Home > Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights > Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor > DRL Programs > Open Calls for Statements of Interest/Requests for Proposals

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO): Supporting Local Civil Society in Ukraine

Share

November 28, 2016

This is the announcement of funding opportunity number, DRLA-DRLAQM-16-102.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.345

Application Deadline: January 17, 2017

A. Project Description

The U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) announces an open competition for organizations interested in submitting applications for projects that support local civil society in Ukraine.

DRL's goal is to enhance the accountability and responsiveness of the Ukrainian government at the local level through civil society advocacy, monitoring, and civic activism. DRL seeks proposals that will empower local civil society organizations to perform a watchdog function and advocate for democratic governance through activism and networking; and raise awareness among and build the capacity of citizens to use existing local mechanisms and institutions for holding government more accountable. The program should increase local-level civic activism and build a network of civic activists throughout Ukraine. The program should focus specifically on government oversight and financial transparency at the local level and include small grants for local watchdog advocacy efforts in the regions. Program activities may include advocacy training for local civil society activists to increase their knowledge and skills related to existing advocacy tools and mechanisms; training for local activists on key areas of local government oversight; mentoring for civil society groups undertaking local advocacy campaigns; building a network of civil society activists; providing learning opportunities between national advocacy campaigns and local activists; and encouraging partnerships between civil society and local media to communicate important information about local reforms to the public.

Projects should have the potential to have an immediate impact leading to long-term sustainable reforms, and should have potential for sustainability beyond DRL resources. DRL's preference is to not duplicate past efforts, but instead support new and creative approaches. This does not exclude from consideration projects that improve upon or expand existing successful projects in a new and complementary way. DRL also strives to ensure its projects advance the rights and uphold the dignity of the most vulnerable or at-risk populations.

Activities that typically are **not** considered competitive include:

- The provision of large amounts of humanitarian assistance;

- English language instruction;

- Development of high-tech computer or communications software and/or hardware;

- Purely academic exchanges or fellowships;

- External exchanges or fellowships lasting longer than six months;

- Off-shore activities that are not clearly linked to in-country initiatives and impact or are not necessary for security concerns;

- Theoretical explorations of human rights or democracy issues, including projects aimed primarily at research and evaluation that do not incorporate training or capacity-building for local civil society;

- Micro-loans or similar small business development initiatives;

- Initiatives directed towards a diaspora community rather than current residents of targeted countries.

B. Federal Award Information

DRL anticipates having approximately $800,000 available to support approximately one successful application submitted in response to this NOFO, subject to the availability of funding. Applicants can submit one application in response to the solicitation.

Applications should not request less than $400,000 and no more than $800,000. Applicants should include an anticipated start date between March 2017 – June 2017 and the period of performance should be between 18-36 months.

The U.S. government may (a) reject any or all applications, (b) accept other than the lowest cost application, (c) accept more than one application, and (d) waive informalities and minor irregularities in applications received.

The U.S. government may make award(s) on the basis of initial applications received, without discussions or negotiations. Therefore, each initial application should contain the applicant's best terms from a cost and technical standpoint. The U.S. government reserves the right (though it is not under obligation to do so), however, to enter into discussions with one or more applicants in order to obtain clarifications, additional detail, or to suggest refinements in the project description, budget, or other aspects of an application.

DRL anticipates awarding either a grant or cooperative agreement depending on the needs and risk factors of the program. The final determination on mechanism will be made by the Grants Officer. If a cooperative agreement is awarded, DRL expects to be substantially involved during its implementation. Examples of substantial involvement can include:

1) Approval of the Recipient's annual work plans, including: planned activities for the following year, travel plans, planned expenditures, event planning, and changes to any activity to be carried out under the cooperative agreement;

2) Approval of sub-award recipients, concurrence on the substantive provisions of the sub-awards, and coordination with other cooperating agencies;

3) Other approvals that will be included in the award agreement.

The authority for this funding opportunity is found in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (FAA).

C. Eligibility Information

For application information, please see the proposal submission instructions on our website.

C.1 Eligible Applicants

DRL welcomes applications from U.S.-based and foreign-based non-profit organizations/nongovernment organizations (NGO) and public international organizations; private, public, or state institutions of higher education; and for-profit organizations or businesses. DRL's preference is to work with non-profit entities; however, there may be some occasions when a for-profit entity is best suited.

