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Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor
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www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/bureau-of-democracy-human-rights-and-labor/

Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for Applications

Updated: December 2021

PLEASE REFER TO THIS DOCUMENT WHEN PREPARING AN APPLICATION.

Table of Contents

SECTION I: Eligibility

A. Eligibility Requirements

The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) welcomes applications in response to DRL Notices of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) from:

- U.S.-based and foreign-based non-profit organizations/non-government organizations (NGOs);
- 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 occasions when a for-profit entity is best suited.

For-profit entities should be aware that their applications may be subject to additional review following the panel selection process, and that the Department of State generally prohibits profit in the form of program income under its assistance awards. Profit is defined as any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs generated by the award. 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.

Please see 2 CFR 200.307 for regulations regarding program income.

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 the applicable NOFO. DRL reserves the right to request additional background information on applicants who do not have previous experience administering federal grant awards, and these applicants may be subject to limited funding on a pilot basis.

Applicants may **form consortia** in order to bring together organizations with varied expertise to propose a comprehensive program in one proposal. However, one organization should be designated as the lead applicant with the other members as sub-award partners.

DRL is committed to an **anti-discrimination** policy in all its programs 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 seeks applications that demonstrate that the recipient does not discriminate against any beneficiaries in implementation of a potential award, such as, but not limited to, by withholding, adversely impacting, or denying equitable access to the benefits provided through this award on the basis

of any factor not expressly stated in the award. This includes, for example, race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, gender expression, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), national origin, disability, age, genetic information, marital status, parental status, political affiliation, or veteran's status. The recipient should insert this provision, including this paragraph, in all sub-grants and contracts under a potential award.

Providing cost sharing, matching, or cost participation is not an eligibility factor or requirement and providing cost share will not result in a more favorable competitive ranking.

B. System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

Note: SAM.gov is not the same as SAMS Domestic. SAM.gov is a regulatory requirement, whereas SAMS Domestic is a Department of State-specific grants management tool. It is free to register in both systems, but the registration processes are different.

Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in the [System for Award Management (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 EPLS can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the EPLS in SAM.gov to ensure that ineligible entities are not included in their application.

All prime organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number – formerly referred to as a DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS)) number – and an active SAM.gov registration before submitting an application. **DRL may <u>not</u> review applications from or make awards to applicants that have not completed all applicable UEI and SAM.gov 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. The 2 CFR 200 requires that subgrantees obtain a UEI number. Please note the UEI for subgrantees is not required at the time of application but will be required before the award is processed and/or directed to a subgrantee.

All prime organizations must also continue to maintain an **<u>active</u>** SAM.gov registration with current information at all times during which they have an active Federal award or application under consideration by a Federal award agency. Please note that a "pending renewal" registration status will not be considered "active." SAM.gov requires all entities to renew their registration once a year in order to maintain an active registration status in SAM.gov. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements at the time of application, DRL may determine that the applicant is technically ineligible to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Note: The process for <u>obtaining or renewing</u> a SAM.gov registration has changed. DRL encourages all organizations to begin the process of registering or renewing with SAM.gov

as early as possible. The registration process may take anywhere from 4-8 weeks on average.

- Organizations **based in the United States** or that pay employees within the United States will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code, and a UEI number from Dun and Bradstreet prior to registering in SAM.gov.
- Organizations **based outside of the United States** and that do not pay employees within the United States do not need an EIN from the IRS, but do need a NATO CAGE (NCAGE) code and UEI number from Dun and Bradstreet prior to registering in SAM.gov.

"Legal Business Name" and "Banking Physical Address" must be precise and **match exactly** when entering it into the IRS, UEI, NCAGE, and SAM.gov websites. Entities must ensure that the physical address used is the same physical address used when establishing the primary banking account and that both addresses match. "Legal Business Name" and "Banking Physical Address" given must be exactly the same—this includes spaces, parentheses, capitalization, small letters, punctuation, and letters with accents or other features not commonly used in U.S. English should be avoided, etc. Any discrepancy will cause validation to fail.

For further guidance on the SAM.gov registration process, please visit the following links: https://sam.gov/SAM/pages/public/help/samQUserGuides.jsf or https://uscontractorregistration.com/about-sam/.

A complete guide to obtaining the registration (NCAGE, UEI, and SAM.gov) may be found on DRL's website: https://www.state.gov/resources-for-programs-and-grants/.

An exemption from these requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis 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 UEI or SAM.gov requirements must email the point of contact listed in the NOFO at least **two weeks prior to the deadline in the NOFO providing a justification of their request**. Approval for a SAM.gov exemption must come from the warranted Grants Officer before the application can be deemed eligible for review.

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.gov. 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 September 2021, NATO nations included Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States of America. As of September 2021, Tier 2

nations included Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Colombia, Finland, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Morocco, New Zealand, Serbia, Singapore, Sweden, Ukraine, and United Arab Emirates.

NSPA and/or the appropriate NCB forwards all NCAGE code information to all Allied Committee 135 (AC/135) nations, which as of September 2021 also included Algeria, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Egypt, Georgia, Jordan, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and Thailand. ___**All organizations are strongly advised to take this into consideration when assessing whether registration may result in possible endangerment.**___

C. Eligible Applications

Technically eligible applications are those that:

- Arrive electronically via SAMS Domestic or Grants.gov by the designated due date and time noted in the NOFO. If reasonable accommodations are granted for persons with disabilities or for security reasons, applications must still be received by DRL by the designated due date and time noted in the NOFO;
- 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. If any document is provided in both English and a foreign language, the English language version is the controlling version. (Please note: the Department of State, as indicated in 2 CFR 200.111, requires that English is the official language of all award documents);
- Heed all instructions contained in the NOFO and PSI, including length and completion of application; and
- Do not violate any of the guidelines stated in the NOFO and the PSI.

It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all of the documents submitted in the grant application package are complete, accurate, and current. **DRL strongly encourages all applicants, especially first-time applicants, to submit applications before the designated due date to ensure that the application has been received and is complete**.

D. Format Requirements

To be considered, all application documents should adhere to the below formatting guidelines:

- All pages are numbered, including budgets and attachments;
- All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper (U.S. letter size); and,
- 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 one page width.

E. Application Requirements

Complete applications <u>must</u> include the following:

1. Completed and signed **SF-424**, **SF-424A**, and **SF-424B** forms. Please see SF-424 instructions below in Section 2B.

2. Organizations that engage in lobbying the U.S. government, including Congress, or pay for another entity to lobby on their behalf, are also required to complete the **SF-LLL** "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities" form (**only if applicable**). Please see SF-LLL guidance in Section 2B.

3. **Cover Page** (not to exceed one (1) page, preferably as a Word Document) that includes a table with the organization name, project title, target country/countries, project synopsis, and name and contact information for the application's main point of contact. Please see *Cover Page* Section 2C below for a template and more details.

4. **Executive Summary** (not to exceed one (1) page, preferably as a Word Document) that outlines project goals, objectives, activities, etc.
   - **The executive summary should include a brief section that explicitly states: (1) the problem statement addressed by the project, (2) research-based evidence justifying the unique project approach, and (3) quantifiable project outcomes and impacts.**

5. **Table of Contents** (not to exceed one (1) page, preferably as a Word Document) listing all documents and attachments, with page numbers.

6. **Proposal Narrative** (not to exceed ten (10) pages, preferably as a Word Document). Please note the ten-page limit **does not include** the Cover Page, Executive Summary, Table of Contents, Attachments, Detailed Budget, Budget Narrative, Audit, or NICRA. Applicants are encouraged to combine multiple documents into a single Word Document or PDF (i.e. Cover Page, Table of Contents, Executive Summary, and Proposal Narrative in one file). Please see *Proposal Narrative Guidelines* in Section 2F below for more details.

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 as additional tabs within the Excel workbook (if available at the time of submission). Please see *Budget Guidelines* Section 2G below for more information.
   - Applicants are expected to submit budget proposals with requested funding broken down by funding type, based on based on (1) the type of funding allocated (i.e. Human Rights Democracy Funds (HRDF), Economic Support Funds (ESF)), (2) the funding year of funds, and/or (3) the number of Foreign Assistance Data

Review (FADR) Data Elements. Applicants should reference the "Total Funding Floor" and "Total Funding Ceiling" sections in the NOFO for multiple funding type(s) allocated to the solicitation, if applicable. Budget proposals should include a separate "Detailed Budget" tab in the Excel budget workbook for each type of funding identified in the NOFO.

o DRL requests programming approaches dedicated to strengthening inclusive societies as a necessary pillar of strong democracies. Please include costs associated with this commitment in the Budget and Budget Narrative.

