



Date: **May 10, 2013**
Subject: **Answers to Questions:**
APC RFA No. GH-005 – Wheelchair Service Development Project

GENERAL CLARIFICATION: Throughout this document, the word “Applicant” refers to the potential prime awardee. “The prime” and “Applicant” are terms used interchangeably.

Registration – Questions 1-4

- 1. Question:** The RFA states that applicant organizations must be registered in the countries they have selected. If the applicant utilizes consortium sub-partners who are registered in the targeted country, or local organizations, can their registration count towards this requirement? Or is the prime’s registration status the only relevant one for the purpose of this requirement?

Answer: *The partner/organization responsible for implementation of activities in the targeted country must be registered in the selected country. As the prime (“Applicant”) is the anchor in all proposed countries, it is essential that the Applicant is registered in each country.*

- 2. Question:** On p. 14, the RFA states that the Applicant organization ‘must be already registered in all of the countries proposed for work...’ As the Applicant would be responsible for managing a project across multiple countries, this requirement seems to suggest that the Applicant must be a large international community development organization with locally registered offices in a large number of countries. Would it be sufficient for all of the sub-grantees to be locally registered instead, or is it absolutely essential that the Applicant is also registered in each country?

Answer: *See answer to Question 1.*

- 3. Question:** Section C: C2. Eligibility: “.....the organization must be already registered in all of the countries proposed.” Please specify the meaning of registered in this context. Does registered mean that the Applicant must be a legal organization in all of the countries proposed?

Answer: *Yes.*

- 4. Question:** On p. 10, the RFA states that ‘An Applicant must meet the requirements of a local or indigenous organization.’ If the Applicant must be registered in all of the countries involved (as stated on p.14), it would be unlikely to be able to qualify as an indigenous organization because it will be an international organization. Can you clarify what is meant by ‘local or indigenous’ or if perhaps this requirement only applies to the sub-grantees?

Answer: *Please disregard the sentence stating “An Applicant must meet the requirements of a local or indigenous organization.”*



Past Performance Information Tables – Questions 5-6

5. **Question:** When submitting a proposal as a consortium, can an application include prior performance references from sub-partners, or must these apply to the prime only? Should an application include three PPRs in total, or three per organization?

Answer: Each named partner organization should provide at least one Past Performance Information Table related to this scope of work. These Past Performance References should be included in the annexes of the proposal and do not count toward the page limit.

6. **Question:** On page 10 and 18, the RFA requests Past Performance References (PPRs) as an attachment, with a limit of 3. Are PPRs required for the prime and subs? If the latter, is the limit 3 for each organization, or 3 total for the entire application among prime and all subs?

Answer: See answer to Question 5.

Project Scope of Work – Questions 7-8

7. **Question:** As I understand it USAID is making a grant to JSI who will ensure that the project is carried out in 5 countries through at least 10 sub-awards. Is this announcement for a country- wide application in association with a wheelchair provider (section A2.1) to manage (through sub-awards?) activities like arranging WHO wheelchair training (32 basic and 16 intermediate - page 8) as well as wheelchair distribution?

Answer: On behalf of USAID, JSI will award one grant of \$9 million USD for a project of up to four years through the APC project. Under the activities in this RFA, JSI is not an implementing organization but will provide financial and management oversight on the award to the prime. The successful Applicant will implement the project in at least 5 countries and utilize at least 10 subawards and/or second tier awards.

8. **Question:** What is your definition of a 'qualified wheelchair provider' (page 1)?

Answer: A “qualified wheelchair provider” is an organization or entity that has engaged in wheelchair provision in less resourced settings for approximately three or more years.

Subawards – Questions 9-21

NOTE: The intent of the RFA is to diversify the scope and breadth of partners engaged in wheelchair provision. Including the Applicant organization, it is expected that at least 11 organizations (prime plus ten subawards) will be engaged in this project. The following clarification of sub-awards is below:

- **One organization can only receive one sub-award, whether this is first, second or third tier sub-awards. (Example: an organization awarded a sub-award cannot be considered for a second sub-award or a second tier award.)**
- **One sub-award may span multiple countries.**
- **Second tier sub-awards may be considered and will be counted toward the 10 sub-awards required by the RFA.**
- **There is no minimum dollar amount applied to second tier awards.**

- **The maximum sub-award is \$1.5 million USD; if there are second tier awards, the funding comes from the sub-award amount.**
- **The Applicant cannot give sub-awards to its own work; if the Applicant plans to engage in implementation, this would be part of the Applicant’s budget and not a sub-award to itself.**

9. Question: On page 1, the RFA states that sub-awards may range from \$300,000-\$1,500,000 per organization. If an INGO has multiple offices that are locally registered in their respective countries, may each separate local office receive discreet sub-awards up to the \$1.5M ceiling?

