



USAID | GEORGIA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Issue Date: February 15, 2019
Pre-Application Conference Date: February 26, 2019 at 14:00 Tbilisi Time
Deadline for Questions/Clarifications: February 27, 2019 at 14:00 Tbilisi Time
Deadline for Phase 1 Submissions: March 18, 2019 at 14:00 Tbilisi Time
Deadline for Phase 2 Submissions: To be provided at notice of Phase 1 completion

Subject: Notice of Funding Opportunity – 72011419RFA00003
Program Title: Georgia Elections and Political Processes Support through Direct Awards to Georgia’s Civil Society Organizations (2019-2023)

Dear Applicants:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking applications from eligible Georgian organizations (see Section C for eligibility requirements) to implement activities under the program entitled “Georgia Elections and Political Processes Support through Direct Awards to Georgia’s Civil Society Organizations (2019-2023)” as fully described in the attached Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). The authority for the NOFO is found in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

The activities envisioned under this NOFO (and another activity awarded separately) constitute a single project with the purpose that “Georgian citizens and their diverse interests are better represented and satisfied through the political system.” These activities will directly contribute to Development Objective One of USAID’s goal in Georgia, “Democratic checks and balances and accountable governance enhanced,” and indirectly contribute to Development Objective Two, “Inclusive and sustainable economic growth.” Please refer to the Program Description (Section A) for a complete statement of goals and expected results.

USAID anticipates issuing 5-7 awards to Georgian organizations. Subject to the availability of funds, USAID intends to provide approximately \$4-5 million in total USAID funding. The period of performance for each award will be within a 42-month period between CY2019 and CY2023.

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

In order to best support a variety of creative approaches and activities by Georgian organizations that contribute to the attainment of project objectives, this NOFO utilizes a two-stage process for applications:

In the first phase, Georgian organizations may submit a short concept paper outlining their proposed

program and its intended results. USAID will evaluate all concept papers received, and the organizations which submitted concept papers that receive a “pass” according to the criteria in the NOFO will be invited to submit full applications in the second phase. (See Section D for complete information on the application process and Section E for the process USAID will use to review applications.)

In the second phase, invited Applicants must submit a full application consisting of a technical portion and a cost portion in separate volumes. The budget must be submitted in unlocked Excel format with all formulas to demonstrate calculations. Applicants are also required to sign the Affirmation of Certifications (see the link on section Cost Application Format 3.2.5 of this NOFO).

All guidance included in this NOFO takes precedence over any reference documents referred to in the NOFO.

USAID/Georgia will hold a pre-solicitation conference for interested applicants on the date and time listed above. Further information regarding the conference can be found in Section D. Any clarifying questions concerning this NOFO should be submitted via email to Justin Gunnoe, Agreement Officer, at jgunnoe@usaid.gov with a cc to Ekaterine Gamezardashvili, Acquisition & Assistance Specialist at egamezardashvili@usaid.gov by the date listed above.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government, nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application.

In addition, the final award of any resultant award cannot be made until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated, and committed through internal USAID procedures. While it is anticipated that these procedures will be successfully completed, Applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for award. The application is submitted at the risk of the Applicant: should circumstances prevent award of an agreement, all preparation and submission costs are at the Applicant's expense.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

/s/

Justin Gunnoe
Regional Agreement Officer

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SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1. Summary

USAID/Georgia seeks to improve how Georgian citizens and their diverse interests are represented and satisfied through the political system. For this purpose, USAID intends to provide approximately \$4-\$5 million in total USAID funding, subject to the availability of funds, to Georgian organizations through approximately 5-7 assistance awards¹ with up to a 42-month period (3.5 years) of performance between 2019 and 2023.

This NOFO is in support of USAID's new Elections and Political Processes project, which will be implemented from April 2019 through April 2023. Activities procured under this NOFO will contribute to the following project sub-purposes: (i) empower and enable the electorate to effectively demand issues-based political party programs and policy agendas responsive to their needs; (ii) level the electoral playing field to ensure elections are free and fair competitions; and (iii) boost participation and representation of politically marginalized groups (e.g. women, youth, minorities, persons with disabilities) to ensure their interests are heard and represented by the political system.

USAID envisions supporting activities under three separate and distinct components of this program description:

- 1.) Voter empowerment and voter education
- 2.) Oversight of elections and political processes
- 3.) Development of future political leaders

USAID intends to make at least one award under the first component, multiple awards under the second component, and at least one award under the third component.

USAID strongly encourages prospective Applicants to thoroughly review all the additional background materials listed in Section H or included as attachments to this NOFO to gain a more complete understanding of the context and aspirations of this project before preparing their concept notes and applications.

2. Background

In 2003, mounting public discontent over rampant corruption and ineffective government services, followed by an attempt by the incumbent Georgian Government to manipulate parliamentary elections in November of the same year, touched off widespread protests that led to the resignation of Eduard Shevardnadze, who had been president since 1995. In the aftermath of that popular movement, which became known as the Rose Revolution, new elections in early-2004 swept Mikheil Saakashvili into power along with his United National Movement (UNM) party. Progress on market reforms and democratization had been made in the years since independence in 1992, but the progress had been

¹ Following review and selection of successful applications, USAID will determine the appropriate type of assistance award that will be provided: grant, cooperative agreement (CA), or fixed amount award (FAA). Applicants need not consider type of instrument when designing their proposals as this decision will be made following selection by USAID. For more information on the difference between a grant, CA, or FAA, please consult USAID Automated Directives System (ADS) Guidance on Grants and Cooperative Agreements ([Link](#)) and ADS additional guidance on Fixed Amount Awards ([Link](#)).

complicated by Russian assistance and support to the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Periodic flare-ups in tension and violence culminated in a five-day conflict in August 2008 between Russia and Georgia, including the invasion of large portions of undisputed Georgian territory. Russian troops pledged to pull back from most occupied Georgian territory, but in late-August 2008, Russia unilaterally recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Billionaire philanthropist Bidzina Ivanishvili's unexpected entry into politics in October 2011 brought the divided opposition together under his Georgian Dream coalition, which won a majority of seats in the October 2012 parliamentary elections and removed UNM from power.

These parliamentary elections of 2012 ushered in a new era in Georgian politics. The elections marked the first time that an incumbent accepted defeat in elections and agreed to a peaceful transfer of power. In 2013, Giorgi Margvelashvili won the presidential elections, which ended a tense year of power-sharing between Saakashvili and new Prime Minister Ivanishvili. Not long after, Ivanishvili voluntarily resigned and appointed Irakli Garibashvili. Local elections in 2014, together with the 2013 presidential victory, completed the full transition to the Georgian Dream Coalition. These developments looked highly promising for democracy as the former ruling party, United National Movement (UNM), did not disappear from the political stage, but remained the most prominent opposition party. Despite the significant advances that UNM made between 2003 and 2012 related to state building, the eradication of corruption, and the reform of public services, there had begun a growing concern that UNM's strangle-hold on power had stalled democratic progress in Georgia. The 2012 elections and their consequences changed this outlook and there was renewed hope that the transition in power would help consolidate the democratic gains that had been made in Georgia following the Rose Revolution.

In December 2015, less than a year before the upcoming parliamentary elections, Garibashvili was replaced as Prime Minister by Giorgi Kvirikashvili. Eventually, Georgian Dream (GD) won a constitutional majority in the 2016 parliamentary elections, capturing 115 of 150 seats, compared to UNM's initial 27 seats (of which 21 MPs would defect in January 2017 to form the new European Georgia party), the Alliance of Patriots' (AoP) six seats, one seat for Industry Will Save Georgia, and one independent candidate. With the 2016 elections, the expectations for enhanced democratic development and greater political competition were greatly strained.

Following the election, GD re-initiated a constitutional reform process that began with UNM in 2010 in the interest of transitioning Georgia's presidential republic into a European parliamentary republic. As part of the constitutional reform, changes to the electoral system fostered much discussion among parties and polarized political debate in the country. Parties and civil society organizations did not reach a broad consensus over the amendments. In September 2017, the amendments were adopted, with the parliamentary opposition having boycotted the vote. Nevertheless, the reforms were generally positively assessed by the Venice Commission in their October 2017 official opinion.

The trend towards one-party dominance, which had been previously observed with Shevardnadze's Union of Citizens and Saakashvili's UNM, was confirmed with the 2017 local government elections. In the elections, GD won 62 of 64 mayoral positions and 78 percent of city council seats. The resulting overwhelming control of parliament and local government by GD signaled a concerning consolidation

of power, which manifested itself in the polarization of politics and lawmaking without the need for compromise with opposition parties. By May of 2018, popular dissatisfaction with the government began to spill over when police raids of a popular Tbilisi nightclub and the botched investigation of the murder of two minors by the Tbilisi City Court led to large-scale street protests against law enforcement and the judicial system. The protests that continued through June led to the resignation of Kvirikashvili and appointment of Mamuka Bakhtadze as the new Prime Minister, who responded to the situation by shaking up government ministries. Although GD emerged weakened from the spring protests, the embattled and often discredited opposition appeared incapable of taking advantage of the situation.

