of the award.

By signing below, the applicant or recipient, as applicable, through its duly designated representative, after having conducted due diligence, hereby certifies the following:

1. The applicant/recipient has implemented a compliance plan to prevent the prohibited activities identified in section (a) of the Mandatory Provision “Trafficking in Persons” and is in compliance with that plan;

2. The application/recipient has implemented procedures to prevent any activities described in section (a) of the Mandatory Provision “Trafficking in Persons” and to monitor, detect, and terminate any contractor, subawardee, employee, or other agent of the applicant/recipient engaging in any activities described in such section; and

3. To the best of the representative’s knowledge, neither the applicant/recipient, nor any employee, contractor, or subawardee of the applicant/recipient, nor any agent of the applicant/recipient or of such a contractor or subawardee, is engaged in any of the activities described in section (a) the Mandatory Provision “Trafficking in Persons.”

6. Certification of Recipient

By signing below the recipient provides certifications and assurances for (1) the Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Non-Discrimination in Federally Assisted Programs, (2) the Certification Regarding Lobbying, (3) the Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for Covered Countries and Individuals (ADS 206) and (4) the Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing Implementing Executive Order 13224 above.

These certifications and assurances are given in consideration of and for the purpose of obtaining any and all Federal grants, loans, contracts, property, discounts, or other Federal financial assistance extended after the date hereof to the recipient by the Agency, including installment payments after such date on account of applications for Federal financial assistance which was approved before such date. The recipient recognizes and agrees that such Federal financial assistance will be extended in reliance on the representations and agreements made in these assurances, and that the United States will have the right to seek judicial enforcement of these assurances. These assurances are binding on the recipient, its successors, transferees, and assignees, and the person or persons whose signatures appear below are authorized to sign these assurances on behalf of the recipient.

Request for Application No. _______________________________

Application No. ____________________________________

Date of Application ____________________________________

Name of Recipient ____________________________________

Typed Name and Title ____________________________________

Signature ____________________________________

Date ____________________________________

Part II – Key Individual Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking

I hereby certify that within the last ten years:

1. I have not been convicted of a violation of, or a conspiracy to violate, any law or regulation of the United States or any other country concerning narcotic or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances.

2. I am not and have not been an illicit trafficker in any such drug or controlled substance.

3. I am not and have not been a knowing assistor, abettor, conspirator, or colluder with others in the illicit trafficking in any such drug or substance.

Signature: ____

Date: ____

Name: ____

Title/Position: ____

Organization: ____

Address: ____

____

Date of Birth: ____

NOTICE:

1. You are required to sign this Certification under the provisions of 22 CFR Part 140, Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers. These regulations were issued by the Department of State and require that certain key individuals of organizations must sign this Certification.

2. If you make a false Certification you are subject to U.S. criminal prosecution under 18 U.S.C. 1001

Part III – Participant Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking

1. I hereby certify that within the last ten years:

a. I have not been convicted of a violation of, or a conspiracy to violate, any law or regulation of the United States or any other country concerning narcotic or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances.

b. I am not and have not been an illicit trafficker in any such drug or controlled substance.

c. I am not or have not been a knowing assistor, abettor, conspirator, or colluder with others in the illicit trafficking in any such drug or substance.

2. I understand that USAID may terminate my training if it is determined that I engaged in the above conduct during the last ten years or during my USAID training.

Signature: ________________________________

Name: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________

Address: ________________________________

____

Date of Birth: ________________________________

NOTICE:
1. You are required to sign this Certification under the provisions of 22 CFR Part 140, Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers. These regulations were issued by the Department of State and require that certain participants must sign this Certification.

2. If you make a false Certification you are subject to U.S. criminal prosecution under 18 U.S.C. 1001.

Part IV – Representation by Organization Regarding a Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Criminal Conviction

(a) As required by sections 744 and 745 of Division E of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Pub. L. 113-235), and similar provisions, if contained in subsequent appropriations acts, none of the funds made available by that Act may be used to enter into an assistance award with any organization that

– (1) "Was convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency has direct knowledge of the conviction, unless the agency has considered, in accordance with its procedures, that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government"; or

(2) "Has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, where the awarding agency has direct knowledge of the unpaid tax liability, unless the Federal agency has considered, in accordance with its procedures, that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government".

It is USAID's policy that no award may be made to any organization covered by (1) or (2) above, unless the M/OAA Compliance Division has made a determination that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.

(b) Applicant Representation:

(1) The Applicant represents that it is [ ] is not [ ] an organization that was convicted of a felony criminal violation under a Federal law within the preceding 24 months.

(2) The Applicant represents that it is [ ] is not [ ] an organization that has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability.

Part V – Other Statements of Recipient

1. Authorized Individuals

The recipient represents that the following persons are authorized to negotiate on its behalf with the Government and to bind the recipient in connection with this application or grant:

Name Title Telephone No. Facsimile No.