For-profit entities should be aware that its applications may be subject to additional review following the panel selection process. Additionally, the Department of State generally prohibits profit under its assistance awards to for-profit or commercial organizations. Profit is defined as any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs. The allowability of costs incurred by commercial organizations is determined in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) at 48 CFR 30, Cost Accounting Standards Administration, and 48 CFR 31 Contract Cost Principles and Procedures. Project income earned by the recipient must be deducted from the total project allowable cost in determining the net allowable costs on which the federal share of costs is based.

C.2 Cost Sharing or Matching

Providing cost sharing, matching, or cost participation is not an eligibility requirement for this NOFO.

C.3 Other

Applicants must have existing, or the capacity to develop, active partnerships with thematic or in-country partners, entities and relevant stakeholders, including private sector partners and NGOs, and have demonstrable experience in administering successful and preferably similar projects. DRL encourages applications from foreign-based NGOs headquartered in the geographic regions/countries relevant to this NOFO. Applicants may form consortia and submit a combined application. However, one organization should be designated as the lead applicant with the other members as sub-award partners. DRL reserves the right to request additional background information on applicants that do not have previous experience administering federal grant awards, and these applicants may be subject to limited funding on a pilot basis.

DRL is committed to an anti-discrimination policy in all of its projects and activities. DRL welcomes applications irrespective of an applicant's race, ethnicity, color, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other status. DRL encourages applications from organizations working with the most at risk and vulnerable communities, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, members of ethnic or religious minority groups, and LGBTI persons.

Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System in the System for Award Management (SAM) (www.sam.gov) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR,1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR,1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension." Additionally no entity listed on the Excluded Parties List System in SAM can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the Excluded Parties List System in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

D. Application and Submission Information

D.1 Address to Request Application Package

Applicants can find application forms, kits, or other materials needed to apply on www.grants.gov and www.grantsolutions.gov under the announcement title "Supporting Local Civil Society in Ukraine," funding opportunity number "DRLA-DRLAQM-16-102." Please contact the DRL point of contact listed in section G if requesting reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities or for security reasons. Please note: reasonable accommodations do not include deadline extensions. **It is DRL's preference that applications be submitted through GrantSolutions.gov**

D.2 Content and Form of Application Submission

For all application documents, please ensure:

> 1) All documents are in English and all costs are in U.S. dollars. If an original document within the application is in another language, an English translation must be provided (please note: the Department of State, as indicated in 2 CFR 200.111, requires that English is the official language of all award documents. If any documents are provided in both English and a foreign language, the English language version is the controlling version);
>
> 2) All pages are numbered, including budgets and attachments;
>
> 3) All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper; and,
>
> 4) All documents are single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, with 1-inch margins. Captions and footnotes may be 10 point Times New Roman font. Font sizes in charts and tables, including the budget, can be reformatted to fit within 1 page width.

D.2.1 Application Requirements

Complete applications must include the following:

> 1. Completed and signed **SF-424**, **SF-424A**, and **SF-424B** forms.
>
> 2. If your organization engages in lobbying the U.S. government or Congress, or pays for another entity to lobby on your behalf, the **SF-LLL** "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities" form is also required.

3. **Cover Page** (not to exceed one [1] page, preferably in Microsoft Word) that includes a table with the project title, target country/countries, thematic area, project synopsis, and name and contact information for the application's main point of contact.

4. **Executive Summary** (not to exceed one [1] page, preferably in Microsoft Word) that outlines project goals, objectives, and activities.

5. **Table of Contents** (not to exceed one [1] page, preferably in Microsoft Word) listing all documents and attachments, with page numbers.

6. **Proposal Narrative** (not to exceed ten [10] pages, preferably in Microsoft Word). Please note the ten page limit does not include the Table of Contents, Cover Page, Attachments, Detailed Budget, Budget Narrative, or Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA). Applicants are encouraged to combine multiple documents in a single Word Document or PDF (i.e., Cover Page, Table of Contents, Executive Summary, and Proposal Narrative in one file).

