DFOP0019913 Moldova SOI - Question and Answers

Serial	Section	Question	Answer	NOFO Revision
Section A				
1	A.1 / A.2 / D.1	The NOFO anticipates one to two awards from $40 million. Does the Department of State anticipate awarding by line of effort, so that an applicant addressing only one line of effort would compete for approximately half of the available funding? May an organization submit more than one SOI, or appear as a sub-recipient on another applicant's SOI	- The Department of State may make either one award that addresses both lines of effort or it may make two awards where each award addresses one of the two lines of effort. The determination will be made based on SOIs and eventual full applications received. - There is no predetermined split for the $40 million, but if two awards are made, the Department of State reserves the right to negotiate budgets with applicants. More guidance will be provided during stage 2 to short-listed applicants. - Organizations can only submit 1 SOI either addressing both lines of effort or one of the two lines of efforts. - Applicants can appear as subrecipients on another applicant's SOI.	See yellow highlighted changes in A.2, D.1 (new), and D.2 (new, previously this was D.1).
2	A.1 / A.2 / D.1	**Funding between the lines of effort** Has the Department identified an indicative allocation of the $40 million between Line of Effort 1 and Line of Effort 2? Or will the split be based on the applications received and proposed budgets, with the $10 million minimum per award as the only constraint?	-There is no indicative allocation; the split will be based on the applications received and proposed budgets. The Department reserves the right to negotiate budgets with applicants. - The $10 million minimum per award is the only constraint.	None
3	A.1 / A.2 / D.1	Does DOS anticipate making separate awards for Line of Effort 1 and Line of Effort 2, or may one award support an integrated approach covering both lines of effort?	The Department reserves the right to make 1 award that addresses both lines of effort or to make 2 awards where each award addresses one line of effort.	None

4	A.1 / A.2 / D.1	If DOS makes two awards, does it anticipate allocating one award to each line of effort, and is there an indicative funding range or ceiling for either line? Given the $10 million minimum award size and $40 million in total available funding, may an applicant request the full $40 million for an integrated approach?	- If the Department makes two awards, each award will address one of the lines of effort, i.e. award #1 addresses line of effort 1 and award #2 addresses line of effort 2. - If one award is made that works on both lines of effort, up to $40 million would be awarded to that award.	None
5	A.2 / C	**Regional Natural Gas Storage:** Would activities facilitating access to underground natural gas storage in Romania and Ukraine—including commercial storage agreements, transportation capacity reservations, and seasonal supply optimization—be eligible, even when the storage infrastructure and service providers are located outside Moldova?	The NOFO is only for programmatic interventions in Moldova.	None
6	A.2 / C	For Line of Effort 2, may proposed activities, beneficiaries, or infrastructure located outside Moldova be included when they directly support Moldovan and Ukrainian trade flows, or must all funded activities occur within Moldova?	The NOFO is only for programmatic interventions in Moldova.	None
Section B				
7	B.2	**Cost Sharing, Financing, and U.S. Government Coordination:** Although cost sharing is encouraged but not required, what level and form of private-sector leverage would strengthen an SOI? Would letters of interest, prospective financing from DFC, EXIM, or EBRD, and nonbinding commercial commitments be acceptable evidence at the SOI stage, or are formal partnership agreements expected?	The SOI does not set a minimum level or a required form of leverage, but it is encouraged. Applicants may describe letters of interest or prospective financing from other investors, financial institutions, and donors, and should say clearly whether each one is committed or prospective. Any supporting documents count toward the 5-page limit.	None

Section C				
8	C.3	**Program Priorities and Scope:** For Line of Effort 1, does the Department of State envision an integrated program combining electricity trading, U.S. LNG procurement, regional gas storage, renewable generation, and battery storage, or would it prefer proposals focused on fewer, higher-priority commercial transactions?	Responses should present an integrated program addressing the complete Line of Effort.	None
9	C.3	**Prior U.S. government work** Prior U.S. government-funded programs in Moldova have supported activities relevant to both lines of effort, including battery storage, grid modernization and port/customs work. Is there any expectation or preference to maintain continuity with any of these specific efforts from prior incumbents? Will the Department share related materials with all prospective bidders, including assessments, feasibility studies, technical specifications or other work products previously produced, where continuity is expected or preferred, at this stage or during the application stage?	There is no expectation or preference that applicants continue prior incumbents' efforts. Applications will be evaluated on their merits against the stated criteria.	None
10	C.3	**Trump Liberty Line and Electricity Trading:** Given the anticipated completion timeline of the Trump Liberty Line, what specific complementary investments or market reforms does the Department consider most important during the 36-month program period? Would strengthening electricity trading, balancing, forecasting, and grid management through existing interconnections be considered a priority?	DOS is seeking the best proposals to achieve the stated results in the SOI. DOS does not have a list of specific complementary investments.	None
11	C.3	For Line of Effort 1, what commissioning schedule should applicants assume for the Trump Liberty Line, and which implementing entities, utilities, regulators, or contractors should applicants plan to coordinate with?	The NOFO is separate from the Trump Liberty Line development efforts.	None