The 2018 presidential election, while representing little importance in terms of political power due to the diminished role of the president following the constitutional reforms, became highly significant after a competitive first round between the GD-endorsed independent candidate Salome Zourabichvili and UNM candidate Grigol Vashadze. Eventually President Zourabichvili won comfortably in the second round, becoming Georgia's first female elected president. However, the means employed by both parties during the contest, were characterized as 'concerning' and a 'step backwards' for many elections and political observers. In particular, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) election observation mission stated that the campaign was overshadowed by "harsh and, at times, violent rhetoric" and that "one side enjoyed an undue advantage" due to the misuse of administrative resources, most especially the announcement of debt relief for 600,000 individuals by a private financial institution linked to the GD party chairperson just days before the second round.

The 2018 election was the last direct election of the president in Georgia as subsequent presidents will be chosen by an electoral college; the 2020 parliamentary election will be the last election under the old mixed majoritarian and proportional electoral system; and the 2024 parliamentary election will be the first election under the new fully proportional electoral system.

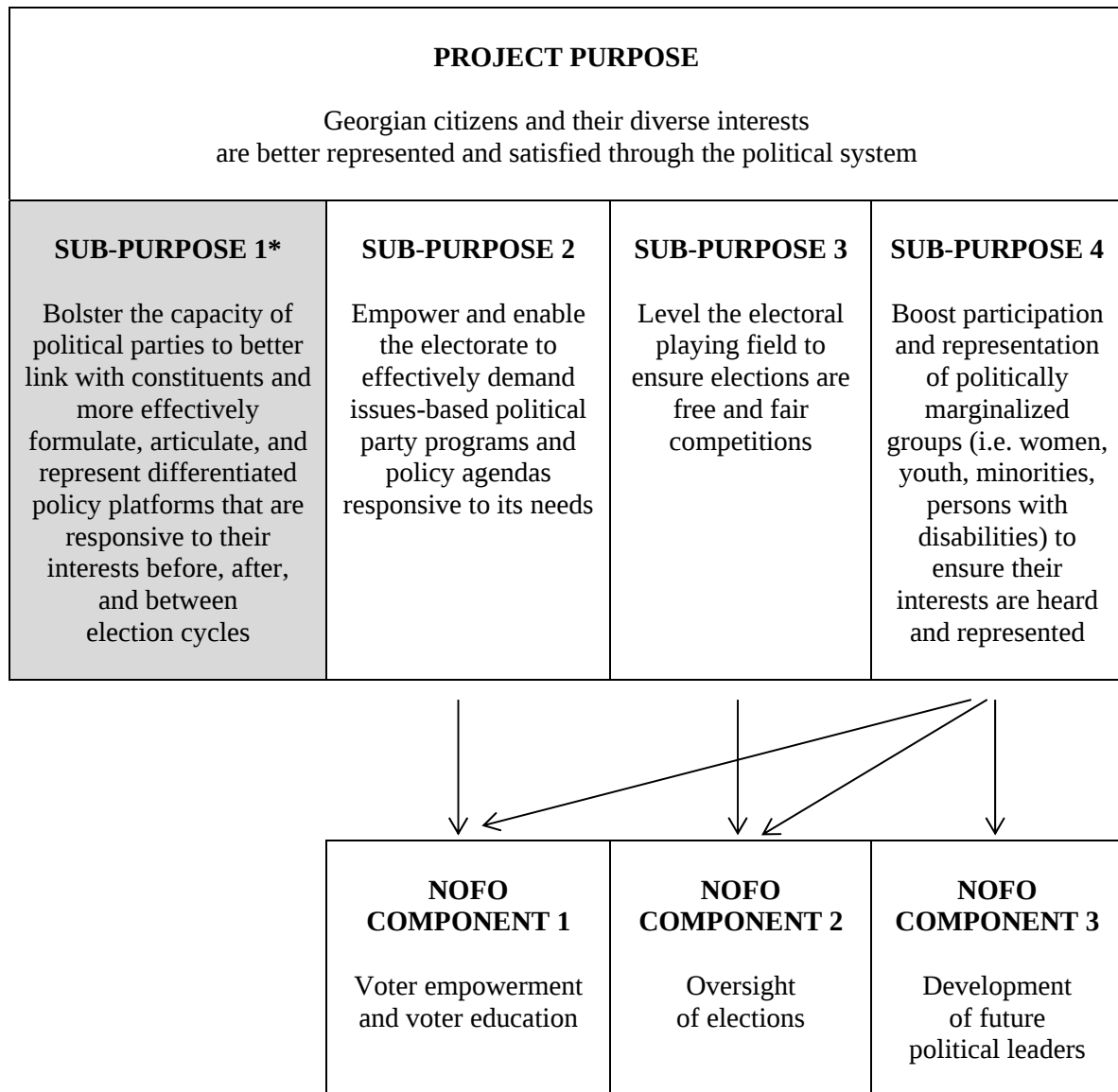
3. Problem Statement and Project Purposes

Georgia faces several challenges on its journey towards a stronger, more stable, resilient democracy. Of these challenges, USAID/Georgia's new Elections and Political Processes project (2019-2023) focuses on the absent or inadequate conditions for political pluralism in Georgian society and how these challenges ultimately limit choice, competition, and the ability of the political system to deliver outcomes responsive to citizen needs.

The overarching problem that this project addresses is that Georgians are deprived of compelling choices between contending, differentiated visions for Georgia's development when at the polls and are denied the healthy competition of policy options representing their needs in the national and sub-national legislatures. Contributing to this main problem are four sub-problems related to Georgia's weak political parties, unengaged electorate, uneven electoral playing field, and lack of inclusion of underrepresented groups including women, youth, minorities, and persons with disabilities.

Accordingly, USAID's project purpose is to improve how Georgian citizens and their diverse interests are represented and satisfied through the political system. This NOFO addresses three of the project's

four sub-purposes. A cooperative agreement with the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS), planned for award in March 2019, addresses the remaining sub-purpose and contributes to achieving the other three sub-purposes.



* Note: Sub-Purpose 1 is not to be addressed under these CAs; rather, Sub-Purpose 1 will be addressed by the flagship Elections and Political Processes Support (EPPS) activity implemented by IFES, IRI, and NDI.

The entirety of USAID/Georgia’s new Elections and Political Processes project will consist of the flagship activity implemented by CEPPS, which will address all four project sub-purposes, and approximately 5-7 activities implemented by local Georgian civil society organizations, which address sub-purposes two, three, and four. In order for USAID’s new project to be successful and achieve its stated purpose, all recipients will be expected to cooperate effectively together and with USAID. Specifically, recipients of an award under this project will be required to coordinate and cooperate with CEPPS to achieve project purposes and attend regular coordination meetings organized by USAID and

CEPPS.

4. Program Structure

To achieve these sub-purposes, USAID envisions supporting activities under the three separate and distinct components of this program description:

- 1) Voter empowerment and voter education
- 2) Oversight of elections and political processes
- 3) Development of future political leaders

Component 1 - Voter Empowerment and Voter Education: USAID will use approximately \$1 million to issue at least one award under the first component with a period of performance of up to 42 months.

Component 2 - Oversight of Elections: USAID will use approximately \$2-\$3 million to issue multiple awards (between \$200,000 and \$1.5 million each) under this component with a period of performance of up to 36 months.

Component 3 - Development of Future Political Leaders: USAID will use approximately \$1.5 million to issue at least one award under the third component with a period of performance of up to 42 months.

The Agreement Officer has the discretion to award a grant, CA, or FAA as a result of this NOFO.

If an Applicant wishes to apply for an award to work on multiple components, then the Applicant must submit multiple concept papers. For example, if the Applicant would like to propose work under Component 1 and Component 3, the Applicant would submit two concept notes: one concept note addressing Component 1 and a second concept note addressing Component 3. Applicants can only submit one concept paper for each component (for a maximum of three per organization, if the organization should choose to apply to all Components). Concept papers should not attempt to address two or more components in a combined approach. For example, Applicants cannot address Component 1 and Component 3 in one concept note. (See Section D for complete application instructions.)

4.1 Component 1: Voter empowerment and voter education

4.1.1 Objective:

The goal of this component of the NOFO is to empower and enable the electorate to effectively demand issues-based political party programs and policy agendas responsive to citizen needs (Sub-Purpose 2).

4.1.2 Anticipated Results:

Awards under this component will contribute to achieving one or more of the following outcomes:

- 1) established, routine channels and formal mechanisms for dialogue between elected representatives and constituents;
- 2) citizens groups equipped with the skills to effectively engage political parties and elected representatives on behalf of their interests;
- 3) citizen groups hold political actors accountable for implementing platforms and policies and for delivering on campaign promises;
- 4) increased public understanding of changes to the electoral system (from recent constitutional reform), electoral procedures, and social contract between voter and representative; and
- 5) increased civic participation and voter turnout by politically underrepresented groups (i.e. women, youth, ethno-religious minorities, and persons with disabilities).

4.1.3 Illustrative Activities:

USAID/Georgia's Elections and Political Processes project recognizes that in order to enhance citizen-responsive political representation and governance, both the demand-side of representational governance (i.e. citizens engaging political parties and elected officials on behalf of their interests and holding them accountable for representing them) and supply-side of representational governance (i.e. political parties engaging citizens to learn of their interests and then represent these interests in platforms and policies) must be strengthened. Activities under Component 1 will work to strengthen the demand-side. These efforts will link with USAID's Elections and Political Processes Support flagship activity, implemented by CEPPS, which will serve as this project's main line of effort on the supply-side.