7. **Budget** (preferably as an Excel workbook) that includes three [3] columns containing the request to DRL, any cost sharing contribution, and the total budget. A summary budget should also be included using the OMB-approved budget categories (see SF-424A as a sample) in a separate tab. Costs must be in U.S. dollars. Detailed line-item budgets for subgrantees should be included in additional tabs within the Excel workbook (if available at the time of submission).

8. **Budget Narrative** (preferably as a Word Document) that includes substantive explanations and justifications for each line-item in the detailed budget spreadsheet, as well as the source and a description of all cost-share offered.

9. Your organization's most recent A-133 **audit** (if applicable), F Audit, or standard audit.

10. **Logic Model** (not to exceed two [2] pages, preferably in Microsoft Word).

11. **Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative** (not to exceed two [2] pages).

12. **Monitoring and Evaluation Performance Indicator Table** (not to exceed four [4] pages in Microsoft Word).

13. **Risk Analysis** (not to exceed one [1] page, preferably in Microsoft Word).

14. **Key Personnel** (not to exceed one [1] page, preferably as a Word Document): Please include short bios that demonstrate relevant professional experience. Given the limited space, CVs are not recommended for submission.

15. **Timeline** (not to exceed one [1] page): The timeline of the overall proposal should include activities, evaluation efforts, and program closeout.

D.2.2 Additional Application Documents

Strong applications will also contain the following:

• Individual Letters of Support and/or Memorandum of Understanding Letters of support and MOUs must be specific to the project implementation (e.g. from proposed partners or sub-award recipients) and will not count towards the page limit.

Please refer to the Proposal Submission Instructions on DRL's website for detailed guidance on the documents above: http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/260979.htm. **For an application checklist and sample template please see the Resources page on DRL's website:** http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/c72333.htm. **The sample templates provided on the DRL website are suggested, but not mandatory.**

DRL reserves the right to request additional documents not included in this NOFO. Additionally, to ensure that all applications receive a balanced evaluation, the DRL Panel will review from the first page of each section up to the page limit and no further.

Note: If ultimately provided with a notification of intent to make a Federal award, applicants typically have two to three weeks to provide additional information and documents requested in the notification of intent. The deadlines may vary in each notification of intent and applicants must adhere to the stated deadline in the notification of intent.

D.2.3 Additional Information Requested

Successful applicants must submit after notification of intent to make a Federal award, but prior to issuance of a Federal award, will include:

> • If your organization has a NICRA and includes NICRA charges in the budget, your latest NICRA should be included as a PDF file.
>
> • Written responses and revised application documents addressing conditions and recommendations from the DRL Review Panel;
>
> • Completion of the Department's Financial Management Survey, if receiving DRL funding for the first time;
>
> • Submission of required documents to register in the Payment Management System managed by the Department of Health and Human Services, if receiving DRL funding for the first time (unless an exemption is provided);
>
> • Other requested information or documents included in the notification of intent to make a Federal award or subsequent communications prior to issuance of a Federal award.

D.3 Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in the System for Award Management (SAM) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension." Additionally, no entity listed on the EPLS can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the EPLS in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

All organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), formerly referred to as DUNS, and an active registration with the SAM before submitting an application. DRL may not review applications from or make awards to applicants that have not completed all applicable UEI and SAM requirements. A UEI is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards.

Note: The process of obtaining a SAM.gov registration may take anywhere from 4-8 weeks. Please begin your registration as early as possible.

> • If you are based **in the United States** or pay employees within the United States, prior to registering in SAM you will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code.
>
> • If you are based **outside of the United States** and do not pay employees within the United States, you do not need an EIN from the IRS. However, you will need a NATO CAGE (NCAGE) code before you can have an active registration in SAM.

All organizations must also continue to maintain active SAM registration with current information at all times during which they have an active Federal award or application under consideration by a Federal award agency. SAM requires all entities to renew their registration once a year in order to maintain an active registration status in SAM. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure it has an active registration in SAM and to maintain that active registration. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time DRL is ready to make an award, the applicant may be deemed unqualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

For further guidance on the registration process, please see the SAM.gov Registration Guide on DRL's website: http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/c72333.htm. Please refer to 2 CFR 25.200 for additional information.