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. Please see *Budget Guidelines* Section 2G below for more information.

9. The organization's most recent **audit, if applicable**. This should be a single audit, program-specific audit, or other audit in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS). Please see *Audit* Section 2H below for more information.

10. **Logic Model** (preferably as a Word Document). Please see *Logic Model* Section 2I below for more information.

11. **Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative** (not to exceed four (4) pages, preferably as a Word Document). Please see *Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative* Section 2J below for more information.

12. **Monitoring and Evaluation Plan** (preferably as a Word or Excel Document). Please see *Monitoring and Evaluation Plan* Section 2J below for more information.

13. **Risk Analysis** (preferably as a Word Document). Please see *Risk Analysis* Section 2K below for more information.

14. **Key Personnel** (not to exceed two (2) pages, preferably as a Word Document). Please include short bios that highlight relevant professional experience. Given the limited space, CVs are not recommended for submission.

15. **Timeline** (not to exceed one (1) page, preferably as a Word or Excel Document). The timeline of the overall proposal should include activities, evaluation efforts, and program closeout.

16. **Gender and Inclusion Analysis** (not to exceed three (3) pages, preferably as a Word Document) that provides a concise analysis of relevant gender norms, power relations, and conflict dynamics in target countries. Potential domains of analysis include institutional practices and barriers, cultural norms, gender roles, equity and equality for underserved communities and marginalized populations, access to and control over assets

and resources, and patterns of decision-making. Applicants should briefly explain how they have integrated findings from their analysis into project design and/or other proposal documents, including a plan for regularly reviewing and updating the gender and inclusion analysis with local partners/beneficiaries, and making any necessary adjustments to program implementation. A set of guiding questions can be found in Section 2L below.

17. **Security Plan** addressing any issues involving in-person events and recruitment for said events, and safety for any online programs or communications, including independent IT security audits (to include a vulnerability assessment) of any proposed web application or platform. Organization's Security Plan should demonstrate consideration of the risks identified in the submitted risk assessment. Costs may also be identified within the Budget and Budget Narrative. Applicants are also encouraged to include contingency plans for in-person or online activities. **If applicable, please refer to the NOFO to see if this is required.**

18. **Contingency Plan** for proposed activities should the originally planned activities not be able to be implemented. The Contingency Plan should be submitted as an additional annex. Applicants should demonstrate consideration of the risks identified in the submitted risk assessment and include specific alternative activities or locations as part of the Contingency Plan. Any proposed "plan" must comply with 2CFR200.433 – Contingency provisions. Plans must not include unallocable or unallowable expenses and must not result in a larger total award value than the identified as the "competition ceiling." DRL requires prior approval by the Grants Officer of the plan before any activities can take place, or costs can be incurred against the plan. **If applicable, please refer to the NOFO to see if this is required.**

19. **Lessons Learned** (not to exceed one (1) page, preferably as a Word Document) from past programs that demonstrate how the implementer has safely operated and responded to programmatic challenges, learning from both successes and failures, in the operating environment. To be incorporated into the ten (10) pages allowed for the Proposal Narrative. **If applicable, please refer to the NOFO to see if this is required.**

20. **Psychosocial Assistance** (to be incorporated into the ten (10) pages allowed for Proposal Narrative, and into Budget and Budget Narrative). A section in the Proposal, Budget, and Budget Narrative to reflect appropriate resources and support for the psychosocial health of staff (i.e. activities can range from access to educational materials and training opportunities to counseling services to other contextually relevant support). **If applicable, please refer to the NOFO to see if this is required.**
    o References: For reference to international guidance, please see the following: Core Humanitarian Standard Commitment 8.9 (https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/files/files/CHS-Guidance-Notes-and-Indicators.pdf); and IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings Action Sheet 4.4 (http://www.who.int/mental_health/emergencies/guidelines_iasc_mental_health_p

sychosocial_june_2007.pdf).

21. **Burma Due Diligence Assessment** (not to exceed one (1) page, preferably in Microsoft Word) that outlines existing organizational practices for vetting program beneficiaries and capacity to conduct due diligence vetting as outlined in the solicitation. **If applicable, please refer to the NOFO to see if this is required.**

Applications that do not include the elements listed above will be deemed technically ineligible if required by the NOFO.

F. Additional Application Documents

Strong applications will also contain the following:

- Individual Letters of Support and/or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). 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 application checklist and sample templates when submitting your application: https://www.state.gov/resources-for-programs-and-grants/. 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 PSI. Additionally, to ensure that all applications receive a balanced evaluation, the DRL review 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.

Additional Information Requested For Those Receiving Notification of Intent

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

- Written responses and revised application documents addressing conditions and recommendations from the DRL review panel;
- A copy of the applicant's latest NICRA as a PDF file, if the applicant has a NICRA and includes NICRA charges in the budget;
- A completed copy 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;
- Applicants who submit their applications through Grants.gov will be required to create a SAMS Domestic account in order to accept the final award. Accounts must be logged into to every 60 days in order to maintain an active account.

SECTION II: Guidelines for Application Components

A. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Regulations

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

The applicant/recipient of the award and any subgrantee under the award must comply with all applicable terms and conditions, in addition to the assurance and certifications made as part of the Notice of Award. The Department's Standard Terms and Conditions can be viewed at https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/.

B. SF-424 Forms

Organizations must complete, sign, and submit SF-424, SF-424A, and SF-424B forms as directed on SAMS Domestic or Grants.gov. **Please note that all communications regarding the application will be directed to the points of contact identified on the SF-424 forms**.

I. SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance: Please refer to the following guidelines as you fill out the SF-424 form. Complete all fields, except where noted as "Leave Blank" below.

1.	Type of Submission: Application.
2.	Type of Application: New.
3.	Date Received: Leave blank. This will be assigned automatically.
4.	Applicant Identifier: Leave blank.
5a.	Federal Entity Identifier: Leave blank.
5b.	Federal Award Identifier: Leave blank.
6.	Date Received by State: Leave blank. This will be assigned automatically.
7.	State Application Identified: Leave blank. This will be assigned automatically.
8a.	Enter the legal name of the applicant organization. Do **not** list abbreviations or acronyms unless they are part of the organization's legal name.
8b.	Employer/Taxpayer ID Number: Non-U.S. organizations that do not have an IRS EIN enter 44-4444444.
8c.	Enter organizational Unique Entity Identifier number (UEI) or DUNS Number.
8e.	Enter the headquarters address of the applicant.
8f.	Enter the name of the primary organizational unit (and department or division) that will undertake the assistance activity as applicable.
8g.	Enter the name, title, and all contact information of the person to be contacted on matters involving this application. Please note this is the only person to receive updates on the submitted application.
9.	Select an applicant type: Select the type of organization applying.

10.   Enter: Office of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor
11.   Select: 19.345.
12.   Enter the Funding Opportunity Number and title. This title and number will already be entered on electronic applications.
13.   Enter the Competition Identification Number and title. This number will already be entered on electronic applications.
14.   Areas Affected by Project: Enter country or region intended for project. Multiple countries may be entered for regional programs.
15.   Enter the descriptive title of applicant's project. Note, there is a 30 character limit including spaces.
16.   (16a) Congressional districts of Applicant: Applicants based in the U.S. should enter congressional district. Foreign applicants should enter "90." (16b) All applicants should enter "70."
17.   Enter projected start date and projected end date. Refer to the funding opportunity for guidance on projected start dates.
18.   (18a) Enter the amount requested for the project described in the full proposal under "Federal"; (18b) enter any cost-share under "Applicant." If not proposing cost-share, enter zeros. For (18c-f) please enter zeros. For (18g) the total should automatically populate.
19.   Select "c. Program is not covered by E.O 12372."
20.   Select the appropriate box. If the answer is "yes" to this question, provide an explanation.
21.   Enter the name, title, and all contact information of the individual authorized to sign for the application on behalf of the applicant organization.