12	C.3	**U.S. LNG and Vertical Gas Corridor:** Is the Department primarily interested in increasing U.S.-origin LNG volumes delivered to Moldova, facilitating U.S. LNG transit through Moldova to Ukraine and other regional markets, or both? Would commercial transaction facilitation, tariff optimization, and LNG supply agreement development qualify as priority activities?	Increasing U.S.-origin LNG delivered to Moldova and facilitating greater LNG transit through Moldova are both desired outcomes of the program.	None
13	C.3	**Priority Counterparts and Existing Initiatives:** Are there specific Moldovan institutions, utilities, market operators, or private-sector projects that the Department recommends applicants prioritize, such as Energocom, Moldelectrica, OPEM, CET-Nord, or renewable energy developers? Are there existing U.S., EU, or international donor initiatives with which proposals must coordinate to avoid duplication?	The Department does not recommend or prioritize specific Moldovan institutions, companies, or projects. Applicants should choose the partners best suited to their proposed activities and explain why each one is relevant.	None
14	C.3	**Line of Effort 1 scope and the Vertical Gas Corridor.** May an energy-focused SOI concentrate on one or more of generation, storage, grid management, market reform, or operator capacity without including an LNG component? Where a proposed LNG intervention involves commercial, regulatory, or transaction activity elsewhere along the Vertical Gas Corridor, are costs or activities outside Moldova eligible when they directly support increased U.S.-origin gas supply to or through Moldova?	The SOI is only for programmatic interventions in Moldova.	None
15	C.3	For Line of Effort 1, does DOS have preferred or excluded electricity-generation technologies, or may applicants propose any commercially viable technology consistent with Moldovan and European Union requirements and standards?	DOS does not have preferred or excluded technologies. Any proposed technology must comply with all federal regulations.	None
16	C.3	For Line of Effort 2, does DOS expect applicants to focus on Giurgiulesti State Port, Giurgiulesti International Free Port, or both?	Applicants must determine their own approach and provide rationale for programmatic interventions.	None

17	C.3	Can DOS confirm which grid, port, and supply-chain cybersecurity measures with particular standards or frameworks, such as NIST Cybersecurity Framework 2.0, NERC CIP, EU NIS2, or applicable Moldovan requirements, applicants should align to?	Appropriate technical standards must be determined in coordination with the Government of Moldova requirements.	None
18	C.3	Line of Effort 2 references Giurgiulești ‘and/or other ports, including air, land, and sea.’ Does the Department of State have a preferred second airport for freight development? Are activities that increase export cargo volumes upstream of the port (for example, consolidation, storage, and inspection capacity serving shippers) within scope, or should activities be located at the port or airport itself?	Activities do not have to be physically located at the port or airport.	None

19	C.3 / 2 CFR 200 Subpart E	May award funds be used to procure equipment or for minor construction or renovation (for example, inspection, storage, or energy storage equipment), or does the Department of State intend for funds to support technical assistance, transaction facilitation, and regulatory reform, with hard investment financed by private and other partners?	Applicants need to provide technical justifications for proposed interventions. Interventions can include, but are not limited to, technical assistance; feasibility studies, engineering services, transaction advisory services, project development support, and regulatory and legal reform support. Investment-enabling financing mechanisms such as grants, guarantees (including first-loss guarantees), credit enhancement, or revolving facilities may be considered. Direct investments in private companies and direct financing of construction are outside the scope of the award. Minor renovation and equipment procurement can be considered if appropriate.	None
20	C.3 / 2 CFR 200 Subpart E	**Allowable activities and uses of funds.** Please clarify whether Federal award funds may support: (a) procurement and deployment of generation, battery, grid, port, customs, inspection, storage, or logistics equipment; (b) construction, rehabilitation, installation, or other infrastructure works; (c) feasibility, engineering, transaction-advisory, and project-development costs; and (d) investment-enabling financing mechanisms such as grants, guarantees, credit enhancement, first-loss support, or revolving facilities.		None
21	C.3 / 2 CFR 200 Subpart E	**Eligible Use of Program Funding:** Can cooperative agreement funds support transaction advisory services, feasibility and bankability studies, market systems and software procurement, pilot technology deployment, credit-enhancement mechanisms, or project preparation facilities? Are there restrictions on direct financial support to private companies or investments?		None
22	C.3 / 2 CFR 200 Subpart E	May award funds support equipment procurement, pilot installations, construction, rehabilitation, or capital improvements, or should applicants focus on technical assistance, transaction advisory services, capacity building, and feasibility work?		None

