

Request for Proposals (RFP-2023-04) for Diaspora Engagement Advisory Services under an Indefinite Quantity Subcontract (IQS)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question 1: *"Conflict of Interest: Offerors must provide disclosure of any past, present or currently contemplated relationships with any parties associated with the issuance, review or management of this solicitation and anticipated award in or outside of BiH. Failure to provide full and open disclosure may result in USAID DI having to reevaluate selection of a potential vendor and/or result in termination of an award." – Are there any other parties besides USAID DI, USAID, FMI associated with the issuance, review or management of this solicitation?*

Answer: Disclosure requirement pertains only to organizations listed in the question, namely FMI, USAID Diaspora Invest Project, and the USAID Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Question 2: *"Scope of work": Our expertise aligns with a range of services within these areas, and we believe that we can contribute meaningfully to multiple aspects of the project. For instance, within areas A.2, B.2, and B.3, we can offer our advisory services for the "Diaspora Marketplace for BPO sector" and potentially extend our support to the "Diaspora Mentorship Program for global business services – BPO&ITO." However, we would appreciate clarification on whether it is acceptable to submit a proposal that addresses various specific services within both A and B categories, while also considering an offering within area D. Our primary focus and interest lies in area D. However, I am interested in understanding whether we have the flexibility to offer advisory services across multiple areas or if we are required to select only one.*

Answer: Offerors have the flexibility to offer advisory services across multiple areas if they address the relevant deliverables specified in the RFP. Offerors can also list them in order of their strength areas if that is applicable.

Question 3: *"Cost notes": To ensure that our proposal aligns precisely with your expectations, we would greatly appreciate further insights into the following aspects: "Be sure to include data and/or methodologies to support cost estimates." - Could you please specify the preferred or recommended sources of data that should be used? Are there specific methodologies you would prefer us to follow when calculating the cost estimates?*

Answer: The Offerors are encouraged to use the same methodologies they typically use in estimating costs, available market data, or historical data from previously completed assignments/contracts as the basis for justifying cost estimates. For example, to estimate the cost of renting conference venues, we would accept the listing of publicly available pricelists from local hotels or business centers as valid data to support your cost estimate.

Question 4: *Could you specify which financial statements are required to be attached to the proposal?*

Answer: Offerors should submit the annual financial statements that include the balance sheet and income statement.

Question 5: *"Conflict of Interest": "(6) Not participate in business activities with firms that competes with or seeks business from FMI and USAID Diaspora Invest Project, or when it could adversely affect their ability to carry*

out their services and responsibilities in the subcontract. Disclose to FMI if the Offeror works or will work with a competitor in the same area of the service provided to FMI.” – Could you provide clarity on who is classified as a competitor?

Answer: For the purposes of this solicitation, a competitor is defined as any organization or entity that is providing diaspora engagement or business advisory services in Bosnia and Herzegovina. To provide further clarity, clause 6 of Annex C (Offerors’ Declaration on Conflict of Interest (Organizational)) is hereby deleted and replaced as follows:

(6) Not participate in business activities with firms that compete with or seek business from the USAID Diaspora Invest Project, if doing so could adversely affect the Offeror’s ability to carry out the services and responsibilities set forth in any resulting subcontract. Offeror’s must disclose to FMI if the Offeror works or will work with a competitor in the same area of service that they intend provide to the USAID Diaspora Invest Project. Disclosure of such a conflict may, but will not necessarily, preclude the Offeror from working with the USAID Diaspora Invest Project.

Question 6: What level of flexibility does the Program allow in terms of structuring the diaspora-related business conferences, workshops, and learning events, particularly regarding session formats, interactive elements, and networking opportunities?

Answer: The RFP provides a reasonable degree of flexibility, and the Activity welcomes innovative proposals in terms of event formats, substance, and networking opportunities.

Question 7. Are there any specific reporting or documentation expectations that USAID DI has regarding the utilization of funds for staff payment and other conference-related/event-related expenses?

Answer: Selected partners will be required to provide detailed invoices for all undertaken actions/activities. These requirements will be defined in the contracts with the selected Offerors.

Question 8: Could you provide insights into the criteria or benchmarks that the USAID DI will use to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the organized diaspora-related business conferences, workshops and learning events helping [Offeror] ensure the events' success?

Answer: The events and conferences listed under the deliverables in the RFP are part of a concerted effort to promote and facilitate diaspora engagement in BiH social and economic development. While the overall impact and effectiveness of the program is subject to a separate impact assessment, the individual events and conferences will be assessed based on the direct outputs and outcomes. These will include participant surveys to establish satisfaction, assess direct benefits attained, and/or identify behavioral changes of participants resulting from event participation. These criteria and benchmarks will vary depending on the type of event organized.

Question 9: What is a reasonable budget range? Do you have some examples of successful proposal ranges?

Answer: The budget ceiling for each individual Offeror had been set in the RFP. USAID Diaspora Invest Project cannot provide any further guidance on the budget thresholds.

Question 10: *What is the decision deadline? It would be useful for planning our activities to know when can we expect the decision.*

Answer: USAID DI expects to complete the selection process of partner organizations by early October 2023.

Question 11: *To what extent could we account for the non-financial support from your project team?*

Answer: USAID DI staff will be available to provide a reasonable level of support, guidance, and consultation for selected Offerors throughout the implementation period. However, the Offeror should demonstrate specific technical expertise required for the implementation of deliverables and budget accordingly.

Question 12: *Do you have a template for the proposal available?*

Answer: No additional templates except those provided in the RFP will be made available.

Question 13: *Is the subcontractor to be selected VAT excluded and is it the Cost Proposal to be submitted in the Proposal without VAT?*

Answer: For the purposes of this solicitation, the cost proposal and any associated budgets should not include VAT.

Question 14: *If the subcontractor is going to nominate external experts from another partner organization, how their engagement is treated in terms of financing, i.e. how costs are to be refunded (based on service contract or the invoice issued by the partner organization)?*

Answer: If the Offeror anticipates using any sub-contracts with other organizations, include the roles and responsibilities of each subcontractor in the technical proposal. The costs of such sub-contracts should be budgeted in accordance with the contractual relationship envisioned (time and materials or fixed price contracts).