Specifically, activities under Component 1 will equip citizens with the information and skills to demand better representation from political parties and then hold them accountable for delivering on it. This Component is supported by the premise that civic organizing around important citizen interests is an effective means to incentivize political party and elected representative attention, based on the notion that when many voters assemble on behalf of an issue, as opposed to few, then parties and representatives recognize the value of addressing the issue for the benefit of many votes. In this regard, efforts will aim to organize citizens around issues and interests to effectively petition parties and elected representatives. This Component is also supported by the premise that in order to foster issues-based political parties and actors, voters must be issues-based themselves and demand substantive issues-based platforms and policies. In this regard, efforts will aim to educate voters on the key issues impacting their lives such that they are better able to demand such issues-based representation from their elected officials.

In addition to building the capacity of citizens and civil society to collaborate with political actors and parties, this component envisions voter education during election years to explain the voting process and the changes in the electoral system as well as build an understanding of the social contract between voters and representatives for added accountability within the political system.

Applicants applying to conduct activities under this component are encouraged to propose innovative, fresh approaches to empowering and educating voters in Georgia that explicitly acknowledge the successes, shortcomings and lessons learned from past efforts implemented by Georgian and

international organizations. Applicants should aim to maximize their geographical spread and prioritize efforts in the regions, working with diverse communities and community organizations.

Illustrative interventions include but are not limited to:

- Civic organizing around key citizen interests to form issue groups and voter blocs.
- Utilize technology and civic engagement tools to increase interaction between voters and parties and representatives.
- Establish feedback loops between voters and parties and representatives.
- Citizen scorecards to evaluate elected representative compliance with campaign promises.
- Organization of candidate forums and town hall meetings.
- Supporting local organizations to conduct voter issue seminars.
- Community-based civic education courses.
- Supporting citizens' ability to engage with media of all types (i.e. social, digital, etc.) to amplify their demands and hold political actors accountable.
- Other innovative activities aimed at ensuring elected officials are more responsive to the needs of constituents.

4.1.4 Period of Performance:

Activities under this Component should propose a period of performance of up to 42 months, i.e. 3.5 years between mid-2019 through early-2023.

4.2 Component 2: Oversight of elections and political processes

4.2.1 Objective:

The goal of this component is to ensure Georgian civil society groups mount credible electoral and political process monitoring activities that will inform the public and build consensus for possible reforms required to level the electoral playing field necessary to ensure elections are free and fair competitions (Sub-Purpose 3).

4.2.2 Anticipated Results:

Awards under this component will contribute to achieving one or more of the following outcomes:

- 1) Local observer groups mount credible, non-partisan electoral and/or political process monitoring missions;
- 2) monitoring data and reporting is made available to the public in a timely manner;
- 3) recommendations to level the playing field and improve electoral and/or political processes –especially related to campaign and political party finance (CPF) and abuse of state resources (ASR)– are developed, published, presented, and advocated to relevant stakeholders;
- 4) electoral legislation, practices, and enforcement –especially related to CPF and ASR– are reformed in accordance with international best practices through a multi-stakeholder process;
- 5) systems for monitoring ASR, CPF, as well as the harassment and intimidation of candidates and voters are strengthened;
- 6) public confidence in local, independent election monitoring organizations is increased; and

- 7) barriers to enhanced electoral participation (as candidates and voters) by politically underrepresented groups (i.e. women, youth, minorities, persons with disabilities) are researched and recommendations for enhanced electoral inclusion developed and disseminated.

4.2.3 Illustrative Activities:

A. Election Observation

Short-term observation on Election Day is important to gather detailed information about what occurs at polling stations to contribute to analysis and conclusions about the effectiveness and fairness of voting and tabulation processes.

Long-term monitoring of the pre-election period is also critical to judge whether a level playing field was ensured for all electoral subjects, voter list composition is well managed and reflects actual eligible voter numbers, and to what extent human rights and fundamental freedoms as related to elections and electoral participation are respected by the state.

Applicants applying to observe elections should plan to cover the upcoming election cycle, including the 2020 Parliamentary and 2021 Local Self-Government Elections and other possible by-elections. Given the long period of time between the anticipated award date and the 2020 Parliamentary Elections, applicants applying to observe elections should propose other essential electoral and political processes monitoring activities, for example, monitoring of election and other democratic reforms, as a complement to long- and short-term election observation in the period before the next elections. Organizations applying to monitor elections must provide a clear methodology for short- and/or long-term observation and clearly indicate how results will be shared with the broader public. Preference will be given to applicants that propose nation-wide coverage and/or focus on minority districts for short- and long-term monitoring efforts.

B. Specialized Electoral Processes Monitoring Activities

Selected electoral processes can become the focus of a single monitoring project. While it is not required to cover each and every district, political party, or media outlet, USAID/Georgia will require relevant justification for selecting a specific scope and impact on the overall electoral process. Monitoring-focused activities should involve relevant awareness-raising components aimed at engaging the public on behalf of reforms to improve electoral processes as well as involve advocacy components aimed at key stakeholders capable of fostering change. Such awareness-raising components may entail regions-based consultations and the use of various types of media (social, digital, audiovisual, etc.) to amplify messages to wider audiences. Applicants applying to engage in specialized electoral processes monitoring activities are encouraged to propose innovative, fresh approaches to boosting electoral transparency and accountability.

Illustrative interventions include but are not limited to monitoring:

- Election legislative and institutional framework reform processes.
- Use of administrative state resources during an election period.
- Campaign finance and use of private and public resources during election period.

- Activities, composition, preparedness, capacity, and public confidence in Election Management Bodies (EMBs), the Inter-Agency Task Force for Free and Fair Elections, State Audit Office, and/or other relevant state agencies directly involved in electoral processes.
- Consistency of decisions made by members of the Central Election Commission, and other election commission bodies, appointed by political parties.
- Electoral processes in minority communities, including how well members of disadvantaged groups are informed of political platforms, electoral rights, and responsibilities of the voter.
- Candidate/party registration processes as well as voter registration processes and the quality of voter lists.
- Participation of women, youth, minority, and persons with disabilities in electoral processes, including as candidates, voters, members of EMBs, etc.
- Election complaint adjudication processes and consistency of decisions by all relevant bodies including courts.
- Election security environment, including cases of harassment and intimidation.
- Media coverage of each candidate and party activities for equal access and compliance with law.
- Social media for disinformation and discrediting campaigns during election period.
- Other innovative electoral process monitoring activities.

C. Specialized Political Processes Monitoring Activities

Selected political processes can become the focus of a single monitoring project or be combined with activities monitoring electoral processes. Such projects will focus on monitoring the activities of political parties and their adherence to ethical standards and rules of conduct during an election period. Applicants applying to engage in specialized political processes monitoring activities are encouraged to propose innovative, fresh approaches to boosting the transparency and accountability of political affairs. In addition to sharing findings with the public, monitoring activities should propose recommendations for reform. Towards these ends, applicants should discuss how they will disseminate findings and recommendations, including through the utilization of different types of media (social, digital, audiovisual, etc.).

Illustrative interventions include but are not limited to monitoring:

- Political party revenues and expenditures and compliance with reporting requirements by candidates and parties.
- Political party programs, policies, and platforms, including to compare them and/or analyze their commitments to gender equality, minority and disadvantaged group equity, Euro-Atlantic integration, pro-job economic growth, and/ or other policy priorities.
- Capacity of all political parties and electoral stakeholders to organize constituent interactions, meetings, and freely and publicly debate around issues of public concern.
- Adherence to ethical standards by political parties, including hate speech used by political parties and candidates.
- Democratic reform agenda.
- Party campaign events and voter education initiatives with specific focus on minority areas.
- Political parties' efforts to increase the participation of women, youth, minorities, and persons with disabilities in political and electoral processes.

- Other innovative political process monitoring activities

4.2.4 Period of Performance:

Activities under this Component should propose a period of performance of up to 36 months, i.e. 3 years between mid-2019 through mid-2022.

4.3 Component 3: Development of future political leaders

4.3.1 Objective:

The goal of this component is to prepare the next generation of capable political leaders and civically engaged young citizens representing Georgia's diverse society (Sub-Purpose 4).

4.3.2 Anticipated Results:

Awards under this component will contribute to achieving one or more of the following outcomes:

- 1) Youth political leaders are equipped with the knowledge, network, and tools to effectively engage citizens, political parties, and elected representatives on important policy issues.
- 2) Political parties engage youth political leaders as representatives of voter and issue groups.
- 3) Political parties engage youth political leaders as electoral candidates.
- 4) Youth from diverse backgrounds demonstrate greater civic engagement on issues important to them.

Recognizing the fact that youth are currently underrepresented in elected office relative to their share of the population and that there is a possible opportunity for greater proportional youth representation in 2024 –especially for young women– with the transition to a fully proportional electoral system, the objective of this Component is to build the capacity of the next generation of political leaders and provide them the confidence, skills, and tools to be successful representatives of their age cohort's interests. Underpinning this effort, the activity will teach the concepts behind democratic governance and provide youth leadership.

Additionally, while the medium-term focus should be to train young leaders ahead of the 2024 parliamentary elections, to facilitate their possible entry, a short-term focus will be providing opportunities for youth to interact with political parties in advance of the 2020 parliamentary elections. Proposed activities should aim to engage a diverse range of participants that mirror the diversity of Georgian society by, for instance, including participants from the regions, rural areas, and different socio-economic backgrounds. In this regard, this component will also prioritize inclusiveness of women, ethnic and religious minorities, and persons with disabilities.