II. SF-424A Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs:

Please review the detailed instructions below **before** completing this form online.

Please note: The person who signs the SF-424A must have legal authority to do so on behalf of the organization.

Budget Summary
     A.   **Grant Program Function or Activity:** If not pre-populated, enter Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. Click Save. Then click on the hyperlink under either "Grant Program Function or Activity" or the blue (i).
     B.   **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:** If not pre-populated, enter 19.345.
     C.   **Federal (Unobligated):** Leave these fields blank.
     D.   **Non-Federal (Unobligated):** Leave these fields blank.
     E.   **Federal (New/Revised):** Enter the **amount of federal funds requested** for this program.
     F.   **Non-Federal (New/Revised):** If voluntary cost-share is applicable, enter the **amount of any other funds the applicant will use** towards this program.
     G.   **Total:** If not pre-populated, enter the **total cost** of this program.

Click Save.

Budget Categories

Object Class Categories A-K: Under the first column "Object Class Categories" click on each of the hyperlinked cost categories to enter the total cost for each class category for 'Program (1)'. In the total column, to the far right, the form should automatically show the sum. Columns indicated for Program 2, 3, and 4 should be left blank.

Object Class Categories Program Income: Enter 0.

Click Save.

Non-Federal Resources *(Only complete this section if the proposal includes voluntary cost-share.)*

Click the title under the Grant Program.
Grant Program: If not pre-populated, enter Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.
Applicant Column: If applicable, enter **cost-share** amount provided by the applicant.
State Column: Leave blank.
Other Sources Column: If applicable, enter the **cost-share** amount provided by other donors.
Total Column: In the total column, to the far right, the form should automatically show the sum for **total amount for all non-federal resources**.

Forecasted Cash Needs

Forecasted Cash needs are the funds award recipients will withdraw from the Payment Management System (PMS) on an as needed basis. Applicants may list their forecasted cash needs by year or leave it blank. Forecasted cash needs by quarter are not required, only the total sum is necessary.
Federal Row: Click on "Federal." Enter the **total** amount of **federal funds** requested for the program in the total column.
Non-Federal Row: Click on "Non-Federal." Enter the **total** amount of **non-federal funds, also known as cost-share,** you expect to expend during the program in the total column.

Budget Estimates of Federal Funds Needed for Balance of the Program and/or Projects

Grant Program: Click the title entered. If not pre-populated, enter Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.
First Year-Fourth Year Columns: Complete the estimated amounts for each year.

Click Save.

Other Budget Information
        Direct Charges: Leave blank.
        Indirect Charges: Leave blank.
        Remarks: Leave blank.

        Click Save & Return.

III. <u>SF-424B Assurances – Non-Construction Programs</u>:

This form must be signed online in SAMS Domestic or Grants.gov. All sections of this form must be filled out and signed. Please note, public international organizations are required to sign the form in order to submit their proposal, but may submit an additional letter declaring the following:

"Our organization is a Public International Organization and therefore is not subject to any of the assurances and certifications referring to US law." Ensure the document is signed by an Authorized Official. The Authorized Official is generally the grant signatory at the organization or business.

IV. <u>SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities</u> (only if applicable):

The filing of an SF-LLL form is required pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352 for each payment or agreement to make payment to any lobbying entity for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any Federal agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with a covered Federal action, such as the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, or cooperative agreement. This does not apply to payments of reasonable compensation to the extent that the payment is for agency and legislative liaison activities not directly related to a covered Federal action or for professional or technical services rendered directly in the preparation, submission, or negotiation of any bid, proposal, or application for a Federal contract, grant, or cooperative agreement or for meeting requirements imposed by or pursuant to US law as a condition for receiving a Federal contract, grant, or cooperative agreement. Any person who fails to file the required disclosure may be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

C. Cover Page

Applicants must submit a cover page (not to exceed one (1) page, preferably as a Word Document) that includes a table with the following information:

Organization Name	
Program Title (not to exceed 30 characters)	
Target Country/Countries	
Program Synopsis (3 sentences maximum)	
Program Length	
Total Amount of Funding Requested (in USD)	
Name and Contact Information for the project's main point of contact. (This should be the same individual in 8f of the SF-424.)	

D. Executive Summary

An executive summary (not to exceed one (1) page, preferably in Microsoft Word) should provide brief overview of the proposal narrative outlining, program goals, objectives, activities, and intended results.

- **The executive summary should include a brief section that explicitly states: (1) the problem statement addressed by the project, (2) research-based evidence justifying the unique project approach, and (3) quantifiable project outcomes and impacts.**

E. Table of Contents

A Table of Contents (not to exceed one (1) page, preferably as a Word Document) listing all documents and attachments, with page numbers.

F. Proposal Narrative Guidelines

Applicants must submit a proposal narrative (not to exceed ten (10) pages). The ten-page limit **does not include** the Cover Page, Executive Summary, Table of Contents, Attachments, Detailed Budget, Budget Narrative, Audit, or NICRA. Applicants are encouraged to combine multiple documents into a single Word Document or PDF (i.e. Cover Page, Table of Contents, Executive Summary, and Proposal Narrative in one file).

A proposal narrative should:

- Fully explain the program's goals, objectives, and activities.
  - o Objectives should be ambitious, yet measurable, results-focused, and achievable in a reasonable timeframe.
  - o Activities should be clearly developed and detailed, and the narrative should clearly articulate how the proposed activities contribute to objectives and overall project goal.
- Outline the applicant's **organizational capacity** to implement the proposed program,
- Outline in detail the program approach, **sustainability, potential impact, and complementarity to ongoing efforts**.
- Identify **target areas** for activities, identify target participant groups or selection criteria for participants, address how the program will engage relevant stakeholders, and identify local partners as appropriate, among other pertinent details. If partners are included, the narrative should clearly describe the division of labor between the direct applicant and partners.
- Describe how the organization will promote and protect human rights for all, including religious minorities, women, LGBTI persons, persons with disabilities, racial and ethnic minorities, and indigenous communities. The Proposal Narrative should demonstrate the applicant's commitment to ensuring the participation of all people as a strategy for implementation and integrate inclusion strategies in all sections of the Proposal Narrative to enhance programmatic impact.

Applicants are encouraged to document lessons learned from past projects or their work in similar contexts, to include both failures and successes. This information can be used to make the case for how the applicant would realistically address the challenges and limitations that would likely arise in implementing the program.

The proposal narrative should expand upon the Risk Analysis to provide greater context, operational or programmatic security concerns, and a contingency plan for overcoming potential difficulties in executing the original work plan.

G. Budget Guidelines

Applications will not be considered complete unless they include a budget that responds to the NOFO guidelines.

Complete budgets will include:

1. **Summary Budget**
2. **Detailed Line-Item Budget (for each type of funding identified in the NOFO)**
3. **Sub-grantee Budgets (if applicable)**
4. **Corresponding Budget Narrative**

All organizations, including those not offering any cost-sharing (cost share is not a requirement), should submit a detailed line-time budget, formatted to include three columns:

1. DRL funding request,
2. Any cost sharing contribution, and
3. Total project budget.

Programming approaches should be dedicated to strengthening inclusive societies as a necessary pillar of strong democracies. The Budget and Budget Narrative should include costs associated with this commitment.

Please note: Grantees under DRL-funded programs are responsible for complying with all applicable tax treaties and federal, state, and local laws on tax withholding and reporting for program participants.

Before grants are awarded, DRL reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of DRL and availability of funds.

Summary Budget

The summary budget is a synopsis of the detailed line-item budget and must be organized with three columns (DRL Request, Cost Share, and Total Budget) according the OMB cost categories.

Please include in the summary budget header the applicant organization's name, program title, and duration of the program. The summary budget should be included as a tab along with the detailed line-item budget.

For a template summary budget please see the Resources page under "Budget Guidance for Applicants - New Award Budget Sample" on DRL's website: https://www.state.gov/resources-for-programs-and-grants/.

Detailed Line-Item Budget

The detailed line-item budget should outline specific cost requirements for proposed activities and must be organized according to the OMB cost categories. The detailed line-item budget should be included as a tab along with the summary budget.

For a template line-item budget, please see the Resources page under "Budget Guidance for Applicants - New Award Budget Sample" on DRL's website: https://www.state.gov/resources-for-programs-and-grants/.