D.3.1 Exemptions

An exemption from these requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if:

> • An applicant is a foreign organization located outside of the United States without a UEI and the Department determines that acquiring one is impractical given the geographic location; or
>
> • If an applicant's identity must be protected due to potential endangerment of their mission, their organization's status, their employees, or individuals being served by the applicant.

* Organizations requesting exemption from SAM.gov, NCAGE, and UEI should email the point of contact in the solicitation. If establishing your SAM.gov account as private rather than public view, please notify DRL at the time of submission.

Note: Foreign organizations will be required to register with the NATO Support Agency (NSPA) to receive a NCAGE code in order to register in SAM. NSPA will forward your registration request to the applicable National Codification Bureau (NCB) if your organization is located in a NATO or Tier 2 Sponsored Non-NATO Nation. As of March 2016, NATO nations included Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States of America; and Tier 2 nations included Australia, Austria, Brazil, Finland, Israel, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Morocco, New Zealand, Serbia, and Singapore.

NSPA and/or the appropriate NCB forwards all NCAGE code information to all Allied Committee 135 (AC/135) nations, which as of March 2016 also included Afghanistan, Argentina, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Colombia, Egypt, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Montenegro, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand, Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, and the United Arab Emirates. **All organizations are strongly advised to take this into consideration when assessing whether registration may result in possible endangerment.**

D.4 Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due no later than 11:30 p.m. **Eastern Standard Time (EST), on Tuesday, January 17, 2017 on** www.grants.gov **or** www.grantsolutions.gov **under the announcement title "Supporting Local Civil Society in Ukraine," funding opportunity number "DRLA-DRLAQM-16-102."**

Grants.gov and Grantsolutions.gov automatically log the date and time an application submission is made, and the Department of State will use this information to determine whether an application has been submitted on time. Late applications are neither reviewed nor considered unless the DRL point of contact listed in section G is contacted prior to the deadline and is provided with evidence of system errors caused by www.grants.gov or www.grantsolutions.gov that is outside of the applicants' control and is the sole reason for a late submission. Applicants should not expect a notification upon DRL receiving their application.

D.5 Funding Restrictions

DRL will not consider applications that reflect any type of support for any member, affiliate, or representative of a designated terrorist organization.

Project activities whose direct beneficiaries are foreign militaries or paramilitary groups or individuals will not be considered for DRL funding given purpose limitations on funding.

Restrictions may apply to any proposed assistance to police or other law enforcement. Among these, pursuant to section 620M of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended(FAA), no assistance provided through this funding opportunity may be furnished to any unit of the security forces of a foreign country when there is credible information that such unit has committed a gross violation of human rights. In accordance with the requirements of section 620M of the FAA, also known as the Leahy law, project beneficiaries or participants from a foreign government's security forces may need to be vetted by the Department before the provision of any assistance.

Federal awards generally will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs; however, the grants officer may approve pre-award costs on a case by case basis. Generally, construction costs are not allowed under DRL awards. For additional information, please see DRL's PSI for Applications, as updated in August 2016: http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/260979.htm.

D.6 Application Submission

All application submissions must be made electronically via www.grants.gov or www.grantsolutions.gov. Both systems require registration by the applying organization. Please note: the Grants.gov registration process can take 10 business days or longer, even if all registration steps are completed in a timely manner.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that it has an active registration in GrantSolutions.gov or Grants.gov. Applicants are required to document that the application has been received by GrantSolutions.gov or Grants.gov in its entirety. DRL bears no responsibility for disqualification that result from applicants not being registered before the due date, for system errors in either GrantSolutions or Grants.gov, or other errors in the application process. Additionally you must save a screen shot of the checklist showing all documents submitted in case any document fails to upload successfully.

GrantSolutions.gov is highly recommended for submission of all applications and is DRL's preferred choice for receiving applications.

Faxed, couriered, or emailed documents will **not** be accepted. Reasonable accommodations may, in appropriate circumstances, be provided to applicants with disabilities or for security reasons. Applicants must follow all formatting instructions in the applicable solicitation and these instructions.