Activities under this Component will closely coordinate and collaborate with USAID's Elections and Political Processes Support (EPPS) flagship activity, planned to be implemented by CEPPS, which will also be working on the same goal of developing the next generation of political leaders from the political party perspective. While CEPPS works to develop youth political leaders through political party structures, efforts through Component 3 of the NOFO endeavor to develop political leaders in the civic space and then link efforts with CEPPS to ensure these youth leaders have access and entry points with political parties and elected representatives.

4.3.3 Illustrative Activities:

Illustrative interventions include but are not limited to:

- Democracy education through student-led school government.
- School-based political debate clubs and competitions.
- Summertime youth political leader exchange programs.
- Internship program with intern placements in political parties, advocacy groups, public policy think tanks, etc.
- Facilitated interaction and networking with national political leaders, political party leadership, government officials, political party youth wing members, youth parliamentarians and established youth leaders, etc.
- Youth Parliament.
- Not Too Young To Run (for elected office) advocacy campaigns.
- Participation in election observation.
- Youth capacity building, leadership training, public speaking courses, etc.
- Other innovative activities aimed at developing future political leaders.

4.3.4 Period of Performance:

Activities under this Component should propose a period of performance of up to 42 months, i.e 3.5 years between mid-2019 through early-2023.

As a reminder, Applicants that intend to propose activities under multiple Components must submit separate concept notes for each Component. Furthermore, Applicants may only submit one concept note per Component.

5. Strategic Focus

The overall goal of this NOFO is to support Georgian civil society groups to play a larger role in fostering and sustaining the conditions for enhanced pluralism in Georgia's electoral and political affairs. This NOFO is integral to USAID/Georgia Mission goals to advance Georgia on its journey to self-reliance and achieve objectives under its Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) and the wider Integrated Country Strategy (ICS) for the U.S. Embassy in Georgia.

5.1 Journey to Self-Reliance

Recognizing that the ultimate purpose of USAID's assistance to Georgia is to end the need for its existence, this NOFO will support local civil society organizations currently engaged in election and political processes activities to ensure their efforts are scaled and able to build consensus for needed reforms in the interest of making elections more competitive and politics more responsive to citizen needs.

Mobilizing this programmatic approach, USAID/Georgia will be conscious of Georgia's journey to self-reliance in the elections and political processes sector. For Georgia, self-reliance in the sector can

mean established political parties represent the differentiated political orientations in the country, they conduct their own public opinion polling, organize their own constituency outreach activities, and mobilize their own resources; the electorate will organize itself into citizens groups and issues-based organizations and will engage the political system at their own initiative for their own purposes; the electoral administration will rely on its own budget resources to fund technical assistance from experts or will improve its technical competency via peer learning from advanced democratic partner nations; and civil society watchdog organizations will mobilize domestic funding from diverse sources to watch over citizen interests across the branches of government. Although Georgia is considered a strong reformer compared to other countries in which USAID implements democracy support programming, much work remains to consolidate Georgia's young democracy and reach the end goal of self-reliance in the elections and political processes sector.

Consistent with the above, civil society organization recipients of USAID funding through this NOFO will be encouraged to engage in efforts to fundraise and supplement USAID-provided funds from diverse international and domestic donors in the interest of establishing greater resiliency and promoting sustainability of efforts in the elections and political processes sector.

5.2 U.S. Government Country Strategies for Georgia

This NOFO advances USAID's 2013-2019 Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) for Georgia². The overarching objective of the CDCS is: *Georgia's democracy, free-market, Western-oriented transformation strengthened and sustained.*

This NOFO falls under the CDCS's first (of three) development objectives (DO): *Democratic checks and balances and accountable governance enhanced.* According to the CDCS, if DO1 is achieved, an increased percentage of Georgians will more actively participate in the governance of their nation; Government will become responsive to Georgian's aspirations, preferences, and needs through elections and political processes; and Georgia's political system will become more democratic with stronger links between state and society, and mechanisms for accommodation of citizens' needs will be further institutionalized.

This NOFO falls under DO1's second Intermediate Result (IR). IR1.2 states: *Political and electoral processes are more competitive, deliberative, and transparent.* Efforts addressing this IR recognize that improved oversight means more transparent electoral and political processes; a better-informed citizenry; strengthened accountability for a more level playing field and more competitive elections; and, ultimately, greater citizen trust in elections and political processes.

This NOFO also falls under U.S. Embassy Tbilisi's Integrated Country Strategy (ICS) Mission Goal 1: Georgia further integrates with the West as a more democratic and stable country. Mission Objective 1.1 states: *Georgia's democratic checks and balances and accountable governance are enhanced by institutions with increased capacity, a pluralistic media environment, and vibrant civil society organizations.* Efforts addressing Mission Objective 1.1 recognize the threat identified in the ICS that "Continued consolidation of power at all levels of government by one party, coupled with weak and fractionalized parties, increases the risk of democratic backsliding and social instability."

² Please note that USAID/Georgia's CDCS was extended from the original 2013-2017 period to 2013-2019.

6. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Iterative Learning

Activities selected in support of USAID's new Elections and Political Processes project will not be successful without the Applicant's commitment to monitoring the outcomes of program activities, documenting changes in behavior reasonably attributable to the program, learning from continual analysis and evaluation of data, and applying learning within the period of performance to increase the achievement of sustainable results. The Applicant will be responsible for developing and implementing a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan aligned with expected outcomes of this program. In designing the MEL Plan, the Applicant should allocate sufficient human and financial resources within the program budget necessary for its successful implementation.

Data collection tools used for program activities should also be considered an integral part of the MEL Plan. For example, public opinion surveys can measure the reach of public information campaigns. Applicants are encouraged to be creative and intentional in their approach to designing the MEL plan, using both quantitative and qualitative methods as applicable to synthesize the most useful information for continued learning to make mid-course adjustments of activity interventions that will achieve greater program impact.

Finally, the Applicant is expected to coordinate with USAID/Georgia's monitoring and evaluation efforts. The final MEL Plan should reflect this coordination. USAID is committed to evaluating programs and projects using credible impact and performance evaluation methodologies. In the spirit of increasing the rigor of all USAID project evaluations, the USAID evaluation policy states that, where possible, evaluations will be solicited by USAID and conducted by objective third parties—external evaluations—and final results made public. The Recipient will consult with USAID before conducting any sub-contracted evaluations to ensure that planned evaluation efforts will not be duplicated. Moreover, the Recipient must cooperate (to include the sharing of all program data) with any external evaluation indicated by USAID and provide input to the external evaluation team when requested by USAID.

SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

Subject to funding availability, USAID intends to provide \$4-\$5 million in total USAID funding over a 42-month period.

Sub-awards are allowed in the Applicant's program if appropriate. The Applicant should budget appropriately for monitoring and learning components of this program.

USAID intends to award at least one award for each component of the program description and may award more than one award under each component of the Program Description pursuant to NOFO.

While multiple awards are anticipated as a result of this NFO, USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted

2. Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Awards

The period of performance anticipated herein is 36-42 months, depending on the NOFO Component (see Section A). The anticipated award date will be on or about June 1, 2019.

The Applicant may plan for programmatic "pauses" at appropriate times to review results-to-date, assess learning, and confer with USAID and other partners, including beneficiaries, about possible refinements to the program to better achieve the intended results.

3. Substantial Involvement

USAID/Georgia anticipates the use of assistance instruments as supported by the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended.

Should USAID/Georgia choose to award a Cooperative Agreement (CA) and not a grant, USAID will maintain a greater degree of involvement of award implementation in order to assist the Recipient in achieving the supported objectives of the CA. Actual elements of USAID's substantial involvement will be specified in the award and correspond to the program description incorporated into the award, but USAID (including through the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR)) may be substantially involved during the implementation of an award in the following ways:

1. Approval by USAID of the recipient's annual implementation plans.
2. Approval by USAID of the recipient's specified key personnel. If the recipient changes previously specified key personnel during project performance, USAID reserves the right to approve all replacements.
3. Approval by USAID of the recipient's monitoring and evaluation plans (M&E) – the applicant will submit an M&E plan for USAID review and approval. The plan will be updated and revised as appropriate, in collaboration with USAID.
4. Approval by USAID any sub-grant plans and respective recipients over \$25,000.

4. Title to Property

Property title under the resultant agreement shall vest with the recipient in accordance with the Requirements of 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700.

5. Authorized Geographic Code

The geographic code for this program is 937 and 110.

6. Program Income

If Program Income is generated under this program, it will be added to the award in accordance with 2 CFR 200.307(e)(2).

7. 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) Part 204 (<https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/200/204>), which, in part, require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all activities.

The awardee's environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs of this award. In addition to complying with the obligations below, the awardee must comply with host country environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. In case of conflict between host country and USAID regulations, the latter shall govern.

No activity 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), or Environmental Assessment (EA) duly signed by the Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO).

If the awardee plans any new activities outside the scope of the IEE, it shall assist the AOR in preparing an IEE amendment for USAID review and approval. No such new activities shall be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of the amendment.

SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible Applicants

Only qualified local Georgian organizations may apply for funding under this NFO.

To qualify as a *local* entity for the purpose of this NOFO, the entity must:

1. Be legally organized under the laws of Georgia (the country receiving assistance);
2. Have its principal place of business or operations in Georgia;
3. Be majority owned by individuals who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of Georgia;
4. Be managed by a governing body, the majority of who are citizens or lawful permanent; and
5. Residents of the country receiving assistance.

The terms “majority owned” and “managed by” include, without limitation, beneficiary interests and 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.