If a NOFO includes multiple funding types under the "Total Funding Floor" and "Total Funding Ceiling" sections, a separate detailed line-item budget tab must be included in the Excel budget workbook for each type of funding identified in the NOFO.

For a template budget with separate line-item budgets for multiple funding types, please see the Resources page under "Budget Guidance for Applicants – Multiple Funding Types" on DRL's website: https://www.state.gov/resources-for-programs-and-grants/.

Cost Categories

Budgets should be arranged according to the cost categories below and should clearly delineate cost-share.

- **Personnel** – Staffing of employees should be appropriate to the successful implementation of the proposal and cost should conform to the requirements identified in 2 CFR 200.430. In general, direct employees of the non-federal entity whether receiving benefits or not are considered personnel. Consultants or contractors hired through a contractual agreement to assist with the project should be included under F. Contractual. Identify employees by each position title and brief description of duties. This information can be included in the budget narrative if preferred. Each employee's salary calculation should include the annual/base salary, percentage of time and number of months devoted to the program aka Level of Effort (LOE) (e.g., Administrative Director: $30,000/year x 25% x 8.5 months; calculation: $30,000/12 = $2,500 x 25% x 8.5 months = $5,312).

- **Fringe Benefits** – Fringe benefits are allowances provided by employers to their employees as compensation in addition to regular salaries and wages. Benefit costs should be listed separate from salary costs with an explanation of how benefits are calculated for each category of employee (specify type and rate) as well as whether the benefit is required by law, an established policy of the non-Federal entity, or a non-Federal entity-employee agreement. These costs may be derived from historical costs or calculated as a percentage of salaries and wages. If the costs are calculated as a percentage of salaries and wages, this percentage will need to be justified by the entity's written internal policy or documented on their Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA). Examples of fringe benefits include, but are not limited to, the costs of leave (vacation, family-related, sick, or military), employee insurance, pensions, and unemployment benefit plans. For additional information, please see 2 CFR 200.431.

- **Travel** – Travel costs include expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence, and related items incurred by employees, contractors, or participants who are in travel status on official business for the non-Federal entity or participating in program activities conducted by the non-Federal entity. Such costs may be charged on an actual cost basis, on a per diem or mileage basis in lieu of actual costs incurred, or on a combination of the two, provided the method used is applied to an entire trip and not to selected days of the trip, and results in charges consistent with those normally allowed in like circumstances in the non-Federal entity's non-federally-funded activities and in accordance with non-Federal entity's written travel reimbursement policies. For additional information, please see 2 CFR 200.474. Employee and participant travel may include the following

categories:

- *International Airfare*
- *Domestic Airfare*
- Costs incurred while traveling, including costs of lodging, other subsistence, and incidental expenses, must be considered reasonable and otherwise allowable only to the extent such costs do not exceed charges normally allowed by the non-Federal entity in its regular operations as the result of the non-Federal entity's written travel policy. These costs include:
  - *Lodging*
  - *Meals and incidentals*
  - *Ground transportation costs*
- *Visa Fees and Immunizations* associated with program travel.

Note: In the absence of an acceptable, written non-Federal entity policy regarding travel costs, the rates and amounts established under 5 U.S.C. 5701-11, ("Travel and Subsistence Expenses; Mileage Allowances"), or by the Administrator of General Services, or by the President (or his or her designee) pursuant to any provisions of such subchapter must apply to travel under Federal awards (48 CFR 31.205-46(a)).

Please explain differences in fares among travelers on the same routes (e.g., project staff member traveling for three weeks whose fare is higher than that of staff member traveling for four months). Please note that all travel, where applicable, must be in compliance with the Fly America Act. For more information see DRL's website: https://www.state.gov/resources-for-programs-and-grants/.

- **Equipment** – Equipment is defined as an item with a per-unit cost of $5,000 or more and a service life of more than one year. This includes information technology systems. If the item meets these criteria, property standards under 2 CFR 200.313 are required. Additionally, a description of the non-federal entity's procurement procedures should be included as well as identification of method of procurement required by 2 CFR 200.320. If an item does not meet the criteria of equipment, it should be considered a supply and listed under cost category E. Please provide justification for any equipment purchase/rental in the budget narrative.

- **Supplies** – Materials and supplies including the cost of computing devices should be reasonable and necessary for the implementation of the proposal and conform to the 2 CFR 200.314. A computing device is a supply if the acquisition cost is less than $5,000, regardless of the length of its useful life. Supplies may include specific activity-related costs and/or the allocation of general supplies incurred by the non-federal entity as necessary to carry out the proposal. List items separately using unit costs and the percentage or allocation of each unit cost being charged to the grant. Items may include photocopying, postage, printing, and other office supplies (e.g., Printing: $50/month x 50% = $25/month x 12 months or Computers $900/2 x 100% = $1800).

- **Contractual**
  - *Subgrants* – A subgrant means an award provided by the applicant as a pass-through entity to a subgrantee for the subgrantee to carry out a part of the Federal award. A subgrant is not payment for the contract of goods or services. See 2 CFR 200.330 for subgrant and contractor determinations. For each subgrant, please provide a detailed line-item breakdown explaining specific services in a separate tab in the excel workbook. Subgrant budgets should include the same level of detail for personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, and indirect costs required of the direct applicant. If indirect costs are charged on a subgrant budget, please include the subgrantee's NICRA or explanation of how the indirect rate was determined in accordance with 2 CFR 200. The recipient organization has the responsibility to honor an existing NICRA, negotiate an indirect rate, offer the 10% de minimis, or allow costs to be directly charged to the sub-award budget for each sub-award, per 2 CFR 200.331.iiiv.4. If an organization has an established NICRA the agreement should be submitted with the proposal package. Please note that a subgrantee who receives $25,000 or more is required to have a UEI number. Please visit https://www.fsrs.gov/ or the Resources page on DRL's website: https://www.state.gov/resources-for-programs-and-grants/ for more information.

  - *Fixed Amount Award (FAA)* – FAAs of up to simplified acquisitions threshold may be executed with prior written approval from the Department's warranted Grants Officer, per 2 CFR 200.332. Per 2 CFR 200.201, fixed amount awards may be used if the project scope is specific and if adequate cost, historical, or unit pricing data is available to establish a fixed amount award based on a reasonable estimate of actual cost. Payments are based on meeting specific requirements of the award. Accountability is based on performance and results. At the completion of the fixed amount award, the organization must certify in writing that the project or activity was completed, or the level of effort was expended. If the required level of activity or effort was not carried out, the amount of the fixed amount award must be adjusted.

    Please note: *Fixed Amount Awards (FAAs) must be stated in the budget and budget narrative at the time of application. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that proposed subgrantees are eligible for U.S. government funding.*

  - *Contractor/Consultant Fees* – These include payments to contractors/consultants for the purpose of obtaining goods or services for the non-federal entities own use and creates a procurement relationship. Items may include lecture fees, honoraria, translator costs or external evaluators. Please list number of people and rates per day (e.g., 2 x $150/day x 2 days) and provide justification in narrative. Single audit or 2 CFR 200 Subpart F audit costs can be included if they are not part of indirect costs. Only the portion of an organizational audit cost associated with this project can be included in the budget.

> *Please note: Organizations must adhere to their own documented procurement procedures, which must reflect applicable U.S. State, local, and tribal laws and regulations, provided that the procurements conform to applicable U.S. Federal law and the standards identified in 2 CFR 200.318 through 2 CFR 200.326.*

- **Construction** – Due to the nature of DRL programs, construction costs are not allowable or applicable.

- **Other Direct Costs** – These will vary depending on the nature of the project. The inclusion of items in this cost category should be justified in the budget narrative. Items may include venue rentals, catering costs, or other activity related costs.

- **Indirect Charges** – An organization with a NICRA should include a copy of their negotiated indirect cost-rate agreement with their application. This document will not be reviewed by the panelists, but rather used by program and grant staff if the submission is recommended for funding. As such, it does not count against the submission page limitations. Applicants should indicate in the proposal budget how the rate is applied (e.g. to direct administrative expenses, to all direct costs, to wages and salaries only, etc.) and if any of the rate will be cost-shared.

