



Issuance Date: March 7, 2019

Subject: Amendment No. 3 to the NOFO No. 720114RFA00003
Georgia Elections and Political Processes Support through
Direct Awards to Georgia's Civil Society Organizations (2019-
2023)

The purposes of this amendment are to:

- 1) Provide answers to the questions submitted to USAID/Georgia by the questions submission deadline of March 6, 2018, 14:00 Tbilisi Time and the questions posed during the pre-application conference.
- 2) Attach the Power-Point Presentation from the Pre-Application Conference

Prospective applicants are strongly advised to read all questions and answers provided by the subject amendment.



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Questions & Answers

Answers to all questions from applicants posed both in advance and from the Pre-Application Conference held by USAID/Georgia Mission on March 4, 2019 in Tbilisi, at Radisson Blue Iveria Hotel.

Question: We wish to clarify as to what the regulations governing organizations who wish to be sub-grantees (co-applicant) under this call. We would be particularly interested in finding out as to whether an organization can be a sub-grantee (co-applicant) to multiple applicants under this call and whether this would have an adverse impact on the lead applicant if this were the case? Furthermore would details of sub-grantees be required to be registered in SAM and have DUNS numbers?

Answer: Being a sub-grantee with multiple prime applicants should not prevent you from applying for this funding opportunity and it will not have a negative impact on the prime applicant.

As it is clearly noted in the NOFO, each applicant must have a valid DUNS number for the applicant and all proposed sub-recipients. Apparently successful applicant and its partners (sub-recipients) need to be registered in SAM before submitting its full application at Phase 2. As SAM registration can be time-consuming process, we advise to begin the registration process as early as possible.

Question: The issue is more technical, concerning obtaining SAM registration. The case is that our organization has DUNS number and NCAGE code. Although there is an issue with SAM registration, when indicating the address, the system requests the match with DUNS address, although indicated address is the same as in DUNS's application. We've tried to copy address from the DUNS application form but still doesn't work and we cannot proceed with registration. We even applied with a question to SAM help desk, but no respond so far. Could you instruct how to proceed with this issue.

Answer: Information about registration procedures in SAM may be found at www.sam.gov including a Quick Start Guide and a video on how International Registrants should answer the questionnaire and get registered. Please note that while going through the registration procedure you must not leave any fields blank and you must answer all questions correctly. Contacting the SAM help desk is a very helpful resource and they will definitely respond to you. If you still have problems with registration please send the print screen of your problem directly to Eka Gamezardashvili at egamezardashvili@usaid.gov.

Question: What is the minimum budget the organization should have managed in the past in order to get \$200,000 award?

Answer: Organizations should not apply for awards larger than they think they can manage and simultaneously account for the funds provided. A reasonable measure would be not doubling or tripling your current annual budget if you receive an award, which would place an unreasonable burden on your financial systems.



Question: Will preference be given to the project ideas where two and/or more organizations will be partners?

Answer: USAID will not give priority to a group submission.

Question: If an organization submits two concepts at the first stage and both of them will succeed in the second round, shall the organization need to prepare two separate full applications on both concepts or will be able to unify them?

Answer: Yes, generally if more than one concept note is selected, each concept paper submitted by the same organization will be treated individually against the evaluation criteria outlined in the NOFO. Accordingly, the full applications need to be submitted and evaluated separately. Note: There is a possibility that one organization receives several awards, however USAID seeks to work with diverse organizations as the budget and activities proposed allows.

Question: If an organization succeeds in the second round, will you plan to organize a workshop on writing the full application and budget for the shortlisted applicants?

Answer: The NOFO provides detailed guidance on how the cost applications should be structured and prepared. The purpose of pre-application conference was also to discuss the application submission requirements. Therefore, USAID will not provide further guidance in writing and or organize any meeting with prospective applicants.

Question: Composition of Governing Body (indicating the citizenship of members and other occupation) - Do we need to provide the proof documents, such as IDs, Decision of the Governing Body etc.?

