Responses to FY2020 Food for Progress NOFO Questions

Questions Received June 25 – July 1, 2020

1. Can entities be subcontractors or provide letters of support to more than one consortium (project proposals). Are there any restrictions?
   A: There no restrictions from USDA on entities providing multiple letters of support or subcontracting with more than one consortium (project proposals).

2. The budget narrative template provided by USDA includes "call forward fees." In previous funding cycles, these fees are covered by USDA. Could USDA please clarify if this should be included in the offeror's budget and budget narrative?
   A: The budget narrative example provides a general overview of the budget cost categories and required level of detail. It does not prescribe all expenses and not all examples are relevant to every project. If an organization's business practices include a third-party assisting with call forwards, this can be an allowable cost.

3. Can USDA confirm that graphics and formatting (tables, bullets, etc.) are acceptable for the Strategic Analysis and Plan of Operations attachments?
   A: Yes. The Strategic Analysis and Plan of Operations attachments may contain graphics. Please note that applicant must adhere to the page limits set forth in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

4. The Appendix D Budget Narrative Example provided as part of the NOFO includes insurance and maintenance under the "Other" category (page 67). Can USDA please confirm if Offerors can revise, remove, or add any line items based on Offerors' cost accounting practice and program solutions?
   A: The line item budget cost categories provided in the "Expense Type" column of the budget summary must be adhered to in the budget narrative. Subline items provided within the "Other" line item in the budget narrative example are simply examples of common expenses. Applicants may adjust the types of expenses categorized as "Other" based on the applicant's accounting practices and program solutions.

5. On page 15 of the NOFO is listed the page limitations for the various sections of the proposal. On page 27, the budget section and differs from what is listed on page 15.
   A: The Budget is 26 pages in total (Budget Summary – 1 page and Budget Narrative – 25 pages)

6. Under Component 4. P.49 of the NOFO states "…the project will establish an endowment to plan and fund research…" Question: Could USDA funds under this NOFO be contributed to help fund this endowment?

A: Yes. Funds from the program can be used to support the start of the endowment.

7. I am writing to enquire about the call advertised. I want to know if there is a template for concepts/ proposals?
A: No. There is no template available for proposals. That said, all proposals must include the information identified in the "Content Guidance" section of the NOFO.

8. Can a subrecipient partner with two different organization to submit an application in response to this call?
A: An organization may participate as a subrecipient under multiple proposals. There is no limit on the number of applications which an applicant may submit and no limit on the number of proposals a potential subrecipient may participate on.

9. **Page 17, D.i, *Application and Submission Information, Domestic Entities*, notes:** "In addition to the required content and forms listed above, each Applicant that is a domestic entity (as determined by FAS based on the entity's registration information on SAM.gov) must also certify to the "Federal Assistance General Representations and Certifications" and "Grants Certifications" in SAM.gov by the closing date of the announcement." Further, on page 30, ***Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)*, the NOFO notes: "**Each subrecipient organization must also have an active SAM registration before the subaward is signed, unless the organization has an exemption approved by FAS under 2 CFR section 25.110(d)."

Question: Domestic entities, non-US entities, and beneficiary country entities bring tremendous value to our bid subsequent implementation and may not be registered in the SAM system. Therefore, the Prime Offeror requests that all subrecipients, including domestic entities, be required to certify in SAM.gov before subaward is signed and not by the closing date of the announcement to allow for sufficient time for registration processing.
*A: Subrecipient organizations must have an active SAM registration before the subaward is signed **not** by the closing date of the announcement. If selected for funding, FAS cannot provide funds to organizations that do not have an active SAM registration.*

10. In preparing our submission, it was brought to my attention that over the past 15 years, no awards have been made to academic institutions for any of the FPPs. Is there any guidance that you can provide on this? Should a University even try to apply?
A: The 2018 Farm Bill (Public Law No: 115-334) included universities as eligible entities under FFPr. 2019 was the first year under which this new eligibility criterion was use and is the reason no universities were awarded cooperative agreements previously under FFPr. However, universities have always been eligible to be sub-awardees before the 2018 Farm Bill and have participated in many FFPr agreements under those conditions.

11. Should the Child Labor Analysis (on vanilla and other agricultural products) be integrated into the strategic analysis, or does USDA envision an attached, separate document?
A: The Child Labor Analysis should be integrated into the Introduction and Strategic Analysis section of the proposal. Applicants should reference the DOL guidelines on locations and at-risk value chains to determine which value chains need the child-labor analysis.

12. For the Uganda program, should the Strategic Analysis assessment of "priority areas sector value chains" and "impact on the rural economy" only focus on vanilla? Or, does this specific assessment on priority value chains and the rural economy need to include the vanilla's complementary crops as well?
A: USDA welcomes proposals that include other complementary crops appropriate for mixed-cropping with vanilla.

13. The Strategic Analysis asks for how the project will coordinate with other stakeholders and how the project will complement current and future activities. The Plan of Operation also asks for how it will complement existing efforts by USDA, other agencies and donors and public private partnerships. Is it necessary to repeat this in both sections? Or can this be done in the Plan of Operation as it is more about implementation?
A: In the Strategic Analysis, applicants must outline how the project will coordinate with other stakeholders and how the project will complement current and future stakeholder activities whereas the Plan of Operations should be more focuses on how stakeholders will be involved in the implementation of activities specific to the project.

14. Does USDA want our activities integrated into their provided RF graphic (in the NOFO), or would USDA prefer our activities in a separate graphic with reference to where they are mapped to in their RF?
A: Per the results framework guidance in the NOFO on pages 19-20, the submitted results framework graphic should display how each proposed activity contributes to a result(s) in the program-level results framework. Ideally reference to the specific activities would be added to the program-level RF graphic itself, to clearly show the links between activities and the program-level results.