  Per 2 CFR 200.414, any non-Federal entity that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, except for those non-Federal entities described in Appendix VII to Part 200—States and Local Government and Indian Tribe Indirect Cost Proposals, paragraph D.1.b, may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. Per 2 CFR 200.68, MTDC means all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first $25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subaward). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition reimbursement, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs, and the portion of each subaward in excess of $25,000. Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs. The budget narrative should include a justification of the MTDC calculation, clearly describing which costs will be covered if using the 10% de minimis indirect rate.

  As described in 2 CFR 200.403, *Factors Affecting Allowability of Costs*, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. The elected methodology must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time.

  Organizations not applying the de minimis rate of up to 10% of MTDC but claiming indirect costs should have established NICRAs.

- **Cost Share** – Cost-sharing is the portion of program costs not borne by the Federal Government. While not a competitive element, DRL encourages (but does not require) cost-sharing, which may take the form of allowable direct or indirect costs offered by the applicant and/or in-country partners. Applicants should consider all types of cost-sharing, including in-kind and public-private partnerships. Examples include the use of office space owned by other entities; donated or borrowed supplies and equipment; (non-federal) sponsored travel costs; waived indirect costs; and project activities, translations, or consultations conducted by qualified volunteers. The values of offered cost-share should be reported in accordance with the applicable cost principles outlined in 2 CFR 200.306. **Other United States federal funding does not constitute cost-sharing**.

  Explanations of contributions should be included, whether cash or in-kind. Assign a monetary value in U.S. dollars to each in-kind contribution. If the proposed project is a component of a larger program, identify other funding sources and the specific funding amount to be provided by those sources. In addition, it is recommended that the budget narrative address the overall cost-effectiveness of the proposal, including leveraging of institutional or other resources.

  Please note: DRL programs do not require cost share, but if it is included 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.

  For information on Shared Cost Allocations, please reference 2 CFR 200.405.

DRL does **not** pay for the following, under any circumstances:
- Costs incurred before or after the specified dates of the grant (unless prior approval is received by the Grants Officer);
- Projects designed to advocate policy views or positions of foreign governments or views of a particular political faction;
- Alcoholic beverages;
- Explicitly religious activities, including those that involve overt religious content such as worship, religious instruction, prayer, or proselytization; and,
- Costs of entertainment, including amusement, diversion, and social activities and any associated costs are unallowable, except where specific costs that might otherwise be considered entertainment have a programmatic purpose and are authorized either in the approved budget for the Federal award or with prior written approval of the warranted Grants Officer.

Budget Narrative Guidelines

Applicants must submit a budget narrative (preferably as a Word Document) to justify each line-item in the budget and explain how the amounts were derived, consistency with the applicants

documented policies, as well as the source and description of all proposed costs (and cost-share, if applicable).

The narrative should complement the budget rather than repeat information provided in the budget. For example, the narrative should provide details on the purpose of costs, reasonability of costs, cost price analysis, explain allocations, explain any yearly variances and tie expenses to program activities and/or objectives where appropriate. For ease of review, DRL requests that applicants order the budget narrative as presented in the detailed line-item budget. Personnel costs should include a clarification of the roles and responsibilities of key staff, base salary, and percentage of time devoted to the project (level of effort).

Sources of all cost-share offered in the application should be identified and explained in the budget narrative. When organizations have made a reasonable, good-faith effort to obtain cost sharing or are pursuing avenues to cost share, DRL encourages applicants to note this in the proposal. Cost share is not required.

H. Audit Guidelines

The applicant's proposal may include the cost of an audit that:

- Complies with the requirements of 2 CFR 200 Subpart F "Audit Requirements;"
- Complies with the requirements of American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) Statement of Position (SOP) No. 92-9, "Audits of Not-for-Profit Organizations Receiving Federal Awards;"
- Complies with AICPA Codification of Statements on Auditing Standards AU Section 551, "Reporting on Information Accompanying the Basic Financial Statements in Auditor-Submitted Documents," where applicable. When the U.S. Department of State is the largest direct source of Federal financial assistance (i.e., the cognizant Federal Agency) and indirect costs are charged to Federal grants, a supplemental schedule of indirect cost computation is required.

Audits of Non-Federal entity Organizations:

All non-Federal organizations that expend $750,000 or more in the organization's fiscal year in Federal awards must perform an independent, non-Federal entity-contracted Single Audit or Program Specific Audit.

Program-specific Audit means an audit of one Federal award program. Single Audit means an audit which includes both the entity's financial statements and the Federal Awards to be conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS).

The audits must be independently and professionally executed in accordance with GAGAS either prescribed by a government's Supreme Audit Institution with auditing standards approved by the Comptroller General of the United States, or in accordance

with the host country's laws or adopted by the host country's public accountants or associations of public accountants, together with generally accepted international auditing standards. However, foreign entity audits consistent with International Standards for Auditing or other auditing standards are acceptable with the Grants Officer's approval.

For sub-non-Federal entities expending $750,000 or more in Department of State award funding during their fiscal year, Department of State standard audit provisions require that Prime non Federal entities certify that audits of sub-non-Federal entities are performed annually and according to the standards described above.

The cost of audits may be charged either as an allowable direct cost to the award or included in the organizations established indirect costs in the award's detailed budget.

For additional information on audits, please see Subpart F – Audit Requirements of the Code of Federal Regulations: 2 CFR 200.500.

I. Logic Model Guidelines

A logic model is a useful tool to help "map" a project. It details planned activities, the immediate services or product of project activities (outputs), and the expected changes or benefits that occur after activities have been implemented (outcomes). Applicants can specify objectives, identify what resources (inputs) are needed, outline proposed activities (outputs) and beneficiaries, and illustrate how activities lead to expected results. The activities and expected outcomes documented within the logic model should be achievable within the level of funding and timeframe of the project.

When designing a program, applicants are strongly encouraged to start with a logic model, or other conceptual approaches (e.g. results chain, theory of change, systems map)—prior to writing their program proposal narrative. Logic models, and alternative approaches, can be helpful when planning and designing programs. These tools can be used to visually depict or outline how and why a project will work—i.e. the rationale behind your project approach. Detailing how a program's planned activities lead to certain outcomes can often help applicants understand the assumptions within the approach. Detailing factors outside your control, such as policy shifts (i.e. external factors) within a logic model can identify areas that should be included within your program's risk analysis.

Applicants are also encouraged to work with partners or sub-grantees, in developing project logic models. This can provide diverse viewpoints throughout the project design process, which can help to identify issues in the initial program approach. A basic logic model should include:

- **Problem Statement:** What problems or issues does the program attempt to solve or address.

- **Needs:** The community need as identified by the organization.

- **Inputs:** Human and financial resources used for the project implementation.

- **Activities:** Actions taken, or work performed through which inputs are mobilized to produce outputs.

- **Pathways:** Linkages that specify how activities of a project lead to the expected outputs, outcomes, and impact of a project through each step of the logic model. Applicants can illustrate pathways with arrows—human rights defenders are trained (output)➔human rights defenders apply skills from training (outcome); or, by placing each step in different columns. Applicants can also include text identifying how they believe outputs lead to certain outcomes.

- **Expected Outputs:** Measures the direct or immediate product of a project activity (e.g. number of individuals trained). Outputs should be tangible, visible and measurable.

- **Expected Outcomes:** The short-term, medium-term, and longer-term changes that take place after project activities have been implemented. Outcomes reflect the changes or benefits from project activities (e.g. training participants apply skills in their work; legislators incorporate recommendations from civil society into laws or policies). The longer-term changes of a program, often called **impact**, are linked closely to the overall program goal(s). These can be seen as changes to the broader social, cultural, political or economic system. They could be as ambitious as reducing human rights violations in an authoritarian society, or it could be less ambitious, though equally important, such as adding greater female representation to a country's political parties. Longer-term change is generally not produced by one project, but through the work of many organizations and a series of initiatives over time.

- **Assumptions:** Hypotheses about factors or risks which could affect the progress or success of the project. This includes underlying beliefs about the project (how activities lead to change), as well as stakeholders or beneficiaries (who need to be involved to support change).

- **External Factors:** Factors which are not explicitly in the control of the project, but which can have an important effect on the intended outcomes and impact, such as government policies or changes in the political situation in the country.