Answer: Applicants are required to provide names, titles and citizenships of the members of the Governing Body, however at this stage of the application process documents such as identifications should not be submitted with concept notes..

Question: EECMD has been established and registered in Georgia in 2017. Prior to this, beginning from 2009, we have been working as the regional office of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD). Can our organizational experience prior to 2017 be considered the organizational experience of EECMD?

Answer: Yes, you may apply as a prime applicant to this funding opportunity. The eligible Georgian organization must be registered at least two years in the Georgian NGO registry. Yes, your technical expertise acquired before 2017 will be considered as organizational experience, however your financial experience will be counted from the time of establishment of the Georgia branch forward.

Question: “Organizational budget demonstrating that they meet funding requirement.” Does this mean annual budget for the past year only?



Answer: The organization should demonstrate their annual budget at least for the past two years.

Question: Do we have to use any particular format for the budget, or is there any template of the budget?

Answer: The subject NOFO provides detailed guidance regarding the budget format to be submitted on Phase 1 and Phase 2. Please review the instructions in the NOFO. No other specific template of the budget will be available.

Question: Establishing DUNS number - Which Socioeconomic data suits non - profit organizations working in the area of democracy support best? Would indicating Industry Group 864: Civic, Social, And Fraternal Associations be accurate?

Answer: Please review the information sources as stated on 21 of the NOFO. For example, the quick video will help you to go through each field and question related to obtaining DUNS number and assist you to select the appropriate answers.

Question: According to our forecasts, annual spending will not exceed USD 700,000. In this case, do we need to include USAID project audit fees in our budget?

And if not, could we budget a part of organizational audit expenses under administrative costs? We'd definitely prefer the project to be officially examined under organizational financial audit, than left unaudited.

Answer: USAID agreements with foreign nonprofit organizations require that a recipient-contracted audit be performed annually when the recipient expends \$300,000 or more in USAID awards in its fiscal year. In addition to these annual audit requirements, a close-out audit must be performed for all awards in excess of \$500,000. The cost application budget must include a line item for recipient-contracted audits.

Please note that if your organization is selected, USAID will perform a pre-award survey to assess your organizational capacity. An external audit of your organization may be considered as additional supporting information.

Question: There is nothing asked about partner/ subcontracted organization, can we include the info in the attachment where leading organization's history/ past activities are requested or the info about prime company is sufficient?

Answer: If the sub-recipient organizations are identified and known at the concept paper submission stage please include this information in the attachment.

Question: There was this question asked at the meeting but would like to clarify: if the organization has annual \$50,000 turnover then it can request double amount per annum it was said, can it request \$300,000 for 3 years then?



Answer: Please note that that the proposed budget of the action should not substantially exceed the annual budget of the applicant. A proposed amount of USAID funding should be reasonable within the context of the applicant's capacity. For instance, it may not be reasonable for an organization that has never received more than \$50,000/year to apply for \$1 million program. In other words, if the requested amount is not consistent with the applicant's financial capacity it will not be acceptable.

Question: Is it possible to give international(American) expert short term service contract? He/she could work online and do advising via email communication.

Answer: Yes.

Question: If I correctly understood from today's presentation, under the Component 1, it is anticipated to fund just one proposal in amount of \$1000 000, while for Component 2, multiple proposals might be funded (as it was highlighted in red in PPT). However, I have question, is there any chance to expand the number of grant recipients under Components 1, if you'll receive the several interesting, mutual complementary project proposals from different applicants.

Answer: So far we anticipate to have one project under Component 1. We cannot tell if we change this decision until we review the proposals.

Question: If proposal involves several co-applicants, is there any limitation of budget share/budget distribution to sub-grantees? For instance, lead applicant is required to undertake activities covering no less than certain % of requested funds.