Answer: *See Note at beginning of Subawards section.*

10. Question: Can an Applicant (if successful) give sub-awards to its own work, as well as in-country partners?

Answer: *See Note at beginning of Subawards section.*

11. Question: Can USAID/JSI clarify whether subgrants to consortium sub-partners should be considered one of the 10 sub-grants envisioned in the RFA?

Answer: *See Note at beginning of Subawards section.*

12. Does USAID/JSI draw any distinction between the terms ‘sub-grant’ and ‘sub-award’ as used in the RFA?

Answer: *No, the terms are interchangeable.*

13. Question: We are interested in this initiative and have a key partner in mind who we would wish to consider developing the bid with. However, if we name a collaborating partner in the bid then the usual competitive tendering process for a sub-award that USAID requires could not be followed. Can you please advise on the mechanism (if any) for incorporating a named partner into a bid? We would, of course, then wish to at least adopt the 5 country 10 sub-recipient approach if we were successful.

Answer: *Subawards identified in the Applicant's proposal are deemed to have met all competitive requirements through the broader proposal review process.*

14. Question: Are 2nd tier sub-awards allowed for this program? If so, would these sub-awards be included in the 10+ required for the program?

Answer: *See Note at beginning of Subawards section.*

15. Question: The RFA stipulates that the prime must work in at least 5 countries and engage at least 10 sub-grantees to implement the project. Must all 10+ sub-grantees be identified at the proposal stage? Or may some of the sub-grantees be selected after the award?

Answer: *At least 10 subgrantees must be identified at the proposal stage; additional partners identified after the project starts will be subject to USAID approval. A letter of collaboration or a teaming agreement is sufficient for the application, with the expectation that partnering would be finalized quickly upon award. Partnership with sub-grantees should be completed within the first three months of the prime award.*

16. Question: Does USAID/JSI envision the applicant organization identifying all subgrants within the submitted proposal? Or does USAID expect that some or all subgrants will be solicited after the award has been granted?

Answer: *See answer to Question 15.*

17. Question: Would it be acceptable for an organization to have activities in more than one proposal in response to the RFA? In particular:

- a. Could an organisation be the Applicant in one proposal and be a sub-grantee in one or more other proposals?
- b. Could an organisation be a sub-grantee in multiple proposals (if they were not the Applicant in any proposal)?

Answer: *Yes, this is acceptable.*

18. Question: Can an organization be a prime applicant on one application, as well as a consortium sub-partner or named subgrantee on another bid?

Answer: *See Answer to Question 17.*

19. Question: Is JSI looking for applicants who will receive sub-awards ranging from \$300,000 up to \$1,500,000 USD? Or is JSI looking for one organization working in at least 5 countries and utilizing at least ten sub-awards to qualified wheelchair providers?

Answer: *The RFA is looking for one organization (the prime) working in at least 5 countries and utilizing at least 10 subawards and/or second tier awards to qualified wheelchair providers.*

20. Question: The RFA states that the minimum sub-award is \$300,000. In several countries or regions where we work, wheelchair services are delivered through a national or regional network of relatively small wheelchair service partners. Rather than give such a large sub-grant to each of these partners, would it be acceptable to provide a sub-grant to a consortium through a larger regional organization who would manage the sub-award and provide smaller grants to the members of their network?

Answer: *See Note at beginning of Subawards section.*

21. Question: Do all of the subgrants envisioned under this program have to be tied to a specific country? If an applicant wants to secure the use of a technical organization to provide a specific service in all 5 countries, would this be an appropriate use of one of the subgrants?

Answer: *Yes, if an Applicant wants to secure the use of a technical organization to provide a specific service in all 5 countries, this would be an acceptable use of one of the subgrants.*

Geographic Region/Country Choice – Questions 22-26

22. Question: Is there any requirement to have an existing relationship or link with the USAID mission in each of the proposed countries?

Answer: *Applicants do not need to contact USAID missions at this time. Short-listed applicants will be expected to obtain a Letter of Support and/or Acknowledgement for the project from the local USAID Mission in each country proposed after they have been notified of their short-listed status.*

23. Question: Will any preference be given to proposals for organizations or countries with more or less previous investment or expertise in wheelchair services? For example, would it be more appropriate to propose work in countries with a large number of existing wheelchair services and provide training to upgrade those services to meet the WHO Guidelines; or instead to propose work in countries where there are no wheelchair services, which will require a much larger (and riskier) investment into infrastructure, advocacy and recruitment?

Answer: *The applicant is responsible for justifying the countries and organizations selected.*

24. Question: Does USAID have a preference for geographic scope for this project – would a regional hub model be preferable, or would USAID like to see project with global scale with emphasis on countries with greatest need?

Answer: *See answer to Question 23.*

25. Question: The RFA states that the applicant should focus on giving grants in ‘less resourced countries’. Is there a comprehensive list of which countries are designated as ‘less resourced countries’?