____

____

____

2. Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)

If the recipient is a U.S. organization, or a foreign organization which has income effectively connected with the conduct of activities in the U.S. or has an office or a place of business or a fiscal paying agent in the U.S., please indicate the recipient's TIN:

TIN: ______________________________

3. Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number

(a) Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation using an application exemption, in the space provided at the end of this provision, the recipient should supply the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number applicable to that name and address. Recipients should take care to report the number that identifies the recipient's name and address exactly as stated in the proposal.

(b) The DUNS is a 9-digit number assigned by Dun and Bradstreet Information Services. If the recipient does not have a DUNS number, the recipient should call Dun and Bradstreet directly at 1-800-333-0505. A DUNS number will be provided immediately by telephone at no charge to the recipient. The recipient should be prepared to provide the following information:

(1) Recipient's name.
(2) Recipient's address.
(3) Recipient's telephone number.
(4) Line of business.
(5) Chief executive officer/key manager.
(6) Date the organization was started.
(7) Number of people employed by the recipient.
(8) Company affiliation.

(c) Recipients located outside the United States may e-mail Dun and Bradstreet at globalinfo@dbisma.com to obtain the location and phone number of the local Dun and Bradstreet Information Service office.

The DUNS system is distinct from the Federal Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) system.

DUNS: _________________________

4. Letter of Credit (LOC) Number

If the recipient has an existing Letter of Credit (LOC) with USAID, please indicate the LOC number:

LOC: ______________________

5. Procurement Information

(a) Applicability. This applies to the procurement of goods and services planned by the recipient (i.e., contracts, purchase orders, etc.) from a supplier of goods or services for the direct use or benefit of the recipient in conducting the program supported by the grant, and not to assistance provided by the recipient (i.e., a subgrant or subagreement) to a subgrantee or subrecipient in support of the subgrantee's or subrecipient's program. Provision by the recipient of the requested information does not, in and of itself, constitute USAID approval.

(b) Amount of Procurement. Please indicate the total estimated dollar amount of goods and services which the recipient plans to purchase under the grant:

$________________________

(c) Nonexpendable Property. If the recipient plans to purchase nonexpendable equipment which would require the approval of the Agreement Officer, please indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types, quantities of each, and estimated unit costs. Nonexpendable equipment for which the Agreement Officer's approval to purchase is required is any article of nonexpendable tangible personal property charged directly to the grant, having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more per unit.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION(Generic) __________________________
QUANTITY __________________________
ESTIMATED UNIT COST __________________________

(d) Source. If the recipient plans to purchase any goods/commodities which are not in accordance with the Standard Provision “USAID Eligibility Rules for Procurement of Commodities and Services”, indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types and quantities of each, estimated unit costs of each, and probable source. “Source” means the country from which a commodity is shipped to the cooperating country or the cooperating country itself if the commodity is located in the cooperating country at the time of purchase. However, where a commodity is shipped from a free port or bonded warehouse in the form in which received, “source” means the country from which the commodity was shipped to the free port or bonded warehouse. Additionally, “available for purchase” includes “offered for sale at the time of purchase” if the commodity is listed in a vendor’s catalog or other statement of inventory, kept as part of the vendor’s customary business practices and regularly offered for sale, even if the commodities are not physically on the vendors’ shelves or even in the source country at the time of the order. In such cases, the recipient must document that the commodity was listed int eh vendor’s catalog or other statement of inventory; that the vendor has a regular and customary business practice of selling the commodity through “just in time” or other similar inventory practices; and the recipient did not engage the vendor to list the commodity in its catalog or other statement of inventory just to fulfill the recipient’s request for the commodity:

TYPE/DESCRIPTION ______________________________
QUANTITY ______________________________
ESTIMATED GOODS ______________________________
PROBABLE GOODS ______________________________
PROBABLE (Generic) ______________________________
UNIT COST ______________________________
SOURCE ______________________________

(e) Restricted Goods. If the recipient plans to purchase any restricted goods, please indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types and quantities of each, estimated unit costs of each, intended use, and probable source. Restricted goods are Agricultural Commodities, Motor Vehicles, Pharmaceuticals, Pesticides, Used Equipment, U.S. Government-Owned Excess Property, and Fertilizer.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION ______________________________
QUANTITY ______________________________
ESTIMATED ______________________________
PROBABLE ______________________________
INTENDED USE (Generic) ______________________________
UNIT COST ______________________________
SOURCE ______________________________

(f) Supplier Nationality. If the recipient plans to purchase any goods or services from suppliers of goods and services whose nationality is not in accordance with the Standard Provision "USAID Eligibility Rules for Procurement of Commodities and Services," indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types and quantities of each good or service, estimated costs of each, probable nationality of each non-U.S. supplier of each good or service, and the rationale for purchasing from a non-U.S. supplier.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION ______________________________
QUANTITY ______________________________
ESTIMATED ______________________________
PROBABLE SUPPLIER ______________________________
NATIONALITY ______________________________
RATIONALE (Generic) ______________________________
UNIT COST (Non-US Only) ______________________________
FOR NON-US ______________________________

6. Past Performance References

On a continuation page, please provide past performance information requested in the NFO.