Answer: The prime applicant/recipient of USAID assistance award should be responsible for covering major activities and one organization must be considered the prime to lead. Distribution of funds among expected sub-recipients is up to the applicant but will need to be accounted for with precision if a full application is requested.

Question: Is it correct that at the concept paper stage, DUNS number and SAM registration is required only from primary applicant and at the later stage (full proposal stage), all co-applicants should have DUN number and must be registered in SAM; or all co-applicants need to have the DUN number and SAM registration at concept paper stage?

Answer: Each applicant must have a valid DUNS number and all proposed sub-recipients at the concept paper stage. Each applicant must be registered in SAM before submitting its full application at Phase 2. **However, since the registration process may take long time to complete, all applicants are highly recommended to begin the registration process in SAM as early as possible.**

Question: During pre-application conference was suggested that the proposed budget of the action should not substantially exceed (triple) annual budget of the applicant.

Answer: Yes, that's correct. This is in reference to the ANNUAL budget, not life of program budget, and is for the purposes of financial management.



Question: Does it refer only to the lead applicant? In case the lead applicant has a partner, can the budget be elaborated taking into consideration annual budget of the partner?

Answer: Yes, the financial capacity of partners is also considered.

Question: The total budget of the proposed action should not substantially exceed the annual budget of the applicant, or annual planned budget of the proposed action should not exceed annual budget of the applicant?

Answer: Please note that that the proposed budget of the action should not substantially exceed (triple) annual budget of the applicant. A proposed amount of USAID funding should be reasonable within the context of the applicant's capacity.

Question: What type of documents are implied under "by-laws", what type of actions/activities should it regulate?

Answer: The official documentation of the organization's formal legal status.

Question: For demonstration of organization's budget to meet funding requirement, should we provide budget of 2018 or more years? Should we indicate only a lump sum (annual turnover) or provide it with cost classification e.g. in excel format?

Answer: The organization's budget of the last 3-5 years will be sufficient including the annual turnover.

Question: Will it be acceptable to provide the Registration document and the Bylaw in Georgian language, or they should be in English? Should we get them notarized as well?

Answer: This type of documentation can be submitted in Georgian. Notorization is not required.

Question: Since 2007 our organization has been operating in Georgia as a representation office of NIMD, but in **July 2017** it was decided to establish it as a local NGO – EECMD. All funding that was allocated to the representation office was moved to the local NGO EECMD as it became the descendant of the representation organization. As we were informed at the Conference, we are allowed to show the experience of both organizations as our existing expertise. The same relates to the finances - are we entitled to show the financial information for the whole 2017 despite the fact that at the start of 2017 until July 2017 it officially was counted under the representation organization?

Answer: Yes, you may apply as a prime applicant to this funding opportunity. The eligible Georgian organization must be registered at least two years in the Georgian NGO registry. Yes, your technical expertise acquired before 2017 will be considered for technical experience purposes, but financial information will only be considered from time of registration as a fully independent



Question: What happens if the Primary SIC Code selected while DUNS registration does not fully fit our activities? Will it be possible to change it at a later stage?

Answer: The dropdown menu for codes should have an appropriate code for your activity to fit. Please review it carefully and select. Without the appropriate code selected you will not be able to obtain the DUNS number and the DUNS number needs to be provided to USAID at the concept paper stage.

Question: Is there any ceiling or limits for the percentage for organization's overhead?

Answer: If an applicant does not have a NICRA, applicants should budget all expenses as direct expenses. Alternatively, in accordance with recently revised USAID regulations and policies, if an applicant has never received a NICRA, the applicant may request to charge a de minimus rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (see 2 CFR 200.414(f)). If a successful applicant requests the de minimum rate, the 10% indirect cost rate will be incorporated into the award budget and the recipient must follow the requirements in 2 CFR 200.414(f). See also ADS 303 303.3.12 Negotiation of the Award and USAID Standard Provision for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations RAA4. Indirect Costs – Charged As A Fixed Amount (Nonprofit) (June 2012).

