

## SECTION V – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

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

The technical applications will be evaluated in accordance with the Technical Evaluation Criteria set forth below. Cost applications will be evaluated for general reasonableness, allowability, and allocability. Award will be made to the responsible applicant(s) whose application offers the greatest value to the US Government.

The final award decision is made by the Agreement Officer, with consideration of the Technical Evaluation Committee recommendations.

**The following technical evaluation criteria are listed in descending order of importance.**

### **I. PROGRAM APPROACH**

#### **1) Technical Approach**

- a. The overall quality, responsiveness, innovativeness, and sustainability of the proposed strategy and methodology;
- b. Reliable mechanisms for managing the participation and support of local counterparts;
- c. The overall strength of proposed coordination mechanisms with local actor, USAID programs and other donor programs;
- d. The appropriateness of proposed criteria for the selection of focus advocacy efforts; and

#### **2) Work Plan and Performance Monitoring Plan**

- a. The overall quality, responsiveness, and comprehensiveness of the management plan (including mobilization, timetable, and notional work plan);
- b. The overall quality, reliability and strength of proposed performance monitoring plan;
- c. The realism of proposed approach and timeframe for mobilizing;
- d. The appropriateness and realism of proposed baselines, timelines and milestones for results;
- e. The comprehensiveness, technical excellence and realism of the monitoring and evaluation strategy;
- f. Strong, methodologically-sound strategy for monitoring and evaluating Project activity results and outcomes; and
- g. Rigorous and innovative indicators for activity outputs, intermediate results and overall systemic outcomes.

### 3) Key Personnel

Specific requirements to be taken into consideration for key staff include:

#### 1. Chief of Party

- Advanced degree in decentralization, international relations, political science, public administration, or other related field.
- Minimum 12 years of experience managing and implementing local development projects related to democracy and governance and political advocacy areas.
- Experience working collaboratively with a broad range of government officials, international donors, implementing partners, and other relevant sector stakeholders.
- Experience working in Central America and Honduras with subnational and national governments and civil society organizations.
- Demonstrated competence in leadership, client relations, and project and contract management.
- Excellent written and oral communications skills. Fluency in Spanish and English.

#### 2. Administrator/Financial Manager

- Advanced degree in financial or administrative management related fields.
- Minimum of five years of experience in financial reporting, budgeting, procurement and resource management.
- Excellent analytical, interpersonal and communication skills
- Fluency in English highly desirable

### Other Key Personnel

All other proposed key personnel shall be evaluated based on the quality and appropriateness of their experience and educational qualifications.

Note: On qualification and experience of proposed personnel, the offeror is required to ensure that the personnel whose biographical data is included in the proposal will in fact be available to staff the project should the offeror be selected for award. Failure to provide such assurances and letters of commitment may disqualify the offeror from being considered for award. Failure of the offeror selected for award to provide the proposed personnel may result in termination of the agreement for default. If USAID has not made its selection within 90 days of the closing date for receiving proposals, approved substitutions of personnel by the offeror will be permitted.

USAID reserves the right to request those offerors determined to be within the competitive range for award to make their proposed key personnel candidates and other representatives available for interviews and oral discussions in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

**4) Past Performance**

- a. Substantial experience managing programs oriented to support service delivery and decentralization reform and policy dialogue, including managing grants to local civil society organizations, improving skills in strategic planning, legal reform, provision of services to citizens, decentralized government management, and use of citizen engagement methodologies; and
- b. Demonstrated capacity to coordinate with other sector oriented programs.

Information on past performance must be provided in accordance with the following table. USAID/Honduras may contact the individual(s) indicated as well as others.

Instrument Number

Instrument Number	Name of Organization	Contact (Name, phone, fax, email)	Funding Amount	Period of Performance	Place of Performance	Brief Description of Work

**5) Cost**

- a. Viable and proven cost control and budgeting methodology
- b. Clear and functional financial planning

**COST/BUSINESS EVALUATION**

Cost/Business Applications will be reviewed for cost realism. Cost has not been assigned a weight but will be evaluated for general reasonableness, allocability, allowability, cost effectiveness and realism, adequacy of budget detail and financial feasibility and cost sharing. While cost may be a determining factor in the final award decision, especially between closely ranked applicants, the technical merit of applications is substantially more important under this RFA.

## EVALUATION SYSTEM

The following adjectival scoring system will be used by the technical evaluation committee to assess each of the technical criteria and the technical proposal as a whole:

- “Outstanding”      O    Very significantly exceeds most or all solicitation requirements. Response exceeds a “Better” rating. The Offeror has clearly demonstrated an understanding of all aspects of the requirements to the extent that timely and highest quality performance is anticipated.
- “Better”            B    Fully meets all solicitation requirements and significantly exceeds many of the solicitation requirements. Response exceeds an “Acceptable” rating. The areas in which the Offeror exceeds the requirements are anticipated to result in a high level of efficiency or productivity or quality.
- “Acceptable”      A    Meets all solicitation requirements. Complete, comprehensive, and exemplifies an understanding of the scope and depth of the task requirements as well as the Offeror’s understanding of the Government’s requirements.
- “Marginal”        M    Less than “Acceptable.” There are some deficiencies in the technical proposal. However, given the opportunity for discussions, the technical proposal has a reasonable chance of becoming at least “Acceptable.” (Areas of a technical proposal which remain to be “Marginal” after “Final Proposal Revision” offers shall not be subject to further discussion or revision.) If award is made on the initial offers, there will not be an opportunity for discussions nor a chance to become at least “Acceptable.”
- “Unacceptable”    U    Technical proposal has many deficiencies and/or gross omissions: Failure to understand much of the scope of work necessary to perform the required tasks; failure to provide a reasonable, logical approach to fulfilling much of the Government’s requirements; failure to meet many personnel requirements of the solicitation. (When applying this adjective to the technical proposal as a whole, the technical proposal must be so unacceptable in one or more areas that it would have to be significantly revised to attempt to make it other than acceptable.)

## BRANDING STRATEGY AND MARKING PLAN

It is a federal statutory and regulatory requirement that all USAID programs, projects, activities, public communications, and commodities that USAID partially or fully funds under a USAID grant or cooperative agreement or other assistance award or sub award, must be marked appropriately overseas with the USAID Identity. See Section 641, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended; 22 CFR 226.91.

Under the regulation, USAID requires the submission of a Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan, but only by the "apparent successful applicant," as defined in the regulation. The apparent successful applicant's proposed Marking Plan may include a request for approval of one or more exceptions to marking requirements established in 22 CFR 226.91. The Agreement Officer is responsible for evaluating and approving the Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan (including any request for exceptions) of the apparently successful applicant, consistent with the provisions "Branding Strategy," "Marking Plan," and "Marking of USAID-funded Assistance Awards" contained in AAPD 05-11 and in 22 CFR 226.91. Please note that in contrast to "exceptions" to marking requirements, waivers based on circumstances in the host country must be approved by Mission Directors or other USAID Principal Officers, see 22 CFR 226.91(j). The acceptability of the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan from the apparently successful applicant will be a determining factor of award eligibility. If the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan are not approved, USAID reserves the right to eliminate the apparently successful applicant from further consideration and proceed with award to the next eligible, highly ranked applicant for award.

See Section VIII.

#### **AWARD**

Award will be made to the responsible applicant whose application offers the best value, cost and other factors considered. The final award decision is made, while considering the recommendations of the Technical Evaluation Committee, by the Agreement Officer.

The Agreement Officer's decision about the funding of an award is final and not subject to review. Any information that may impact the Agreement Officer's decision shall be directed to the Agreement Officer.

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

[END OF SECTION V]