Local entities do not include subsidiaries, affiliates, or member entities of organizations organized or headquartered outside of the country where the proposed activity will take place. Local entities also do not include public international organizations as described in USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) Chapter 308 or their subsidiaries, affiliates, or member entities.

The term “controlled by” means a majority ownership or beneficiary interest as defined above, 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.

“Foreign entity” means an organization that fails to meet any part of the “local organization” definition. Government controlled and government owned organizations in which the recipient government owns a majority interest or in which the majority of a governing body are government employees, are included in the above definition of government owned organization.

Partnerships of eligible Georgian organizations are allowed. If applications come from a coalition of NGOs, the prime organization (recipient of USAID award) must comply with all above mentioned requirements and all other organizations must comply with first three requirements.

ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTS

Subject to the conditions for eligibility provided above, if the applicant is selected to submit a full application, the applicant will submit official documentation of its organization's formal legal status, as follows:

- a. State registration certificate
- b. By-laws
- c. Composition of Governing Body (indicating the citizenship of members and other

- occupation)
- d. Organization's budget demonstrating they meet funding requirement.
- e. List of activities implemented by the organization in recent years related to the proposed activities.
- f. Other supporting documentation to demonstrate relevant experience in the field and technical capacity to implement the project

Additional Eligibility Information

The Recipient must be a responsible entity. The successful applicant(s) will be subject to a responsibility or risk assessment determination by the Agreement Officer (AO). The AO may determine that a pre-award survey is required 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. Accounting systems, audit issues, and management capability questions may be reviewed as part of this process. If notified by USAID that a pre-award survey is necessary, applicants must prepare in advance the required information and documents. Prospective NGO applicants should refer to ADS Chapter 303.3.9.1 for additional information about pre-award surveys. A pre-award survey or audit does not commit USAID to make an award to any entity.

Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing is voluntary but not required.

Cost sharing or matching means the portion of project costs not paid by Federal (USG) funds. Cost share may include project costs incurred by the Recipient from its own funds, or project costs financed with cash, services, or property contributed or donated to the Recipient from other non-USG sources, including sub-recipients. Cost share becomes a condition of an award when it is part of the approved award budget. Cost sharing is not required for applicants to be eligible to receive USAID funding under this NOFO. However, applicants may voluntarily propose a cost share component to demonstrate their commitment to the proposed activities and to promote sustainability. For NGO recipient contributions to qualify as cost share, the cost share must be verifiable from the recipient's records. Cost share can be audited. For non-U.S. entities cost share is subject to the Standard Provision, "Cost Share". Refer to Section F.2 of this NOFO for links to these regulations and policies.

OTHER

In support of the Agency's interest in fostering a larger assistance base and expanding the number and sustainability of development partners, USAID encourages applications from potential new partners. When considering making an award to a potential partner with limited or no previous USAID experience, USAID will undertake necessary pre-award reviews to determine the organization's "responsibility" as discussed below. The resultant award to this organization may take some time. The applicant should take this into account and plan their implementation dates and activities accordingly. "Responsibility" of Applicant.

In order for an award to be made, the Agreement Officer must make an affirmative determination that the applicant is "responsible". A positive responsibility determination means that the applicant possesses or has the ability to obtain the necessary management and technical competence to plan and

carry out the program to be funded, and that the applicant will practice mutually agreed upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided by USAID.

Dun and Bradstreet and SAM.gov Requirements:

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

Each applicant must:

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

If your organization does not have a DUNS or is not registered in SAM for Phase 1, please ensure you are registered before Phase 2 application submission. **Your application may not be accepted without a DUNS number or SAM registration.** It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all necessary documentation is complete and received on time

Non-US organizations must also have a NCAGE code which is a five-character alpha-numeric identifier assigned to entities located outside the United States. The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin the process as early as possible.

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

Information on establishing a DUNS number can be found at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

SAM: Quick Start Guide for New Grantee Registration

https://www.sam.gov/sam/transcript/Quick_Guide_for_Grants_Registrations.pdf

SAM: Quick Start Guide for International Registrants

https://www.sam.gov/SAM/transcript/Quick_Guide_for_International_Entity_Registration.pdf

SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Pre-Application Conference: The Mission will hold a conference in Tbilisi at U.S. Embassy Tbilisi, Multi-Purpose Room (MPR) on February 26, 2019 from 2:00 pm until 3:30 pm to discuss this NOFO and respond to questions or requests for clarification from prospective applicants. Applicants interested in attending the conference should submit: (a) their questions on any NOFO-related issues, and (b) the names of their representatives (maximum 2 persons). This information should be sent to Eka Gamezardashvili at egamezardashvili@usaid.gov.

Answers to all questions, posed both in advance and during the conference, will be posted on: <http://www.grants.gov/>, www.jobs.ge

1. Questions and Answers

All questions regarding this NOFO should be submitted along to the designated individuals on the cover page of this NOFO. Questions regarding this NOFO should be submitted no later than the date and time stated on the cover letter, to provide sufficient time to address the questions and incorporate the questions and answers as an amendment to this solicitation. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment to this NOFO, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant.

2. Phase One – Concept Paper

In Phase One, eligible Georgian organizations must submit concept papers for USAID/Georgia review and consideration by the date/time indicated on the letter of this NOFO. An organization must submit only one concept paper for each component of the Program Description (Section A) for a maximum of three per organization. Concept papers should not attempt to address two or more components of the Program Description in a combined approach. USAID urges prospective Applicants to focus efforts where their organizations can make the greatest impact in order to make best use of their organizational capacities.

While USAID encourages creative partnerships and innovative approaches, we also strongly encourage applicants to be realistic in stating what can be reasonably achieved in the proposed activity given the proposed work, budget and timeline.

Concept Paper Format : All concept papers must be:

- A range of five (5) to seven (7) pages for the technical description and additional total limit of three (3) pages for all attachments;
- Typed, single space on letter/standard size, not legal size, paper;
- Printed in 12 font size; charts, tables and spreadsheets may be not less than 10 font; Written in English;
- Written in Word (version 2000 or later) or Adobe PDF format with spreadsheets in MS Excel (version 2000 or later) or in tables that are compatible with MS Word; and
- The total size of a concept paper submitted by e-mail submission should not exceed 25 MBs.

The subject line of the submission email should read as follows: “*Organization Name* - Georgia EPPs NOFO No: 72011419RFA00003.

The seven-page maximum for technical description does not include the cover page or attachments. Up to three (3) pages of attachments is allowable in support of the submission. The attachments must be concise and not be a continuation of the requested seven-page technical description content.

Concept papers must include the following three (3) components (Cover Page, Technical Description and Attachments) and address all stated sub-components. Please organize the concept paper according to the outline below.

a) Cover Page (does NOT count towards the five to seven page limit)

- USAID NOFO No. 72011419RFA00003
- Name and address of organization;
- Contact person (lead contact name; telephone number, address and e-mail Information); Name(s) and title(s) of the principal author(s) of this concept paper;
- Title of proposed program and total amount of funds requested for the activity period
- Identify which of the three components of the Program Description the concept paper addresses: 1) Voter empowerment and voter education, 2) Oversight of Elections, or 3) Development of future political leaders;
- Identify applying organization as a registered Georgian entity according to eligibility requirements;
- Names of other organizations or donors to which the applicant is submitting the application and/or which are funding the proposed activities; and
- Signature, name and title of the authorized representative of the applicant.

b) Technical Description (counts towards five to seven page limit)

- i. Clearly define a **problem statement** and a **theory of change**. Provide background on the sector context, specific problem or opportunity the intervention seeks to address; and theory of change, or simply, how the intervention addresses the problem.
- ii. Provide a **succinct narrative** of how the Applicant would conduct **activities** addressing the problem statement and achieving results within a 36 (for Component 2) or 42 month period (for Components 1 and 3), or a shorter period, mindful of Georgia’s electoral calendar.
- iii. Identify specific high-level **outcomes** expected to be achieved during and at the end of the period of performance and describe how the Applicant will **measure the achievement of results**.
- iv. Specify the **geographic scope** of the proposed program.
- v. Sustainability: A discussion of sustainability: How will the activities be sustained beyond the life of the award?
- vi. Estimated total cost and duration: Proposed estimated total cost, including cost share if applicable, and timeline. Summary budget, broken down by main categories, which reflects the Applicant’s strategy and proposed activities. (Note: A detailed budget is not required in Phase One.) The proposed amount of USAID funding should be reasonable within the context

of the applicant's absorptive 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.

c) Attachments (separate page limit of three pages in total)

- Statement of direct USAID and U.S. Government (USG) assistance received during the preceding five year period; include the amounts received annually and from which U.S. agency, and the total monetary amount in U.S. dollars. **Organizations that did not receive USAID funds during the preceding five-year period must state this fact and include the funding amount from other USG sources.** Include a brief description of activities, donor(s) and amount of support received in the previous five years;
- Concise description of the applicant's development experience including project descriptions, results, and evaluations;
- A brief statement of the history of the organization; its mission and primary development focus, capabilities and challenges; and
- An organizational chart of the applicant organization

Applicants are reminded to articulate in their concept papers how their programmatic approach advances the social inclusion of women, youth, persons with disabilities, and ethnic and religious minorities. Not all organizations submitting a concept paper will be invited to participate in Phase Two.