Answer: *See answer to Question 23.*

26. Question: Are there any geographical preferences for the five sites/countries to be selected for the sub-awards?

Answer: *See answer to Question 23.*

Budgets – Questions 27-35

27. Question: What would be the process for reviewing an organization’s negotiated indirect cost rate based on the results of a recent USAID audit? Should the proposed new rate be included in the budget for this proposal?

Answer: *Only approved indirect cost rates may be included.*

28. Question: Do you have a list of what the solicitation will NOT consider allowable expenditures/costs?

Answer: *Please see USAID Standard Provisions for Non-US NGOs (<http://transition.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303mab.pdf>) and US NGOs*

(<http://transition.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303maa.pdf>), and ADS Chapter 312 (<http://transition.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/312.pdf>). In addition, as noted in the RFA, non-expendable equipment will not be funded under these grants. Equipment is defined as tangible non-expendable personal property which has a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of US\$ 5,000 or more for each equipment.

29. Question: The following 3 questions refer to the budget requirements and format, in three separate but related parts:

- a. On page 13-14, the RFA requests a summary budget with budget notes, not to exceed 4 pages. Please clarify whether a detailed budget is required.
- b. Additionally, the footnote on page 10 requests “sub-grants must also have sufficient detail (following the same format as the budget submitted by the Applicant).” Please clarify - is a separate budget and budget narrative required for each sub in addition to the prime, or can the sub budgets be presented as line items in the overall prime budget? If separate budgets are required for each sub, does the 4 page total limit for the budget apply to the overall budget package, or for each organization’s separate budget and narrative?
- c. With parts ‘a’ and ‘b’ in mind, the RFA states on page 13 that the total application cannot exceed 17 pages – this assumes a 13 page technical proposal and 4 page budget and budget narrative. Will this limit be increased should budgets and narratives be required for each sub?

***Answer:** Subaward budgets (summary, detail, and budget narrative) should be included in the annexes and do not apply to the 4-page budget or 17-page proposal limit. Please note that while detailed budgets are not required for the prime at this time, they are required for all subawards named in the proposal.*

30. Question: It is noted that there is no breakdown in the budget template for software/hardware/equipment vs. supplies. Please clarify whether the applicant is responsible for the purchase of wheelchairs and how this should be accounted for in the budget.

***Answer:** Applicants must include a budget summary and budget notes using only the major line item headings provided in the budget template included in the RFA. All budgets must be in U.S. Dollars. As stated above in Question 29, while detailed budgets are not requested for the prime Applicant at this time, all subawards named in the proposal should be accompanied by a budget summary, detailed budget, and budget notes.*

31. Question: If the applicant organization must name 10 subgrantees in the proposal, is a detailed budget and budget notes necessary for each sub-grant? Would these count against the 4pg limit for the budget portion of the application?

***Answer:** See answer to Question 30.*

32. Question: On page 10, the RFA states that the table of contents, acronym list or attachments do not count against the 13 page limit. On page 11, a cover page is required. Please clarify whether the cover page is also included in the 13 page limit?

***Answer:** Yes, the cover page is included in the 13 page limit.*

- 33. Question:** Can USAID/JSI provide guidelines or insight into what percentage of the program budget should be devoted to the actual procurement of wheelchairs? Is there an illustrative number of wheelchairs that should be targeted?

Answer: *Proposals may vary. The project should provide a range of appropriate wheelchairs, with at least 5,000 wheelchairs provided.*

- 34. Question:** Will applicants be expected to co-fund this project? If yes, what percent co-funding contribution will applicants be expected to meet?

Answer: *While co-funding is not a requirement, it does demonstrate existing capabilities of applicant and value for funds to be invested and will be viewed favorably.*

- 35. Question:** The RFA notes that the applicant should make efforts to source additional funding for wheelchairs in the countries selected. Would it be acceptable to target a country in which the applicant does not anticipate being able to source additional funding, provided that there are strong other reasons to select that country?

Answer: *Yes.*

Procurement – Questions 36-37

- 36. Question:** Which Geographic Code will be applicable for procurement?

Answer: *The applicable Geographic Code will be 937; procurement from countries outside 937 will be subject to USAID's waiver process.*

- 37. Question:** Have there been any changes to last year's guidance on the source and origin of any products funded through USAID projects? (i.e. what would be the current restrictions on source and origin of products?)

Answer: *Source/nationality follows USAID rules and regulations and 22 CFR 228.*

Other – Questions 38-39

- 38. Question:** On page 5, the RFA describes two training packages expected mid-2013. Will more information on the program requirements be provided to all applicants in order to determine budget and staffing needs?

Answer: *The WSTP-Basic package is now available for download from the WHO website (<http://www.who.int/disabilities/technology/wheelchairpackage/en/>). Future training packages will also be made available on the WHO site.*

- 39. The RFA requires “at least twenty-five wheelchair service personnel have passed knowledge/skill testing (twenty basic and ten intermediate).” Please clarify whether this expected result is program-wide, or per country?**

Answer: *These numbers are expected per country.*