7. Type of Organization

The recipient, by checking the applicable box, represents that -

(a) If the recipient is a U.S. entity, it operates as [ ] a corporation incorporated under the laws of the State of, [ ] an individual, [ ] a partnership, [ ] a nongovernmental nonprofit organization, [ ] a state or local governmental organization, [ ] a private college or university, [ ] a public college or university, [ ] an international organization, or [ ] a joint venture; or

(b) If the recipient is a non-U.S. entity, it operates as [ ] a corporation organized under the laws of ______________________________ (country), [ ] an individual, [ ] a partnership, [ ] a nongovernmental nonprofit organization, [ ] a nongovernmental educational institution, [ ] a governmental organization, [ ] an international organization, or [ ] a joint venture.

8. Estimated Costs of Communications Products

The following are the estimate(s) of the cost of each separate communications product (i.e., any printed material [other than non- color photocopy material], photographic services, or video production services) which is anticipated under the grant. Each estimate must include all the costs associated with preparation and execution of the product. Use a continuation page as necessary

Part VI – Standard Provisions for Solicitations

1. Branding Strategy - Assistance (June 2012)

a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and negotiate a "Branding Strategy," describing how the program, project, or activity is named and positioned, and how it is promoted and communicated to beneficiaries and host country citizens.

b. The request for a Branding Strategy, by the Agreement Officer from the applicant, confers no rights to the applicant and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.

c. Failure to submit and negotiate a Branding Strategy within the time frame specified by the Agreement Officer will make the applicant ineligible for an award.

d. The applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth, in the budget portion of the application. These costs are subject to the revision and negotiation with the Agreement Officer and will be incorporated into the Total Estimated Amount of the grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance instrument.

e. The Branding Strategy must include, at a minimum, all of the following:

(1) All estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth.

(2) The intended name of the program, project, or activity.

(i) USAID prefers to have the "USAID Identity," comprised of the USAID logo and brandmark, with the tagline "from the American people" as found on the USAID Web site at transition.usaid.gov/branding, included as part of the program or project name.

(ii) USAID prefers local language translations of the phrase "made possible by (or with) the generous support of the American People" next to the USAID Identity when acknowledging contributions.

(iii) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity and the applicant's identity.

(iv) If branding in the above manner is inappropriate or not possible, the applicant must explain how USAID's involvement will be showcased during publicity for the program or project.

(v) USAID prefers to fund projects that do not have a separate logo or identity that competes with the USAID Identity. If there is a plan to develop a separate logo to consistently identify this program, the applicant must attach a copy of the proposed logos.

(3) The intended primary and secondary audiences for this project or program, including direct beneficiaries and any special target segments.

(4) Planned communication or program materials used to explain or market the program to beneficiaries.

(i) Describe the main program message.

(ii) Provide plans for training materials, posters, pamphlets, public service announcement, billboards, Web sites, and so forth, as appropriate.

(iii) Provide any plans to announce and promote publicly this program or project to host country citizens, such as media releases, press conferences, public events, and so forth. Applicant must incorporate the USAID Identity and the message, "USAID is from the American People."

(iv) Provide any additional ideas to increase awareness that the American people support this project or program.

(5) Information on any direct involvement from host-country government or ministry, including any planned acknowledgement of the host-country government.

(6) Any other groups whose logo or identity the applicant will use on program materials and related materials. Indicate if they are a donor or why they will be visibly acknowledged, and if they will receive the same prominence as USAID.

e. The Agreement Officer will consider the Branding Strategy's adequacy in the award criteria. The Branding Strategy will be reviewed to ensure the above information is adequately included and consistent with the stated objectives of the award, the applicant's cost data submissions, and the performance plan.

f. If the applicant receives an assistance award, the Branding Strategy will be included in and made part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement

(END OF PROVISION)

2. Marking Plan – Assistance (June 2012)

a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and negotiate a "Marking Plan," detailing the public communications, commodities, and program materials, and other items that will visibly bear the "USAID Identity," which comprises of the USAID logo and brandmark, with the tagline "from the American people." The USAID Identity is the official marking for the Agency, and is found on the USAID Web site at http://transition.usaid.gov/branding.

b. The request for a Marking Plan, by the Agreement Officer from the applicant, confers no rights to the applicant and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.