DRL encourages organizations to **submit applications during normal business hours** (Monday – Friday, 9:00AM- 5:00PM Eastern Time). If an applicant experiences technical difficulties and has contacted the appropriate helpdesk but is not receiving timely assistance (e.g. if you have not received a response within 48 hours of contacting the helpdesk), you may contact the DRL point of contact listed in the NOFO in section G. The point of contact may assist in contacting the appropriate helpdesk, but an applicant should also document their efforts in contacting the help desk. Applicants may also contact the DRL point of contact listed in the NOFO if experiencing technical issues with grants.gov or grantsolutions.gov that may result in a late submission.

Applicants experiencing technical difficulties should follow these three steps:

1. Contact the helpdesk for either Grants.gov or GrantSolutions immediately.

2. Document (including screenshots) technical issues AND efforts to contact the helpdesk.

3. Submit all of the required documents to the DRL point of contact listed in the solicitation before the deadline.

Note: The Procurement Office will determine technical eligibility of all applications

GrantSolutions.gov Applications
All applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications via www.grantsolutions.gov.

Applicants using GrantSolutions.gov for the first time should complete their "New Organization Registration" as soon as possible. This process must be completed before an application can be submitted. Registration with GrantSolutions.gov usually occurs directly after an applicant submits their registration. To register with GrantSolutions.gov, click "Login to GrantSolutions" and follow the "First Time Users" link to the "New Organization Registration Page." There are different ways to register your organization, click on the link that fits best.

Upon completion of a successful electronic application submission, the GrantSolutions system will provide the applicant with a confirmation page indicating the date and time (Eastern Time) of the electronic application submission as well as an official Application Number. This confirmation page will also provide a listing of all items that constitute the final application submission. Please save this page for your records. Additionally you **must** remember to save a screen shot of the checklist showing all documents submitted in case any document fails to upload successfully.

GrantSolutions.gov Help Desk:
For assistance with GrantSolutions.gov accounts and technical issues related to the system, please contact Customer Support at help@grantsolutions.gov or call 1-866-577-0771 (toll charges for international callers) or 1-202-401-5282. Customer Support is available 8AM – 5PM EST, Monday – Friday, except federal holidays.

Grants.gov Applications
Applicants who do not submit applications via GrantSolutions.gov may submit via www.grants.gov. It is DRL's preference that applications be submitted through GrantSolutions.gov.

Please be advised that completing all the necessary registration steps for obtaining a username and password from Grants.gov **can take more than two weeks.**

Please refer to the Grants.gov website for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation. Applicants will receive a validation e-mail from Grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application. Validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days. Additionally you **must** remember to save a screen shot of the checklist showing all documents submitted in case any document fails to upload successfully.

Grants.gov Helpdesk:

For assistance with Grants.gov, please call the Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 or email support@grants.gov. The Contact Center is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except federal holidays.

E. Application Review Information

E.1 Proposal Review Criteria

The Panel will evaluate each application individually against the following criteria, listed below in order of importance, and not against competing applications. Please use the below criteria as a reference but **do not structure your application according to the sub-sections**.

Quality of Project Idea

Applications should be responsive to the program framework and policy objectives identified in the solicitation, appropriate in the country/regional context, and should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to DRL's mission of promoting human rights and democracy. Projects should have the potential to have an immediate impact leading to long-term sustainable reforms, DRL prefers new approaches that do not duplicate efforts by other entities. This does not exclude from consideration projects that improve upon or expand existing successful projects in a new and complementary way. In countries where similar activities are already taking place, an explanation should be provided as to how new activities will not duplicate or merely add to existing activities and how these efforts will be coordinated. Proposals that promote creative approaches to recognized ongoing challenges are highly encouraged. DRL strives to ensure the rights and uphold the dignity of the most vulnerable or at-risk populations. DRL prioritizes project proposals with inclusive approaches for advancing these rights.

Project Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives

A strong application will include a clear articulation of how the proposed project activities contribute to the overall project objectives, and each activity will be clearly developed and detailed. A comprehensive monthly work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and the logistical capacity of the organization. Objectives should be ambitious, yet measurable, results-focused and achievable in a reasonable time frame. A complete application must include a logic model to demonstrate how the project activities will have an impact on its proposed objectives. The logic model should match the objectives, outcomes, key activities and outputs described in the narrative. Applications should address how the project will engage relevant stakeholders and should identify local partners as appropriate.