Please note: While the logic model is represented in a linear trajectory, the relationship between factors may not always be unidirectional. Sometimes factors can mutually affect one another. Thus, the logic model should be viewed as a dynamic and evolving document, which should be re-evaluated and adjusted when conditions change. In essence, the logic model (and similar program planning approaches) describes assumptions on how program staff views their operating environment and how a program can support change.

More information about the logic model, including a sample model and template, can be found at https://www.state.gov/resources-for-programs-and-grants/. DRL's Logic Model template

includes two versions: (1) Logic Model with general M&E terminology (inputs, outputs, outcomes); and (2) Logic Model in plain English.

J. Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines

A proposal should include both a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) Narrative and an M&E Plan. When developing M&E components, **applicants should focus on utility**—whether the data collected and the analysis undertaken will be useful for project management and decision-making. As DRL programs often focus on difficult environments or sensitive topics, **applicants are strongly encouraged to assess the ethics behind their M&E processes.**

Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative
An M&E Narrative outlines how a project's M&E system will be carried out and by whom. It details how you will track your project's performance toward its objectives, over time.

Applicants should include the monitoring and evaluation process in their timeline. The M&E Narrative should include an explanation for each of the following components:

- **Overview:** Explain the M&E approach for this program, specifically how applicants will be monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on the progress of program objectives and activities. Provide a clear description of the monitoring and evaluation approach and data collection strategies and tools to be employed (e.g., surveys or questionnaires, interviews, focus groups). The description should include how the applicant will track and document whether activities occurred (outputs) and the results or changes caused by these activities (outcomes). The narrative should be tailored in describing how the monitoring and evaluation approach will lead the applicant to better understand whether the project will achieve its intended outcomes, such as changes in the knowledge, attitudes or skills of project participants; benefits to individuals, communities, or networks; improvements in beneficiary organizations or institutions; and, changes in policy or legislation. Applicants should also describe what quality controls are in place to ensure the validity and reliability of data being collected. Finally, applicants are encouraged to detail how results and findings will be utilized, such as how information could be used to adapt project activities or approaches, if necessary.

    Note: While performance indicators can be helpful in tracking progress, applicants are also encouraged to think beyond metrics and explore alternative monitoring and evaluation approaches (e.g. qualitative data, case studies, storytelling approaches), if their project does not lend itself to quantitative measures or metrics cannot adequately capture the project outcomes.

- **Roles and Responsibilities:** Detail who will oversee and participate in M&E efforts, from data collection and analysis to reporting. If the project includes work with local partners or sub-partners, explain how M&E efforts will be coordinated amongst the organizations.

- **Data Security:** Given the sensitivities of DRL grants, describe the protocols in place to ensure the security of information being collected, including who has access to the information, both on- and offline. The privacy and security of beneficiaries and partners must be considered before any sensitive data is collected.

- **Internal or External Evaluation:** Explain if an external evaluation will be included in the project, or how the project will be systematically assessed in absence of one (if not already been outlined within the overview of the M&E approach). Evaluations, internal or external, should be systematic studies that use research methods to address specific questions about project performance. They should provide a valuable supplement to ongoing monitoring activities. Evaluation activities generally include baseline assessments, mid-term and final evaluations. However, the timing and approach of the evaluation should be based on the nature of the project, the complexity of the operating environment, and the frequency that project staff will use findings for project management purposes.

  If an internal or external project evaluation is planned, please include a brief description including the likely focus (process and/or outcome-focused), frequency of evaluation activities, and an estimate of resources required to conduct or manage the evaluation. Evaluation questions can also be included within this section. Key evaluation questions typically seek to answer whether programming approaches are efficient and effective, as well as appropriate to the operating or policy environment. Project evaluation costs are highly variable and should be considered on a project-by-project basis, considering the frequency of activities, rigor of evaluation methods, level of effort, and expertise of evaluation staff.

  Programs that are at least 24 months are encouraged to include an external evaluation, or specify how internal evaluation will meet the data collection and learning needs of program staff.

  Note: Costs for external or internal evaluations must be built into the overall budget proposal and must be reasonable. If the M&E Narrative outlines that an evaluation has been planned, please ensure that this has been included within the budget (including projected costs for contractual and travel).

- **Addressing Barriers to Equal Participation:** Given DRL's commitment to supporting promoting and protecting human rights, applicants should explain how information about religious minorities, women, LGBTI persons, persons with disabilities, racial and ethnic minorities, and indigenous communities will be collected and included in the proposed program. At a minimum, data should be disaggregated by relevant social categories (e.g., religion, gender, disabilities, ethnicity or sexual orientation and gender identity). The applicant should also include separate indicators that specifically measure program outcomes. The degree to which collecting sensitive demographic data may discourage or present a barrier to beneficiaries participating in activities, however, must be considered prior to collection of such data. Applicants should determine if such data can be

collected, stored, and transmitted, given local context, without creating undue security risks to partners and beneficiaries; without undue invasion of privacy; and without presenting a barrier to beneficiary participation. Data security protocols appropriate for the local context must be established and followed.

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The M&E Plan should draw on the objectives, activities and expected changes from the Logic Model, and link those areas to indicators.

The M&E Plan is generally structured as a table with output- and outcome-based indicators. It explains how data will be collected (**data collection methods**) to show that certain changes occurred. It outlines **baselines** (where your project is starting) and **quarterly targets** (what you would like to achieve) for each indicator.

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan: Components

DRL includes the following categories within its sample M&E Plan. *Many applicant organizations may include other categories, or format M&E plans differently, which is acceptable. This sample has been included for organizations that may not have established M&E processes.*

Indicators: Background and Types

Performance indicators are used to help projects understand if they are on track. As previously mentioned, performance indicators can be helpful, but they often only tell one part of the story. Applicants are also encouraged to think beyond metrics and explore alternative approaches if their project does not lend itself to quantitative measures, or if metrics cannot adequately capture project outcomes.

Performance indicators should be clearly defined and are in many cases quantifiable. Qualitative indicators are encouraged if they provide a reliable means to measure a particular phenomenon or attribute. A good guide for determining the quality of performance indicators is the acronym SMART – i.e., are the indicators: specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely.

Indicators can focus on (i) inputs / process (measures activities or the necessary components for an activity to occur—e.g. training curriculum developed), (ii) outputs (products and services delivered from project activities, and often stated as an amount—e.g. 100 civil society organization members trained in organizational fundraising, 60 radio programs produced), and (iii) outcomes (the specific results of a project, which are often measured as a degree of change—after receiving training on effective engagement in the political process, 40% of female participants ran for a seat in parliament).

Applicants should also track and disaggregate data of participants by sex, where applicable, and include indicators that capture gender sensitivity. Similarly, projects that prioritizes inclusive

and integrated program models that assess and address the barriers to access for individuals and groups based on their religion, gender, disabilities, ethnicity or sexual orientation and gender identity, should track and disaggregate data of participants by those target populations, where applicable and appropriate. Applicants should include indicators that measure support for issues affecting all of its beneficiaries, including support that specifically target these communities facing discrimination, and especially which may be under threat of violence.

> **USG Standard Indicators (F-indicators**): The Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance (F) requires all DRL grantees to report on standard indicators, within the Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Category (formerly called Governing Justly and Democratically, GJD). Therefore, applicants should review the DRG Framework Indicators (https://www.state.gov/resources-and-reports-office-of-foreign-assistance/) and include at least one relevant standard indicator in the proposal M&E Plan. Standard foreign assistance (F) indicators and their disaggregates are "required-as-applicable" (i.e., select only those that are applicable to your project activities). See paragraphs below for more information on selecting or waiving indicators.

> **DRL/GP (DRL) Indicators**: The Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance (F) instituted a Program and Project Design, Monitoring and Evaluation Policy[1] in 2018 where State Department bureaus are required to define and measure programs. As such DRL developed program logic models and corresponding program indicators that apply across all awards to allow for aggregation across DRL-supported projects. Applicants should review the DRL logic models and indicators (https://www.state.gov/resources-for-programs-and-grants/) to select indicators that are relevant to their projects and can be used to measure their project's results. Similar to the selection of F-indicators, the DRL indicators are "required-as-applicable." Please refer to the DRL performance indicator reference sheets (PIRS) for more detailed guidance on the selection and definitions of the DRL indicators.