Question: As indicated in NOFO, the Voter Empowerment and Voter Education Component Proposal should last up to 42 months. What is the minimum duration of the project requested?

Answer: USAID does not have minimum time-frame for the projects, however 42 months is the maximum duration.

Question: Our organization is a donor to Georgian CSOs and our endeavours are to strengthen Georgian civil society and political environment. Some of our partner CSOs intend to apply to funding opportunity provided by USAID in the frame of Georgia Elections and Political Processes Support through Direct Awards to Georgia's Civil Society Organizations (2019-2023). This corresponds to our intentions for the period of next years. Would it be an interference factor for them to mention the same Co-fundgiver in their applications?

Also, it would be helpful to have the PowerPoint presentation from the Pre-Application Conference. Could you please provide it?

Answer: Co-funding is not a problem as long as there is clear delineation between activities to be funded by USAID and other donors. Main requirement is that the organizations should have financial systems in place that will enable them to segregate funding/expenses according to donors.

The Power Point Presentation is provided by this amendment.

Question: We would like to specify the application process for one and the same component - What if one organization applies for the same component with three different projects? Would it be acceptable if one organization, with different status: (I) project applicant organization, (II) project lead organization in coalition A and (III) project coalition member in coalition B, is involved in three



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different projects applying to one and the same component?

Answer: While you may submit applications in this manner, if multiple awards were being considered, it might reflect a large and complicated management burden for an organization. Whether USAID would be willing to make multiple awards when an organization has applied in this fashion would depend on our assessment of the organization's financial, managerial, and technical capacity to manage this level of complexity and still account adequately for US Government resources.

Question: Regarding the oversight of the election? As far as we understand the grants are supposed to start this spring and we have no elections this year? Is there a possibility to work on advocacy to level electoral playing field and address observer organizations' recommendations from the recent elections?

Answer: Yes, absolutely

Question: Can one organization participate with different status i.e. independently and as a partner to another organization?

Answer: Yes, you may as long as you apply as a prime applicant.

Question: In case several organizations apply as a consortium, how important is the experience, budget and other requirements such as DUNS and SAM registration requirements of the other members of the consortium?

Answer: DUNS number and SAM registration is required for the prime applicant and all proposed sub-recipients before any final awards will be made.

Question: Do we have to specify all sub-awardees at the concept paper stage or can we elaborate them at a later stage?

Answer: If sub-recipients are identified at the concept paper submission stage please include them, if not you may elaborate them at a later stage.

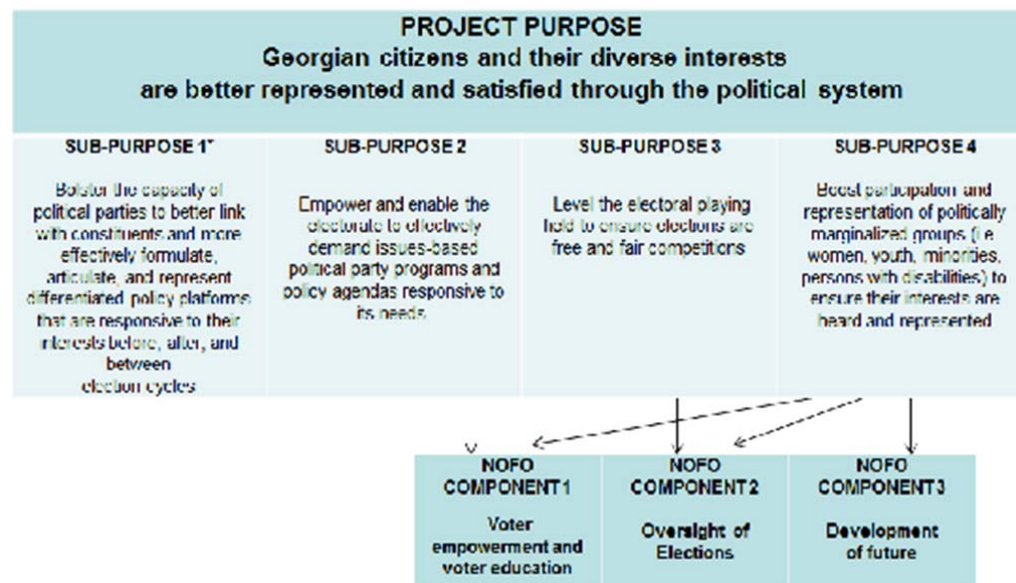
Question: Is cost-share a benefit in general and whether non-Georgian partners are allowed to contribute to the project?