If local partners have been identified, DRL strongly encourages applicants to submit letters of support from proposed in-country partners. Additionally, applicants should describe the division of labor among the direct applicant and any local partners. If applicable, applications should identify target areas for activities, target participant groups or selection criteria for participants, and the specific roles of sub-awardees, among other pertinent details.

DRL recognizes that all programs have some level of risk due to internal/external variables that have the potential to adversely affect a program. Risk management should address how the program design incorporates the identification, assessment, and management of key risk factors. DRL will review the risk analysis based on the organization's ability to identify risks that could have an impact on the overall program as well as how the organization will manage these risks.

Institution's Record and Capacity

DRL will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. Applications should demonstrate an institutional record of successful democracy and human rights programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past grants. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the project's objectives. Projects should have potential for continued funding beyond DRL resources.

Inclusive Programming

DRL strives to ensure its projects advance the rights and uphold the dignity of the most at risk and vulnerable populations, including women, youth, people with disabilities, members of racial and ethnic or religious minority groups, and LGBTI persons. To the extent possible, applicants should identify and address considerations to support these populations in all proposed project activities and objectives, and should provide specific means, measures, and corresponding targets to include them as appropriate. Applicants must provide strong justifications if unable to incorporate the most at risk and vulnerable populations within proposed project activities and objectives. Applications that do not include this will not be considered highly competitive in this category.

Cost Effectiveness

DRL strongly encourages applicants to clearly demonstrate project cost-effectiveness in their application, including examples of leveraging institutional and other resources. However, cost-sharing or other examples of leveraging other resources are not required. Inclusion of cost-sharing in the budget does not result in additional points awarded during the review process. Budgets should have low and/or reasonable overhead and administration costs, and applicants should provide clear explanations and justifications for these costs in relation to the work involved. All budget items should be clearly explained and justified to demonstrate necessity, appropriateness, and connection to the project objectives.

Please note: If cost-share is included in the budget, the recipient must maintain written records to support all allowable costs that are claimed as its contribution to cost-share, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. In the event the recipient does not meet the minimum amount of cost-sharing as stipulated in the recipient's budget, DRL's contribution may be reduced in proportion to the recipient's contribution.

Multiplier Effect/Sustainability

Applications should clearly delineate how elements of the project will have a multiplier effect and be sustainable beyond the life of the grant. A good multiplier effect will have an impact beyond the direct beneficiaries of the grant (e.g. participants trained under a grant go on to train other people; workshop participants use skills from a workshop to enhance a national level election that affects the entire populace). A strong sustainability plan may include demonstrating continuing impact beyond the life of a project or garnering other donor support after DRL funding ceases.

Project Monitoring and Evaluation

Complete applications will include a detailed M&E Narrative and M&E Plan, which detail how the project's progress will be monitored and evaluated. Incorporating well-designed monitoring and evaluation processes into a project is an efficient method for documenting the change (intended and unintended) that a project seeks. Applications should demonstrate the capacity to provide objectives with measurable outputs and outcomes.

The quality of the M&E sections will be judged on the narrative explaining how both monitoring and evaluation will be carried out, and who will be responsible for those related activities. Explain how an external evaluation will be incorporated into the project implementation plan or how the project will be systematically assessed in the absence of one. Please see the section on Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative above for more information on what is required in the narrative.

The output and outcome-based performance indicators should not only be separated by project objectives but also should match the objectives, outcomes, and outputs detailed in the logic model and proposal narrative. Performance indicators should be clearly defined (i.e., explained how the indicators will be measured and reported) either within the table or with a separate Performance Indicator Reference Sheet (PIRS). For each performance indicator, the table should also include baselines and quarterly and cumulative targets, data collection tools, data sources, types of data disaggregation, and frequency of monitoring and evaluation. There should also be metrics to capture how project activities target the most at-risk and vulnerable populations or addresses their concerns, where applicable. Please see the section on Monitoring and Evaluation Plan above for more information on what is required in the plan.