Selecting Indicators. While most F-indicators are focused on outputs and broad topics (e.g. the number of human rights defenders trained) to allow for aggregation across projects, most DRL indicators are outcome oriented to provide complementary, higher level aggregation. Nevertheless, applicants should supplement these with their own **custom** output and outcome indicators that are tailored to the project logic and measures progress toward project objectives. If you have questions concerning how data should be collected or reported, please consult with your Program Officer and/or a DRL M&E Specialist about the indicator's Performance Indicator Reference Sheet (PIRS) and any instructions for how the indicator should be collected and reported.

Waiving Indicators. If none of the standard foreign assistance or DRL indicators are appropriate for a grant, please note that "standard foreign assistance (or DRL) indicators are not applicable to the grant" in the M&E Narrative. In cases where the security of the implementing

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[1] The PD/PM policy is codified by 18 FAM 300, which is a requirement stated in the Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act (FATAA).

partner or project beneficiaries may be comprised due to data collection, the following notation can be added—"standard foreign assistance (or DRL) indicators are not applicable to this grant, due to security concerns with data collection/reporting." If these notations are included within the grant agreement, the requirement to include an F or DRL indicator can be waived. Information on and the list of standard indicators is provided at https://www.state.gov/f/indicators/. Please denote these indicators in the M&E Plan with an asterisk and their indicator number.

For a more detailed explanation of definitions and DRL's expectations for the M&E Plan, please review the **DRL Monitoring and Evaluation Guide** and **Sample Monitoring and Evaluation Plan**, found at https://www.state.gov/resources-for-programs-and-grants/.

K. Risk Analysis Guidelines

Risks are unavoidable – all projects inherently contain both internal and external risks. However, with proper identification and management, risks can be prepared for, minimized, or mitigated. The purpose of a Risk Analysis is to identify the internal and external risks associated with the proposed project in the application, rate the likelihood of the risks, rate the potential impact of the risks on the project, and identify actions that could help mitigate the risks. A Risk Analysis should not be considered a one-time exercise or a static document. DRL expects organizations to conduct adequate risk analysis and remediation for all of its operations and advises that risk analysis and remediation occur throughout the life of a project and should result in revisions to risk analysis documents and processes as necessary. Applicants should include all assumptions and external factors identified in the Logic Model in the Risk Analysis. Applicants should rate the likelihood and potential impact of each risk as "High," "Medium," or "Low." Additional lines can be included in the risk analysis table as necessary.

The safety and security of recipients and beneficiaries are of utmost importance. Applicants should identify risks to staff, implementers, participants, or their communities, in alignment with Do No Harm principles. Besides political and environmental factors, risks may include gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, and other forms of physical, psychological, economic, or social backlash against beneficiaries. They may also include unintended power shifts within or between communities, local competition over program funds and opportunities, unintended crowding out of local civil society actors, or "brain drain" of their own staff or members. DRL requires all recipients to conduct thorough risk assessments and take all actions necessary in accordance with those assessments to mitigate those risks. DRL does not take responsibility for the risks incurred by any recipient.

If available, applicants should submit copies of any organization-wide policies and procedures on Do No Harm and Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA).[2] If such policies are not

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[2] Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) occurs when people in power exploit or abuse vulnerable populations for sexual purposes. According to the U.N. Secretary-General's Bulletin on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and

available, applicants should either explain the organization's plan for developing such policies or clearly describe how they will follow Do No Harm principles and prevent sexual exploitation and abuse from occurring during their program. If not already explained in its policies and procedures, applicants should outline in its proposal how it will work with any sub-grantees who do not yet have Do No Harm and PSEA policies and procedures to develop and apply them over the course of the program.

More information about the Risk Analysis, please see 2 CFR 200.519.

For a sample Risk Analysis please see the Resources page on DRL's website: https://www.state.gov/resources-for-programs-and-grants/.

L. Gender and Inclusion Analysis Guiding Questions

Gather Data and Reports ⟩ **Analyze Gaps** ⟩ **Identify and Address**

Per the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 and subsequent U.S. Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security, it is a U.S. government-wide priority to expand and apply gender analysis, as appropriate, to improve the design and implementation of U.S. government-funded programs. A gender analysis helps consider the different ways in which programs might impact and be impacted by the community, country, and region where activities take place.

Further, DRL is committed to advancing equity and support for underserved and underrepresented communities. Programs should seek strategies for integration and inclusion of individuals/organizations/beneficiaries that can bring perspectives based on their religion, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, sex characteristics, national origin, age, genetic information, marital status, parental status, pregnancy, political affiliation, or veteran's status.

A gender and inclusion analysis helps consider the different ways in which programs might impact and be impacted by different individuals (men, women, boys, and girls), the community, country, and region where activities take place. Once potential challenges, gaps, and opportunities related to gender norms, equity and equality for underserved communities and marginalized populations, power relations, and conflict dynamics are analyzed with regard to the target country/region, this information should be used to tailor and strengthen program design and implementation.

DRL's gender and inclusion analysis is meant to be a concise, three-page overview of which factors considered and how those findings have been integrated in project design. It is **not** meant

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Abuse, sexual exploitation refers to "any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another." Sexual abuse refers to "actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions."

to take the place of DRL's requirement to address barriers to equal participation for marginalized populations. Applicants may be asked to expand upon this gender and inclusion analysis, if selected for funding.

Context and Background
The following list is an illustrative list of questions to help gender and inclusion analysis. The questions are grouped by domains only to assist in organizing the analysis. DRL encourages applicants to ensure that different perspectives and experiences based on religion, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, sex characteristics, national origin, age, genetic information, marital status, parental status, pregnancy, political affiliation, or veteran's status are meaningfully considered and integrated throughout analysis.

Domains of Analysis		Cross-Cutting Questions
Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices	Are men and women treated equally in legislation, and by official policies and institutions in the country? Are there any laws or policies that address inequality or discrimination, current or past? How could treatment under the law, and by official policies and institutions in the country, impact the work?	**Have you consulted the people with whom you want to work?** What do local women's groups and gender equality practitioners think about the work? Have they flagged any potential concerns or unintended consequences?
Cultural Norms and Beliefs	What is expected of men and women here? Do stereotypes help or hurt men's or women's engagement in the work? How will the work impact community members in different ways as a result?	**How could gender-based violence impact the work?** How can gender-based violence impact participation in, or accessing benefits from, the work? Could anything inadvertently exacerbate gender-based violence? *This can include examining rates of domestic violence, sexual violence, early and forced marriage, violence against women online or in politics, etc.*
Gender Roles, Responsibilities and Time Use*	Who does what? How do gender roles and responsibilities, inside and outside the home, impact equitable participation in the work? How will participation impact success? *This should include paid and unpaid work - like care for family members.*	
Access to and Control over Assets and Resources*	Do men and women have equal control over and the capacity to use resources – assets, income, education, social benefits, services, technology – and information necessary to be an active and productive participant in society? If not, how might the work need to adjust to close these gaps? *This should include income, employment, and land.*	**What other factors should be considered?** Identity and power, autonomy, and access intersect in different ways to produce empowerment or disempowerment. How do attributes, in addition to gender, determine someone's safety and access to opportunity? Does
Patterns of Power and	Who decides, influences, and exercises control over material, human,	

Decision-making*	intellectual, and financial resources in the family, community and country? Why? Will women have control over and benefit from assets they may result from participating in the work? Are there any risks associated with disrupting these patterns, even if it is what beneficiaries want? *This should include structural barriers, leadership norms, and entry points.*	anything we are doing risk negatively exacerbating this? *Examples include age, religion, race, ethnicity, tribe, wealth, education, marital status, care of children or elderly, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, geographic location, rural/urban residence, disability status, and nationality.*

Implementation and Proposal Design
Findings from this analysis should be accounted for at the design phase and integrated throughout proposal documents, as appropriate. The following list provides illustrative categories and questions to consider.

Applicants should include a clear plan for: (1) regularly reviewing and updating the gender and inclusion analysis with local partners/beneficiaries, and (2) making any necessary adjustments to the program design based on new findings or developments in the local, national, and/or regional context.