USAID, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to review Concept Papers received out of cycle. USAID anticipates two possible results from the Concept Paper merit review process “Pass” and “Not Pass”:

- Pass - Concept Paper generally satisfies the Concept Paper merit review criteria and receives a “Pass” status. USAID invites Applicants with invitation letter to submit a Full Application.
- Not-Pass: Concept Paper does not satisfy the Concept Paper merit review criteria and received a “Not Pass” status. USAID rejects the Concept Paper and the process is ended for that Applicant.

Do not submit a full application unless requested to do so by a USAID Agreement Officer.

3. Phase Two – Full Application

The Applicants who receive a “Pass” in Phase One of this competition will be invited to Phase Two of the NOFO and to submit a full application. USAID will then review Full Applications according to the evaluation criteria specified in Section E before making an award decision and/or conducting negotiations with any apparently successful Applicants.

The Full Application is divided into a Technical Application and a Cost/Business Application as explained below and will be evaluated separately.

3.1 Technical Application Format

The Technical Application must demonstrate a clear understanding of the work to be undertaken, the responsibilities of all parties involved, offer critical thinking and analysis related to each programmatic element, and tie the technical approach to results expected to be achieved.

The Technical Application should be written in English and should be 15 pages or less when printed on standard sized paper in a legible font or A4 paper, and every page of the application must be numbered. Acceptable file formats are Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and PDF. The total size of a technical application submitted by e-mail submission should not exceed 25 MBs. Large graphics files are discouraged.

The Technical Application must contain: 1) a programmatic approach, 2) a monitoring, evaluation and learning plan, and 3) key personnel.

3.1.1 Programmatic Approach

The programmatic approach should address how the Applicant intends to accomplish their objectives corresponding to one of the three components of the Program Description (Section A).

Building on the Concept Paper, the Applicant will further develop their strategy and technical approach in support of the chosen program objectives. This narrative should demonstrate deep contextual knowledge of Georgia's political trends and display innovative thinking. If there are any significant changes to the approach or the proposed activities as presented in the Concept Paper, an explanation of these changes would be appropriate.

The technical approach must be flexible enough to adapt to contextual changes in Georgia's political environment over the period of performance.

3.1.2 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan:

The Applicant must submit a draft Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan identifying specific outcome-level results expected during and at the end of the period of performance and describing how the Applicant will measure the achievement of results.

The Applicant's MEL Plan must include appropriate outcome indicators linked to each anticipated result. The proposed indicators should be useful for timely management decisions and credibly reflect the actual performance of the program. Collected data should meet the reasonable quality standards of validity, reliability, timeliness, precision and integrity. The Applicant should explain how the MEL Plan will be used to inform programmatic decision-making and allocation of resources within the period of performance.

The Applicant may propose custom *post hoc* indicators for USAID/Georgia to continue tracking after the end of this activity to better document anticipated results that may accrue after the period of performance ends.

All results indicators reported through the MEL Plan must be disaggregated by gender, by age, and by location whenever possible. Structured qualitative data gathering and analysis approaches can shed valuable insight on activities and approaches that are not amenable to standard performance indicators and linear logic models. If the Applicant proposes such data gathering and analysis, discuss how they will transcend anecdotes and contribute to establishing an evidence base for future decisions.

3.1.3 Key Personnel

The Applicant must identify personnel essential to the successful implementation of the proposed program who, therefore, should be designated as “key personnel” as defined in ADS 303.3.11. At a minimum, the key personnel should include a chief of party responsible for the overall performance of the program and a monitoring, evaluation, and learning advisor responsible for tracking progress towards results and realizing learning. The chief of party should be technically proficient in matters related to all components of the program, have a demonstrated record of achieving results for traditionally marginalized groups, and have experience managing teams and projects of commensurate size.

For each key personnel position, the Applicant should submit 1) a brief description of the responsibilities of the key personnel position, 2) a short professional biography of the proposed candidate or a link to an on-line source for a complete *curricula vita* of the proposed candidate, and 3) the name, position, and contact information of two references who can speak to the professional abilities of the candidate.

3.2 Cost Application Format

The Applicant will submit a Cost Application corresponding to its Technical Application. The Cost Application is to be submitted electronically under a separate cover from the Technical Application. Please note that most negotiations stall due to insufficient and/or unverifiable cost and pricing data. The recipient should provide as detailed cost breakdown and cost narrative as practicable. Please provide as much other than certified cost and pricing data necessary for the Agreement Officer to find costs realistic and reasonable. Lack of details in this section will lead to longer procurement time. The format of the Cost Application is described below.

The Cost Application must contain the following:

1. SF-424, SF-424 A; SF-424 B; (please find the standard forms as attachments to the NOFO)
2. Budget;
3. Budget Narrative;
4. Sub-Award Budget (if relevant);
5. Indirect Costs; and
Signed Affirmation of Certifications

3.2.1 Budget

The budget must be in Microsoft Excel (version 2000 or later) or in tables compatible with Microsoft Excel. The spreadsheets must not be locked and the formulas must be visible. The budget must be broken down by program years with an accompanying detailed budget narrative (in MS Word version 2000 or later or PDF) which provides in detail the total costs for implementation of the program as further detailed below. There is no page limit on the Cost Application.

If the Applicant has established a consortium or another legal relationship among its partners, the Cost 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 Applicant must provide budgets of the partner organizations separately. The following sections describe the documentation that the Applicant must submit to USAID prior to award.

3.2.2 Budget Narrative

Please note that the contents of the Budget Narrative and Detailed Budget documents shall mirror and reflect one another. The Budget Narrative shall have appropriate headings that match those of the Detailed Budget. For example, the Budget Narrative shall explain how salaries and wages were determined and give the appropriate rationale under Salaries and Wages heading and the Detailed Budget shall display the estimated costs for salaries and wages under the Salaries and Wages budget line item. The Budget Narrative shall explain in as much detail as possible how costs were derived and the methodologies used to derive and estimate costs. The Detailed Budget shall display the estimated costs proposed for each budget line item.

a. Budget Narrative Contents

The Budget Narrative must provide:

- i. The breakdown of all costs associated with the program.
- ii. The breakdown of all costs according to each partner organization in the program.
- iii. The costs associated with external, expatriate technical assistance and those associated with local in-country technical assistance.
- iv. The breakdown of any financial and in-kind contribution of all organizations involved in implementing the program
- v. Potential contributions of non-USAID or private commercial donors to this program (cost share) in accordance with 2 CFR 200.306 and/or OMB Circular A-110.
- vi. Procurement plan for commodities, goods and services (if applicable).

The budget must have an accompanying detailed budget narrative and justification that provides in 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.). The Cost application will include sufficiently detailed information to evaluate and support the proposed costs. At a minimum, this will include an explanation of the salaries, supplies, travel, other direct costs and indirect cost components of your budget. A breakdown of all costs associated with the program according to the costs of, if applicable, headquarters, regional and/or country offices. Please indicate which items, if any, are being cost-shared and their value. The combination of the cost data and breakdowns specified above and the cost notes must be sufficient to allow a determination of whether the costs estimated are realistic and reasonable.

Identified below are some of the common cost elements in a budget:

- i. *Salary and Wages* - Direct salaries and wages must be proposed in accordance with the applicant's personnel policies. Please provide a separate line item for each proposed individual and identify each by name, title and the level of effort and salary rate. Also include position descriptions for all employees and consultants whose compensation will be charged as a direct cost to the agreement.

This information will also be required for sub-recipients. Also, specify key personnel and all essential personnel under the program for all those individuals and salary history.

- ii. *Fringe Benefits* - If the applicant has a fringe benefit rate that has been approved by an agency of the Government, such rate will be used and evidence of its approval must be provided. If a fringe benefit rate has not been so approved, the applicant will propose a rate and explain how the rate was determined. If the latter is used, 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, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in dollars and as a percentage of salaries.
- iii. *Travel and Transportation* - The application will indicate the number of trips, domestic and international, and the estimated costs. Specify the origin and destination for each proposed trip, duration of travel, and number of individuals traveling. Per diem must be based on the applicant's normal travel policies (applicants may choose to refer to the Federal Standardized Travel Regulations for cost estimates).
- iv. *Other Direct Costs* - This includes communications, report preparation costs, passports and visas fees, medical exams and inoculations, insurance (other than insurance included in the applicant's fringe benefits), equipment (procurement plan for commodities), office rent abroad, etc. The narrative will provide a breakdown and support for all and each other direct costs.
- v. *Branding and Marking* - The cost application must incorporate the estimated cost for Branding and Marking.
- vi. *Seminars and Conferences* - The applicant will indicate the subject, venue and duration of proposed conferences and seminars, if any, and their relationship to the objectives of the program, along with estimates of costs.
- vii. *Foreign Government Delegations to International Conferences* - Funds may not be used to finance the travel, per diem, hotel expenses, meals, conference fees or other conference costs for any member of a foreign government's delegation to an international conference sponsored by a public international organization, except as provided in ADS Mandatory Reference "Guidance on Funding Foreign Government Delegations to International Conferences or as approved by the AOR [<http://www.info.usaid.gov/pubs/ads/300/refindx3.htm>].

If applicable, please provide details on cost-sharing contributions that will be leveraged or provided for this program, including the donors, a narrative explanation of the contributions and other information allowing us to evaluate cost-efficiency of the proposed contributions, if any.

The proposed budget must provide cost estimates for the management of the program (including program monitoring). The Applicant should minimize administrative and support costs for managing the project to maximize the funds available for project activities.

3.2.3 Sub-award budget (if applicable)

Individual sub-award budgets for the sub-awardees identified in the application, if any, must include the same cost element breakdown in their budgets (as applicable) and must be accompanied by a budget narrative.