23	C.4	**Investment Mobilization and Performance Targets:** How will the Department distinguish and evaluate signed commercial contracts, U.S. export sales, private investment commitments, and projects reaching financial close? Would targets of three to five signed U.S.-linked agreements, $25–50 million in U.S. commercial commitments, and $50–100 million in private investment reaching financial close be considered appropriately ambitious for a 36-month program?	The Department of State will not comment on specific proposed targets before a review. Applicants may use the SOI's illustrative indicators or propose others.	None
24	C.4	For purposes of private sector leverage and U.S. commercial impact, will the Department count investment by non-U.S. investors, where U.S. firms supply goods or services? How does the Department of State define a 'U.S. company,' and specifically, do U.S.-owned subsidiaries registered abroad, or U.S.-origin equipment sold through local distributors, qualify?	Investment from non-U.S. investors can count toward private sector leverage, as long as it is private capital that the award helped mobilize. U.S.-origin equipment sold through local distributors and U.S. subsidiaries registered abroad would qualify.	None
25	C.4	Stage 2 applicants must propose specific targets for private investment or sales by U.S. companies. Will the Department of State provide minimum expectations or a benchmark ratio of leverage to award value, and should SOIs include indicative targets at stage 1?	The SOI does not set a minimum level or a required form of leverage, but it is encouraged. Applicants may provide indicative or estimated leverage amounts as part of their SOIs.	None
26	C.4 / C.5	**U.S. Commercial Participation and Eligible Transactions:** What constitutes sufficient U.S. commercial participation for a transaction to qualify as a program result? For example, would contracts involving U.S. LNG suppliers, U.S. technology providers, or U.S.-origin equipment qualify when the primary project developer, buyer, or infrastructure operator is European or Moldovan?	Transactions with European or Moldovan-led parties may count toward program results when they involve a role for U.S. companies, technologies, services, and/or investors. Applicants should explain the U.S. role in each proposed transaction, report the U.S. share of value separately from the total, and describe or quantify expected follow-on U.S. commercial benefits.	None

27	C.5	Private-sector leverage, cost share, and Stage 2 targets. How will the Department distinguish and assess cost share, co-investment, private investment mobilized, and sales generated for U.S. companies? At Stage 1, should applicants provide quantified leverage or sales targets and evidence of prospective commitments, or are indicative assumptions acceptable until the required Stage 2 plan and targets are developed?	Indicative or estimated leverage or sales targets are acceptable for Stage 1, though the Department will consider the feasibility of applicants estimations so any stated basis and justification as well as any early signals of interest, such as letters of intent or partner discussions, are preferred. Firm quantified targets and evidence of commitments will be expected in Stage 2.	None
Section D				
28	D.1	**Meaning of "investment-ready" and "bankable."** What minimum characteristics should an approach or project possess to be considered "practical, investment-ready" or "bankable" at the Stage 1 SOI stage, and what maturity is expected by the end of the award—for example, completed feasibility, site control, permits, environmental and social studies, interconnection or offtake arrangements, financing commitments, or financial close?	Investment-ready" and "bankable" mean a project is mature enough that a lender or investor could make a credit decision on it. That is project dependent, but could require a completed feasibility study and financial model, site control or secured resource access, key permits and environmental and social studies done etc, and/or firm or near-final offtake and interconnection arrangements.	None
29	D.1	May applicants include a cover-page that would not be counted as part of the five-page limit?	No. Applicants must provide the information as required per D.2 and E.7.	See yellow highlighted changes in D.2 (new, previously this was D.1) and E.7.
30	D.1	May applicants include letters of support or commitment from partners as an annex outside the five-page limit?	No	None
31	D.1	Please confirm that text in tables, charts, diagrams, captions, and footnotes may use a readable font smaller than 12-point Times New Roman, and that a cover page, table of contents, acronym list, and partner descriptions will not count toward the five-page SOI limit.	- Text in tables, charts, diagrams, captions, and footnotes can be Times New Roman size 10 - A cover page, table of content, acronym list, and partner descriptions are not required per D.2 and if submitted, will count against the SOI page limit.	None
32	D.1	To allow for a more detailed and comprehensive submission, may applicants submit separate five-page SOIs for each line of effort or provide an up to 10-page response that integrates both lines of effort?	SOI responses must be submitted in accordance with D.1. Applicants can only submit one SOI. Page lengths have been revised.	See yellow highlighted changes in D.1 (new), and D.2 (new, previously this was D.1).