Staffing
- How will you deal with gender norms, discrimination, and vulnerability in this work?
- Will you train staff to help them understand local gender norms, and how to interact with them?
- If staff or partners are discriminating against others or being discriminated against, do you have a policy and practices in place to address these issues?
- Will the team include someone trained in privacy and referrals in cases of GBV?
- Will you have someone on staff who understands how to reach women and men for different activities (i.e. voter registration)?
- Will staff be trained on how to assess and bridge gender gaps?
- Will staff be a part of, and able to communicate with, the people you need to reach?

Stakeholder Participation
- How will you consult with local women and women's groups to ensure that women are active participation in the work?
- How will you make sure you can reach everyone relevant to the success of the work? Consider potential needs such as transportation, childcare, meeting times, etc.
- Which local organizations can help make sure you are able to appropriately engage all members of a community?

Risk Assessment/Challenges
- Is the work likely to exacerbate existing tensions or conflicts within the home, between participants or beneficiaries, within or between communities, or otherwise?

- What gendered issues, including the safety, movement, and access of participants and staff, may arise and how will you mitigate and respond to those risks?
- What are your safeguarding practices and policies to Do No Harm and prevent sexual exploitation and abuse of participants by staff and implementing partners?

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)
- How will you monitor, analyze, evaluate, and continuously learn about gender norms, challenges, and opportunities as you implement this work?
- Are you including sex-disaggregated indicators when counting people?
- Have you included gender-specific indicators (USG GNDR standard indicators may help)?

SECTION III: Proposal Submission Instructions

The U.S. Department of State requires that proposals be submitted electronically via SAMS Domestic (https://mygrants.service-now.com) or Grants.gov (www.grants.gov). Both systems require registration by the applicant.

Documents that are faxed, couriered, or emailed to DRL will generally **not** be accepted. In appropriate circumstances, reasonable accommodations may be provided to applicants with disabilities or for security reasons. Applicants are encouraged to bring potential circumstances to DRL's attention well in advance of the submission deadline. Applicants must follow all formatting instructions in the applicable NOFO and these instructions.

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

1) Contact the help desk for either Grants.gov or SAMS Domestic immediately.
2) Document (including screenshots) technical issues AND efforts to contact the help desk.
3) If there are continued difficulties submitting documents, email all the required documents to the DRL point of contact listed in the NOFO before the deadline.

Note: Eligibility is not guaranteed, and each application will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by a warranted Grant Officer. The warranted Grant Officer will determine technical eligibility of all applications and allowability of acceptable proposal submissions. DRL strongly encourages applicants to apply before the submission deadline to ensure any complications can help be mitigated.

A. SAMS Domestic Applications

All applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications via SAMS Domestic (https://mygrants.service-now.com/grants/portal_login.do).

Applicants using SAMS Domestic for the first time should complete their "New Organization Registration." To register with SAMS Domestic, click https://mygrants.service-now.com/grants/portal_login.do" and follow the "create an account" link.

When submitting an application, organizations **must** remember to save a screen shot of the checklist showing all documents submitted in case any document fails to upload successfully.

Applicants should not expect a separate notification from DRL upon receiving their application. Incomplete applications will not receive a notification.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that it has an active registration in SAMS Domestic or Grants.gov. Applicants are required to document that the application has been uploaded to and submitted (by clicking the submit button) via SAMS Domestic 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 SAMS Domestic or Grants.gov, or other errors in the application process.

Additionally, you **must** remember to save a screen shot of the checklist showing all documents submitted in case any document fails to upload successfully.

SAMS Domestic Help Desk:
For assistance with SAMS Domestic accounts and technical issues related to the system, please contact the ILMS help desk by phone at +1 (888) 313-4567 (toll charges apply for international callers) or through the Self Service online portal that can be accessed from https://afsitsm.service-now.com/ilms. Customer support is available 24/7.

B. Grants.gov Applications

Applicants who do not submit applications via **SAMS Domestic** may submit via www.grants.gov. The Grants.gov registration process can take 10 business days or longer, even if all registration steps are completed in a timely manner.

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.

Applicants should not expect a separate notification from DRL upon receiving their application.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that it has an active registration in SAMS Domestic or Grants.gov. Applicants are required to document that the application has been uploaded to SAMS Domestic 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 SAMS Domestic or Grants.gov, or other errors in the application process.

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 Help desk:

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).

See https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/snow-dismissal-procedures/federal-holidays/ for a list of federal holidays.

SECTION IV: Proposal Review Process

DRL strives to ensure that each application receives a balanced evaluation by the 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 NOFO 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 review panel will evaluate how the application addresses the NOFO 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 review panel votes on recommending the application for approval by the DRL Assistant Secretary. If more applications are recommended for approval than DRL can ultimately fund, the review 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.

Except for technical submission questions, during the solicitation period U.S. Department of State staff in Washington and overseas shall not discuss competing applications with applicants until the review process has been completed and rejection and approval letters have been transmitted.

For further information on the DRL grants process, please see the DRL website: https://www.state.gov/bureau-of-democracy-human-rights-and-labor/programs-and-grants/.

A. Proposal Review Criteria

The DRL review 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**.

1. **Quality of Project Idea:** Applications should be responsive to the program framework and policy objectives identified in the NOFO, 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 prioritizes project proposals with inclusive approaches for advancing these rights.

2. **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 timeframe. 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 geographic 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.

3. **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.

4. **Addressing Barriers to Equal Participation:** DRL strives to ensure its projects advance the rights and uphold the dignity of all persons. As the U.S. government's lead bureau dedicated to promoting democratic governance, DRL requests a programming approach dedicated to strengthening inclusive societies as a necessary pillar of strong democracies. Discrimination, violence, inequity, and inequality targeting any members of society undermines collective security and threatens democracy. DRL prioritizes inclusive and integrated program models that assess and address the barriers to access for individuals and groups based on their race, ethnicity, religion, income, geography, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability. The proposal should also demonstrate how the program will further engagement in underserved communities and with individuals from underserved communities. Applicants should describe how programming will impact all of its beneficiaries, including support for underserved and underrepresented communities. This approach should be an integral part of both the concept and explicit design, and implementation of all proposed project activities, objectives, and monitoring. Strong proposals will provide specific analysis, measures, and corresponding targets as appropriate. Stakeholders shall identify the difference between opportunities and barriers to access, and design programs accordingly to not perpetuate these inequalities, but rather enhance programmatic impact by including all people in society. The goal of this approach is to bring communities and those in power together in support of more stable and secure societies.

5. **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.

6. **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.

7. **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. The M&E Narrative should 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 those who face discrimination due to their religion, gender, disabilities, ethnicity or sexual orientation and gender identity, where applicable. Please see the section on Monitoring and Evaluation Plan above for more information on what is required in the plan.

SECTION V: Additional Information

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

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 DRL's NOFO and this PSI for Applications 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 a 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.

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, or (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.

Program activities that provide training or other assistance to 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 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, program beneficiaries or participants from a foreign government's security forces may need to be vetted by the Department before the provision of any assistance.

Projects that utilize private security contractors must comply with the International Code of Conduct. Contractor(s) must be a member of the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers' Association (ICoCA) in good standing, i.e., not currently suspended or terminated from the ICoCA. Contractor(s) must operate in accordance with the principles of the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (ICoC). In addition,

contractor(s) must conform to the requirements set forth in the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standard entitled PSC-1-2012 for the duration of their performance.

DRL awards either a grant or cooperative agreement depending on the application's risk factor or the needs of the program, which is determined by the Grant Officer for applications that are successful. If it is determined to award a cooperative agreement, DRL expects to be substantially involved during the implementation of the cooperative agreement. Examples of substantial involvement can include:

- 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;
- Approval of sub-award recipients, concurrence on the substantive provisions of the sub-awards, and coordination with other cooperating agencies;
- Other approvals that will be included in the award agreement.

To maximize the impact and sustainability of awards, DRL retains the right to execute non-competitive continuation amendment(s). The total duration of any award, including potential non-competitive continuation amendments, shall not exceed 60 months, or five years. Any non-competitive continuation is contingent on performance and **pending availability of funds.** A non-competitive continuation is not guaranteed, the Department of State reserves the right to exercise or not to exercise this clause.

A. Background Information on DRL and General DRL Funding

DRL has the mission of 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 https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/bureau-of-democracy-human-rights-and-labor/.