If the Applicant intends to utilize contractors or sub-awardees, it should indicate the extent intended

and a complete cost breakdown. A breakdown of all costs according to each partner organization, contract or sub-awardee involved in the program should be provided.

3.2.4 Indirect Costs

The applicant must submit the most recent Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement NICRA.

In case the applicant or its sub-recipient has no NICRA the applicant should submit the following:

- i. *Reviewed Financial Statements Report*: 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
- ii. *Audited Financial Statements Report*: 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 considerations are an important factor in the award decision, and the proposed cost structure should demonstrate a high degree of cost effectiveness and the implementing partner should demonstrate how they plan to keep overhead costs at a minimum level.

3.2.5 Signed Affirmation of Certifications

The cost application must also include the signed Affirmation of Certifications, found at:

<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mad.pdf>

4. Marking and Branding:

It is a Federal statutory and regulatory requirement that all overseas programs, projects, activities, public communications, and commodities that USAID partially or fully funds under an assistance award or sub-award must be appropriately marked with USAID identity. Under 2 CFR 700.348 USAID requires the submission of a Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan by the “apparently successful applicant.” Applicants for Phase 1 are not required to submit a Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan. The apparently successful applicant’s proposed Marking Plan may include a request for approval of one or more exceptions to the marking requirements specified in 2 CFR 700.348. Based on the above, a branding strategy and marking plan will not be required with the submission of the concept papers. However, apparently successful applicants will be required to submit both of these documents upon request.

Further information on how to adhere to branding policies and marking requirements for grants and cooperative agreements are found in ADS 320. This includes visibly displaying the USAID Standard

Graphic Identity that clearly communicates assistance is - From the American people - on all programs, projects, activities, publications, public communications, and commodities provided or supported through USAID assistance awards. ADS 320 requires that, after the evaluation of the applications, the USAID Agreement Officer will request the Apparently Successful applicants to submit a Branding Strategy that describes how the program, project, or activity is named and positioned, how it is promoted and communicated to beneficiaries and cooperating country citizens, and identifies all donors and explains how they will be acknowledged. ADS 320 may be found at the following website: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/320.pdf>

USAID's Agreement Officer will have final approval of the branding strategy and marking plan. The branding and marking plan will be included in and made a part of the resulting award.

SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Process

The concept papers (Phase One) and full applications (Phase Two) will be evaluated in accordance with the process set forth below leading to an award decision.

2. Review of Concept Papers in Phase One

The concept paper will be evaluated on a pass/not pass basis against the below, equally weighted criteria.

- i. Suitability of proposed interventions for contributing to achievement of the Component objective and stated Component results.
- ii. Realism of proposed high-level outcomes and quality of proposed approach to measuring success.
- iii. Effectiveness of proposed approach to promoting social inclusion of politically underrepresented groups (i.e. women, youth, ethno-religious minorities, and persons with disabilities).
- iv. Use of innovative and creative approaches to complement best practices.
- v. Organization's past experience and qualifications for implementing related programming to that which is proposed.

If an Applicant's concept paper in Phase 1 is evaluated as a "pass," then the applicant will be invited to Stage 2. No revisions of the concept paper for Phase 1 will be allowed. If an applicant's concept paper is evaluated as a "not pass", then the applicant is no longer eligible for the award.

The summary budget will not be considered in determining the overall rating of the Concept Paper. Following the review of the Concept Papers, each applicant will be notified of the outcome of the review by the Agreement Officer.

Due to the anticipated number of concept papers, USAID will not be able to provide details on why the concept papers were not selected.

3. Review of Full Applications in Phase Two

The Applicants who submitted the most highly rated Concept Papers during Phase One of this competition will be invited to submit Full Applications for Phase Two of this competition.

Each element of the evaluation criteria for Phase Two (Full Application) will be objectively rated according to a qualitative scale described in the table below. Taking into consideration the ratings of each element of the evaluation criteria, each Full Application will receive an overall rating.

RATING	DESCRIPTION
Exceptional	The application exceeds the fullest expectations for the specified

	requirements. The application convincingly demonstrates that the program description has been thoroughly analyzed and met with proven capabilities and innovative approaches to the development problem. The application contains significant strengths and may contain only minor weaknesses which can be addressed, but does not have discernable deficiencies. The application has a high likelihood of resulting in an outstanding, effective, efficient, and economical performance which achieves the intended results.
Very Good	The application fully meets the specified requirements. The application exhibits clear understanding of the program description and demonstrates ability to utilize best practices towards the development problem. The application has its strengths and weaknesses that are correctable, but no discernable deficiencies. The application is likely to achieve the intended results with strong performance.
Satisfactory	The application meets the minimum specified requirements. The application responds to the program description with established approaches to addressing the development problem. The application has strengths but also contains several weaknesses that are correctable, but no discernable deficiencies. The application could reasonably achieve the intended results.
Marginal	The application meets some but not all minimum specified requirements. The application reflects the program description but does not demonstrate a consistent approach to the development problem. The application contains multiple weaknesses and may contain deficiencies. If deficiencies exist, they may be correctable. The application may achieve the intended results, however there is at least a moderate risk of not achieving them or achieving them in a less than effective and/or efficient way.
Unsatisfactory	The application fails to meet the minimum specified requirements. The application may be incomplete, vague, or so incorrect as to be unacceptable. The application has serious weaknesses and contains one or more major deficiencies which are not correctable without major revision of the application. The application is unlikely to achieve most intended results in an effective and efficient way, and there is a significant risk of not achieving them at all.

Following the review of the Full Applications, each Applicant will be notified of the outcome of the review by the Agreement Officer. The Agreement Officer may not issue an award to any Applicant who fails to resolve any matters USAID deems inadequate or otherwise technically unacceptable.

3.1 Review of the Technical Application

The elements of the Technical Application will be evaluated based on the criteria below with the programmatic approach contributing the most to the overall rating and the key personnel contributing the least to the overall rating. Taking into consideration the ratings of each element of the evaluation criteria, each Technical Application will receive an overall rating.

In reviewing the **Programmatic Approach**, USAID will use the following criteria collectively:

- i. Suitability, detail, and clarity of proposed interventions for contributing to achievement of the Component objective and stated Component results.
- ii. Sustainability of outcomes (not efforts) beyond the period of performance advancing Georgia's journey to self-reliance.
- iii. Effectiveness of approach in promoting social inclusion of marginalized groups.
- iv. Use of innovative and creative approaches to complement best practices.
- v. Organization's past experience and qualifications for implementing related programming to that which is proposed.

In reviewing the **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan**, USAID will use the following criteria collectively:

- vi. Realism of proposed high-level outcomes and quality of proposed measures of success.
- vii. Soundness of methodology for tracking results with measurable illustrative indicators, clear data collection, and disaggregation of results.

In reviewing the **Key Personnel**, USAID will use the following criteria:

- viii. Extent to which the personnel best meet the needs of the programmatic approach with demonstrated technical and management capabilities.

3.2 Review of the Cost/Business Application

The cost application will be evaluated for general reasonableness, allowability, and allocation of resources.

Cost is less important than technical merit and is not rated, however, the cost applications of the apparently successful technical applications will be evaluated with the following considerations:

- i. Completeness of the application, adequacy of budget detail, and consistency with elements of the technical application.
- ii. Extent of the applicant's understanding of the financial aspects of the program and the applicant's ability to perform the activities within the amount requested.
- iii. Whether the applicant's cost plan will achieve the program objectives with reasonable economy and efficiency.
- iv. Cost effectiveness including the level of proposed cost share (if applicable).
- v. Whether any special conditions relating to costs should be included in the award.

The application with the lowest estimated cost may not be selected if a higher priced technical application offers a greater overall benefit. 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.

In addition, the organization must demonstrate adequate financial management capability, to be measured for a responsibility determination. The Agreement Officer will perform a risk assessment (2 CFR 200.205). The AO may determine that a pre-award survey is required to inform the risk assessment in determining whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organizational, experience, accounting and operational controls, financial resources, and technical skills –or ability to obtain them– in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award. Depending on the result of the risk assessment, the Agreement Officer will decide to execute the award, not execute the award, or award with “specific conditions” (2 CFR 200.207).

SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

Award of the agreement contemplated by this NOFO cannot be made until funds have been appropriated, allocated, and committed through internal USAID procedures. While USAID anticipates that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for the award. A notice of award signed by the Agreement Officer is the authorizing document for this NOFO. The notice of award will be provided electronically to the successful applicant's point of contact listed in the full application. Notification will also be made electronically to unsuccessful applicants pursuant to ADS 303.3.7.1.b. USAID may reach out to the applicant with clarifying questions and a request for a revised application by a specified date. USAID reserves the right to award without requesting clarifications or additional detail on an application.

2. Administrative & National Policy Requirements

The award will be administered as follows:

Administrative Agreement Office:

Office of Acquisition and Assistance
USAID/Georgia
29 Georgian-American Friendship Avenue
Didi Dighomi, Tbilisi 0131, Georgia

Technical Office:

Democracy, Governance and Social Development Office
USAID/Georgia
29 Georgian-American Friendship Avenue
Didi Dighomi, Tbilisi 0131, Georgia

This NOFO is issued pursuant to The Foreign Affairs Act of 1961, as amended.

3. Reporting Requirements

3.1 Financial Reporting:

The recipient must provide the following reports to the Agreement Officer Representative (AOR), with a copy to the Agreement Officer, as specified below, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.327 and 2 CFR 200.328.