E.2 Review and Selection Process

DRL strives to ensure that each application receives a balanced evaluation by a DRL Review Panel. The Department's Office of Acquisitions Management (AQM) will determine technical eligibility for all applications. All technically eligible applications for a given solicitation are reviewed against the same seven criteria, which include quality of project idea, project planning/ability to achieve objectives, institutional record and capacity, inclusive programming, cost effectiveness, multiplier effect/sustainability, and project monitoring and evaluation.

Additionally, the Panel will evaluate how the application addresses the solicitation request, U.S. foreign policy goals, and the priority needs of DRL overall. DRL may also take into consideration the balance of the current portfolio of active projects, including geographic or thematic diversity, if needed.

In most cases, the DRL Review Panel includes representatives from DRL, the appropriate Department of State regional bureau (to include feedback from U.S. embassies), and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) (to include feedback from USAID missions). In some cases, additional panelists may participate, including from other Department of State bureaus or offices, U.S. government departments, agencies, or boards, representatives from partner governments, or representatives from entities that are in a public-private partnership with DRL. At the end of the panel's discussion about an application, the Panel votes on

recommending the application for approval by the DRL Assistant Secretary. If more applications are ultimately recommended for approval than DRL can fund, the Panel will rank the recommended applications in priority order for consideration by the DRL Assistant Secretary. The Grants Officer Representative (GOR) for the eventual award does not vote on the panel. All Panelists must sign non-disclosure agreements and conflicts of interest agreements.

DRL Review Panels may provide conditions and recommendations on applications to enhance the proposed project, which must be addressed by the applicant before further consideration of the award. To ensure effective use of DRL funds, conditions or recommendations may include requests to increase, decrease, clarify, and/or justify costs and project activities.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

F.1 Federal Award Notices

DRL will provide a separate notification to applicants on the result of their applications. Successful applicants will receive a letter electronically via email requesting that the applicant respond to panel conditions and recommendations. This notification is not an authorization to begin activities and does not constitute formal approval or a funding commitment.

Final approval is contingent on the applicant successfully responding to the panel's conditions and recommendations, being registered in required systems, including the U.S. government's Payment Management System (PMS), unless an exemption is provided, and completing and providing any additional documentation requested by DRL or AQM. Final approval is also contingent on Congressional notification requirements being met and final review and approval by the Department's warranted grants officer.

The notice of Federal award signed by the Department's warranted grants officers is the sole authorizing document. If awarded, the notice of Federal award will be provided to the applicant's designated Authorizing Official via GrantSolutions to be electronically counter-signed in the system.

F.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards set forth in 2 CFR Chapter 200 (Sub-Chapters A through F) shall apply to all non-Federal entities, except for assistance awards to Individuals and Foreign Public Entities. Sub-Chapters A through E shall apply to all foreign organizations, and Sub-Chapters A through D shall apply to all U.S. and foreign for-profit entities.

The applicant/recipient of the award and any sub-recipient under the award must comply with all applicable terms and conditions, in addition to the assurance and certifications made part of the Notice of Award. The Department's Standard Terms and Conditions can be viewed at http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/c72333.htm.

F.3 Reporting

Applicants should be aware that DRL awards will require that all reports (financial and progress) are uploaded to the grant file in GrantSolutions on a quarterly basis. The Federal Financial Report (FFR or SF-425) is the required form for the financial reports and must be submitted in PMS as well as downloaded and then uploaded to the grant file in GrantSolutions. The progress reports uploaded to the grant file in GrantSolutions must include page one (signed and completed) of the SF-PPR (Performance and Progress Report); a narrative attachment to the SF-PPR as described below; and the SF-PPR-B: Project Indicators (or other mutually agreed upon format approved by the grants officer) for the F Framework indicators.