Answer: Yes. If the Recipient receives project costs from other non-USG sources or donated to the Recipient from other than Federal funds it is a cost share. Cost share includes cash, services or property. For example, the vehicle or office space used but the Recipient but not charged to the project funded by US Government. If 25% of office space is paid by the Recipient own funds it is considered as a cost share. In other words, all the things that you do but not charge the US Government but are being used specifically to benefit the program.

Question: Should one project cover all sub-purposes or shall each project be submitted for a different one?



Answer: One application cannot cover all three components. One proposal should be submitted per component. You should submit applications based on components, bearing in mind that these components contribute to USAID's overall Elections and Political Processes Project sub-purposes. As stated in the NOFO, component 1 contributes to sub-purposes 2 and 4, component 2 contributes to sub-purposes 3 and 4 and component 3 contributes to sub-purpose 4. This also shows that sub-purpose 4 is on inclusion of politically marginalized groups and can be mainstreamed in all three components. See the graph below:



Question: Component three is linked to sub-purpose four – development of future political leaders – and in sub-purpose four we have marginalized groups – does it mean that these future political leaders should belong to the marginalized group or not?

Answer: Not necessarily. The project talks about **politically marginalized groups** meaning women, youth, minorities, persons with disabilities, etc.

Question: Some or most active young people are already somehow involved with parties or political activities. Are there any restrictions to work directly with youth that are already involved in political party activities?

Answer: There are no restrictions.

Question: Is 6th of March a strict date for submission of questions?

Answer: Yes, we have very hard date/time for submissions.



Question: Should the additional documents that were attached to the NOFO, such as SF 424, be submitted with the full application or at the concept paper stage?

Answer: The completed and signed SF 424 standard forms must be submitted at the full application stage – Phase 2 along with the detailed budget.

Question: Is it allowed to work with parties in sense of giving them expertise from outside to prepare issue based programs, for example in economic issues?

Answer: As you might have seen in the NOFO and from the presentation, USAID will have one flagship activity implemented by CEPPS (NDI, IRI and IFES), one of the components of which will be working with Political Parties to bolster their capacity (supply side). Purpose of this particular NOFO is to empower voters, level electoral playing field and boost participation of politically marginalized groups (demand side). Therefore, there are no restrictions on working with political parties but these considerations should be taken into account while developing the application.

Question: For instance we submitted a concept note and you think some parts are interesting and should be funded and some parts should not. Are you going to communicate with the potential applicant in this regard to somehow modify the application?

Answer: Yes, USAID will directly contact the potential applicant to negotiate possible revision of the application.

Question: What kind of financial experience is needed?

Answer: Please see the responses above.

Question: How long will it take after submission of concept notes on March 18th to prepare for the second phase and when the date for phase 2 is determined?

Answer: Depending on the number of concept notes received, this may take between 30 to 60 days.

Question: Do you expect all three components to have full application results at the same time or is it possible to have staged approach to different components?

Answer: Horizon of results for different components may vary, however, be reminded that only one application can be submitted per component.

Question: Are there guidelines how to fill out the forms needed for full application as some of them are not clear? And can we ask questions regarding them after 6th of March?

Answer: The submission of these forms are required at Phase 2. Therefore, if your organization is invited to submit its full application we will provide further guidance on how to fill out the forms.