(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 Representative (AOR) and to the Agreement Officer.

The recipient must submit these forms no later than 14 calendar days after the end of each standard Federal quarter (i.e. October-December, January-March, April-June, July to September).

The recipient must submit quarterly financial reports no later than 30 calendar days after the end of each reporting period.

(2) The recipient must submit the original and two copies of all final financial reports to USAID/Washington, M/CFO/CMPLOC Unit, the AOR and to the Agreement Officer. 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.

The recipient must submit the final financial report no later than 90 calendar days from the end of the agreement.

The quarterly financial reports must contain a summary page which shows spending by category for the quarter, cumulative spending to date by line item, available funding for the remainder of the activity and any variances from planned expenditures. If there are significant accrued expenditures for the quarter being reported upon which for some reason have not yet been billed to the agreement, the recipient must include a brief note to that effect, with the specific amount involved, thus enabling the AOR to accurately track the expenditure rate.

3.2 Quarterly Accrual Reports

The recipient shall submit an estimated accrual report including the following information: (i) agreement number; (ii) recipient's name; (iii) total amount obligated; (iv) total amount invoiced for; (v) total amount expended but not yet invoiced for; (vi) remaining unexpended funds; (vii) estimated completion date; (viii) any pertinent information, including projections for the next quarter, and an explanation of costs increases or underestimation of original costs. The accruals report shall be presented in English to the AOR and other designated administrative staff, on a quarterly basis (15 days previous to the close of each fiscal year quarter) in the format to be provided to the Recipient upon award signature.

3.3 Performance Reporting

3.3.1 Annual Implementation Plans

On an annual basis, the Recipient shall prepare and provide a work plan for USAID's approval which describes the specific core activities to be carried out under the Agreement. The Recipient may involve stakeholders, including sub-awardees, Georgian government officials, other partners, and beneficiaries into preparation of the work plan; the work plan must include a statement describing the process by which stakeholders were involved in preparation of the work plan. USAID will approve work plans and any revisions to them that entail a change in or additional activities. The first work plan will be due thirty days after the signing of the award and should cover the time from the date of the award through the end of Q4. Subsequent annual work plans due to USAID 60 days prior to start of Q1 unless an alternative schedule is agreed to by both USAID and the recipient.

3.3.2 Quarterly Performance Reports

Within 30 days after each quarter of the USG fiscal year, the Recipient shall provide a quarterly performance report which will document overall progress towards the sub-purposes of the project, activities completed during the reporting period, any problems and challenges encountered during implementation (including financial issues) and how they were mitigated, data on all indicators established in the MEL Plan, and specific activities planned for the next quarterly reporting period.

3.3.4 Final Report

The recipient shall prepare a final report on the award in lieu of the final quarterly performance report. The final report must be submitted no later than 90 days after the end of the award.

The final report will clearly describe major accomplishments and results achieved attributable to activities under this award, an account of the sustainability of these efforts and/or results, final data for indicators in the performance management plan, an account of any problems encountered during implementation (including financial issues), and lessons learned and/or best practices identified during implementation.

The final report must be submitted to the Agreement Officer's Representative, to the Agreement Officer, and to USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) electronically.

3.3.5 Gender Reporting

As part of its regular reports, the recipient must collect, analyze and submit sex disaggregated data and propose actions that will address any gender-related challenges that might arise from that data. The recipient will report any challenges to the AOR who, in turn, will work with the USAID Mission's gender specialist to find reasonable solutions.

3.3.6 Geographic Data Reporting Requirements:

Activity Location Data: The recipient shall submit Activity Location Data which indicates the geographic location or locations where an activity is implemented. Activity Location Data shall be submitted as part of the quarterly reports.

3.3.7 Development Experience Clearinghouse Requirements

a) Submissions to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC).

- 1) The recipient must provide the Agreement Officer's Representative one copy of any Intellectual Work that is published, and a list of any Intellectual Work that is not published.
- 2) In addition, the recipient must submit Intellectual Work, whether published or not, to the DEC on-line. The recipient must review the DEC Web site for submission instructions, including document formatting and the types of documents to submit. Submission instructions can be found at: <http://dec.usaid.gov>.
- 3) For purposes of submissions to the DEC, Intellectual Work includes all works that document the implementation, evaluation, and results of international development assistance activities developed or acquired under this award, which may include program and communications materials, evaluations and assessments, information products, research and technical reports, progress and performance reports required under this award (excluding administrative financial

information), and other reports, articles and papers prepared by the recipient under the award, whether published or not. The term does not include the recipient's information that is incidental to award administration, such as financial, administrative, cost or pricing, or management information.

- 4) Each document submitted should contain essential bibliographic information, such as (1) descriptive title; (2) author(s) name; (3) award number; (4) sponsoring USAID office; (5) development objective; and (6) date of publication.
- 5) The recipient must not submit to the DEC any financially sensitive information or personally identifiable information, such as social security numbers, home addresses and dates of birth. Such information must be removed prior to submission. The recipient must not submit classified documents to the DEC.

b. In the event award funds are used to underwrite the cost of publishing, in lieu of the publisher assuming this cost as is the normal practice, any profits or royalties up to the amount of such cost must be credited to the award unless the schedule of the award has identified the profits or royalties as program income.

3.3.8 Geographic Information System (GIS) Reporting

The Recipients must provide to the AOR semi-annually on April 15 and October 15. For this purpose, the Recipient must fill in the appropriate Excel Spreadsheet "Activity Location Data GIS Report Template." This template will be provided by the AOR to the successful applicant.

3.4 Close-out Plans

Three (3) months prior to the completion of activities and/or the award end date, the recipient must submit a close-out plan for the specific country and/or award.

SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

Point of contact (POC) for questions regarding this NOFO is as follows:

Justin Gunnoe
Regional Agreement Officer
jgunnoe@usaid.gov

Ekaterine Gamezardashvili
Acquisition & Assistance Specialist
Regional Contracting Office
egamezardashvili@usaid.gov

SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION

USAID strongly encourages prospective Applicants to thoroughly review all the additional background materials listed here or included as attachments to this NOFO to gain a more complete understanding of the context and aspirations of this project **before** preparing their applications.

The Journey to Self-Reliance

As USAID Administrator Mark Green has stated, each of USAID's programs should look forward to the day when foreign assistance is no longer necessary, and we must measure our work by how far every investment moves us closer to that day. USAID is reorienting the way it does business to focus on supporting our partner countries on the **Journey to Self-Reliance** –or, to put it another way, their ability to solve their own development challenges. This approach to development, which prioritizes fostering stable, resilient, prosperous, inclusive, and self-reliant countries, is good for our partners around the world, our nation's security, and the American taxpayer. To learn more about USAID's focus on the Journey to Self-Reliance, visit <https://www.usaid.gov/selfreliance> and to see Georgia's metrics visit <https://selfreliance.usaid.gov/country/georgia>.

USAID/Georgia's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (2013-2019)

A Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS), typically a five-year strategy, defines a Mission's chosen approach in a country, articulates the self-reliance trajectory, and details expected results. The CDCS provides a roadmap for how USAID will design and implement projects and activities, and is made available publicly. Within two months of CDCS approval, the USAID Mission posts the plan on the Agency's website and to the Development Experience Clearinghouse. It is used to inform dialogue with Congress, engage host country partners and other stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society. For more information on USAID/Georgia's CDCS (2013-2019), please see: https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1863/GeorgiaCDCS_2013-2017.pdf

Final Performance Evaluation for the Strengthening Electoral and Political Processes Project (SEPPS) In Georgia

USAID/Georgia began a five-year project entitled Strengthening Elections and Political Processes (SEPPs) in 2014, two years after the first peaceful transfer of power in the country, at what looked like a promising time for the development of Georgia's democratic political processes. This evaluation explores the performance of this effort based on the progress that had been accomplished towards its objectives and ultimate goal by three international (IFES, IRI, and NDI) and three local (ISFED, GYLA, and TI-Georgia) partners. The evaluation addressed five primary questions specified by USAID: Did the performance of the project's six activities meet expectations and achieve expected results? Were there gaps in achieving the three objectives? Did the activities meet the expectations of their direct beneficiaries? Were the project's goals feasible given the ability of USAID to influence? Did the project offer lessons learned from utilizing local partners? The evaluation established that the project's objectives and sub-objectives were generally met. However, there are structural issues in Georgia's political system that continue to hinder political competition. In this context, the evaluation states that it will be critical for USAID and partners going forward to tackle the more fundamental objective of making political competition an acceptable and assumed part of the Georgian political system.

https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00T9HS.pdf

Public Opinion Research

USAID partners the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) have sponsored public opinion research in Georgia for more than a decade. This contemporaneous record of the views of Georgian citizens over changes in the political context reveals both change and consistency over the years. An easily accessible archive of IRI's polls can be found at <https://www.iri.org/news-and-resource?type=1&country=691> and of NDI's at <https://www.ndi.org/georgia-polls>.

Election Observation Reports

Several organizations have monitored recent elections and various political processes in Georgia with USAID's support. Results of these activities can be found on the websites of the International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED) at <http://www.isfed.ge/>, the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) at <https://gyla.ge/ge>, and Transparency International Georgia at <https://www.transparency.ge/en>, among others. A compendium of election observation reports from international observer missions since 2002 can be found at <http://aceproject.org/electoral-advice/dop/?keywords=&country=Georgia&organization=&year=&election=&mission=&report=>.