Narrative progress reports should reflect the focus on measuring the project's impact on the overarching objectives and should be compiled according to the objectives, outcomes, and outputs as outlined in the award's Scope of Work (SOW) and in the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Statement. An assessment of the overall project's impact, should be included in each progress report. Where relevant, progress reports should include the following sections:

- Relevant contextual information (limited);

- Explanation and evaluation of significant activities of the reporting period and how the activities reflect progress toward achieving objectives, including meeting benchmarks/targets as set in the M&E plan. In addition, attach the M&E plan, comparing the target and actual numbers for the indicators;

- Any tangible impact or success stories from the project, when possible;

- Copy of mid-term and/or final evaluation report(s) conducted by an external evaluator; if applicable;

- Relevant supporting documentation or products related to the project activities (such as articles, meeting lists and agendas, participant surveys, photos, manuals, etc.) as separate attachments;

- Description of how the Recipient is pursuing sustainability, including looking for sources of follow-on funding;

- Any problems/challenges in implementing the project and a corrective action plan with an updated timeline of activities;

- Reasons why established goals were not met;

- Data for the required F Framework indicator(s) for the quarter as well as aggregate data by fiscal year using the SF-PPR-B: Project Indicators or other mutually agreed upon format approved by the Grants Officer. Evaluation indicators from the Foreign Assistance Framework can be found at http://www.state.gov/f/indicators/ ;

- Proposed activities for the next quarter;

- Additional pertinent information, including analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs, if applicable.

A final narrative and financial report must also be submitted within 90 days after the expiration of the award.

Please note: delays in reporting may result in delays of payment approvals and failure to provide required reports may jeopardize the recipient's' ability to receive future U.S. government funds.

DRL reserves the right to request any additional programmatic and/or financial project information during the award period.

G. Contact Information

For technical submission questions related to this solicitation, please contact Sarah Davis at DavisSJ2@state.gov.

For assistance with GrantSolutions.gov accounts and technical issues related to using the system, please contact Customer Support at help@grantsolutions.gov or call 1-866-577-0771 (toll charges for international callers) or 1-202-401-5282. Customer Support is available 8 AM – 6 PM EST, Monday – Friday, except federal holidays.

For assistance with Grants.gov accounts and technical issues related to using the system, please call the Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 or email support@grants.gov. The Contact Center is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except federal holidays.

For a list of federal holidays visit:

https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/snow-dismissal-procedures/federal-holidays/

With the exception of technical submission questions, during the solicitation period U.S. Department of State staff in Washington and overseas shall not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process has been completed and rejection and approval letters have been transmitted.

H. Other Information

Applicants should be aware that DRL understands that some information contained in applications may be considered sensitive or proprietary and will make appropriate efforts to protect such information. However, applicants are advised that DRL cannot guarantee that such information will not be disclosed, including pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or other similar statutes.

The information in this NOFO and DRL's PSI for Applications, as updated in August 2016, is binding and may not be modified by any DRL representative. Explanatory information provided by DRL that contradicts this language will not be binding. Issuance of the NOFO and negotiation of applications does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government. DRL reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the project evaluation requirements.

This NOFO will appear on www.grants.gov, www.grantsolutions.gov, and DRL's website

http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/c12302.htm.

Background Information on DRL and general DRL funding

DRL is the foreign policy lead within the U.S. government on promoting democracy and protecting human rights globally. DRL supports projects that uphold democratic principles, support and strengthen democratic institutions, promote human rights, prevent atrocities, combat and prevent violent extremism, and build civil society around the world. DRL typically focuses its work in countries with egregious human rights violations, where democracy and human rights advocates are under pressure, and where governments are undemocratic or in transition.

Additional background information on DRL and its efforts can be found on www.state.gov/j/drl and www.humanrights.gov

BUSINESS

Business Support: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Office of Global Partnerships

Commercial and Business Affairs Office

Key Officers of Foreign Service Posts

Trade Policy and Agriculture

Defense Trade Controls

Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization

Recovery and Reinvestment Act

Service Contract Inventory

CAREERS

Consular Fellows Program

Foreign Service Officer

Civil Service Officer

Foreign Service Specialist

International Organizations

Student Programs

USAJobs: Working for America

EDUCATION & EXCHANGES

Discover Diplomacy

Global Youth Issues

Diplomatic History

Office of Overseas Schools

Exchange Visitor Program

Fulbright Program

Student Career Programs

Youth Exchange Programs

U.S. Diplomacy Center

Intercountry Adoption

Parental Child Abduction

TRAVEL

Passports

Visas

Travel Information

Emergency Services

Intercountry Adoption

Parental Child Abduction

Foreign Per Diem Rates