c. Failure to submit and negotiate a Marking Plan within the time frame specified by the Agreement Officer will make the applicant ineligible for an award.

d. The applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth, in the budget portion of the application. These costs are subject to the revision and negotiation with the Agreement Officer and will be incorporated into the Total Estimated Amount of the grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance instrument.

e. The Marking Plan must include all of the following:

(1) A description of the public communications, commodities, and program materials that the applicant plans to produce and which will bear the USAID Identity as part of the award, including:

(i) Program, project, or activity sites funded by USAID, including visible infrastructure projects or other sites physical in nature;

(ii) Technical assistance, studies, reports, papers, publications, audio-visual productions, public service announcements, Web sites/Internet activities, promotional, informational, media, or communications products funded by USAID;

(iii) Commodities, equipment, supplies, and other materials funded by USAID, including commodities or equipment provided under humanitarian assistance or disaster relief programs; and

(iv) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity and the applicant's identity.

(v) Events financed by USAID, such as training courses, conferences, seminars, exhibitions, fairs, workshops, press conferences and other public activities. If the USAID Identity cannot be displayed, the recipient is encouraged to otherwise acknowledge USAID and the support of the American people.

(2) A table on the program deliverables with the following details:

(i) The program deliverables that the applicant plans to mark with the USAID Identity;

(ii) The type of marking and what materials the applicant will use to mark the program deliverables;

(iii) When in the performance period the applicant will mark the program deliverables, and where the applicant will place the marking;

(iv) What program deliverables the applicant does not plan to mark with the USAID Identity, and

(v) The rationale for not marking program deliverables.

(3) Any requests for an exemption from USAID marking requirements, and an explanation of why the exemption would apply. The applicant may request an exemption if USAID marking requirements would:

(i) Compromise the intrinsic independence or neutrality of a program or materials where independence or neutrality is an inherent aspect of the program and materials. The applicant must identify the USAID Strategic Objective, Interim Result, or program goal furthered by an appearance of neutrality, or state why an aspect of the award is presumptively neutral. Identify by category or deliverable item, examples of material for which an exemption is sought.

(ii) Diminish the credibility of audits, reports, analyses, studies, or policy recommendations whose data or findings must be seen as independent. The applicant must explain why each particular deliverable must be seen as credible.

(iii) Undercut host-country government "ownership" of constitutions, laws, regulations, policies, studies, assessments, reports, publications, surveys or audits, public service announcements, or other communications. The applicant must explain why each particular item or product is better positioned as host-country government item or product.

(iv) Impair the functionality of an item. The applicant must explain how marking the item or commodity would impair its functionality.

(v) Incur substantial costs or be impractical. The applicant must explain why marking would not be cost beneficial or practical.

(vi) Offend local cultural or social norms, or be considered inappropriate. The applicant must identify the relevant norm, and explain why marking would violate that norm or otherwise be inappropriate.

(vii) Conflict with international law. The applicant must identify the applicable international law violated by the marking.

f. The Agreement Officer will consider the Marking Plan's adequacy and reasonableness in the award criteria, and will approve and disapprove any exemption requests. The Marking Plan will be reviewed to ensure the above information is adequately included and consistent with the stated objectives of the award, the applicant's cost data submissions, and the performance plan.

g. If the applicant receives an assistance award, the Marking Plan, including any approved exemptions, will be included in and made part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement, and will apply for the term of the award unless provided otherwise.

(END OF PROVISION)

3. Conscience Clause Implementation (Assistance) – Solicitation Provision (February 2012)
Not Applicable.

4. Prohibition on Providing Federal Assistance to Entities that Require Certain Internal Confidentiality Agreements-Representations (April 2015)

(a) In accordance with section 743 of Division E, Title VII, of the Consolidated and further Continuing Resolution Appropriations Act, 2015 (Pub. L. 113-235), Government agencies are not permitted to use funds appropriated (or otherwise made available) under that or any other Act for providing federal assistance to an entity that requires employees, subawardees or contractors of such entity seeking to report fraud, waste, or abuse to sign internal confidentiality agreements or statements prohibiting or otherwise restricting such employees, subawardees, or contractors from lawfully reporting such waste, fraud, or abuse to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information.

(b) The prohibition in paragraph (a) of this provision does not contravene requirements applicable to Standard Form 312, Form 4414, or any other form issued by a Federal department or agency governing the nondisclosure of classified information.

(c) By submission of its application, the prospective recipient represents that it does not require employees, subawardees, or contractors of such entity seeking to report fraud, waste, or abuse to sign internal confidentiality agreements or statements prohibiting or otherwise restricting such employees, subawardees, or contractors from lawfully reporting such waste, fraud, or abuse to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information.

(END OF PROVISION)

[END OF ATTACHMENT]

(END OF NFO 524-17-000004)