33	D.1	Can DOS provide a budget template for the submission for the SOI?	The budget template can be downloaded from grants.gov under the "Related Documents" tab.	None
34	D.1	Please confirm whether the technical SOI, budget summary, and SF-LLL be combined into one PDF or submitted as separate attachments?	The SOI, budget summary and SF-LLL can be combined into one PDF.	None
35	D.1 / F.1	Could you clarify what the stage-one SOI should disclose about a proposed technical subrecipient or contractor, and whether a lead may add a named technical partner at the full-proposal stage? If there is an FAQ or required channel for this question, please point me to it.	- While it is applicants' responsibility to determine what specific information to include about subrecipients in the SOI, applicants should be aware of the organizational capability requirements in stage 1. - Subrecipients may be added in stage 2. - There is no additional FAQ for this opportunity; all questions must be submitted to the contacts listed in E.3 of the SOI.	None
Section E				
36	E.1 / E.7	Section E.1 refers to grants.gov, while Section E.7 states that all materials must be submitted via email. Please confirm how SOIs should be submitted.	E.1 states that application forms can be downloaded from grants.gov. E.7 provides instructions how to submit EOIs. Applications will not be received in any other manner except as stated in E.7.	See yellow highlighted changes in E.7
Section F				
37	F.1	**SOI Evaluation and Results Expectations:** Given the five-page SOI limit and the emphasis on technical approach, what level of detail is expected regarding the Theory of Change, proposed commercial counterparties, transaction pipeline, implementation milestones, and measurable outcomes? Should applicants prioritize a small number of investment-ready transactions over broader energy-sector reform activities?	Applicants must cover the required elements within the 5-page limit. Proposals must be practical and investment-ready and must address both cross-cutting objectives. Applicants invited to Stage 2 will provide more detail, including specific targets.	None
38	F.1	Will SOIs that address a single line of effort be evaluated on an equal basis as those that address both lines of effort?	Yes; all applications will be evaluated based on the review criteria in F.1.	None
39	F.3	Does DOS envision engaging with potential awardees in the second phase of selection in a cocreation (or similar) process to ensure complementarity between possible awards?	Instructions how to develop a full application will be shared with short-listed applicants in stage 2. The Department reserves the right to co-create.	None

40	F.3	Can the State Department indicate when selected applicants will be notified and if there is an anticipated deadline for Stage 2 applications?	It is currently not possible to indicate when selected applicants will be notified. The deadline for stage 2 applications will be stated in NOFO. Applicants will be given sufficient time to prepare the full application.	None
Section G				
41	G.1	Could DOS please confirm if the payment terms for the cooperative agreement would be structured on a cost reimbursable or on fixed price deliverables basis?	The award(s) will not be (a) fixed amount award(s). Payment will be made in accordance with 2 CFR 200.305 (b).	None
Other				
42	NA	We are preparing a statement of interest for DFOP0019913. The notice lists for-profit organizations as eligible applicants. Could you confirm whether a for-profit recipient may include a profit or fixed fee under this cooperative agreement? If a fee is permitted, please identify any applicable cap and indicate whether it should appear in the Stage 1 budget summary or be addressed at Stage 2.	Per 2 CFR 200.400 (g), fee or profit is not allowed under federal assistance.	None
43	NA	For eligible for-profit organizations participating as prime recipients or subcontractors, please confirm whether a reasonable fee or profit may be included in the proposed budget in addition to allowable direct and indirect costs. If permitted, please clarify any applicable limitations or restrictions and how the fee or profit should be presented in the Stage 2 budget submission.	Per 2 CFR 200.400 (g), fee or profit is not allowed under federal assistance.	None
44	NA	Does the Bureau maintain or share a list of organizations interested in partnering on this opportunity? If so, we would appreciate being included.	The Bureau does not maintain a list of organizations interested in partnering on this opportunity. Interested organizations must identify and make their own teaming arrangements.	None
END OF Q&A				