QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Date: April 15, 2021

Reference Request for Proposal Number: FON-CATALYZE-Edu-2021-0138

Dear Offerors,

Please see below answers to the questions submitted catalyze.procurements@thepalladiumgroup.com.

No	Question	Answer
1	Can you do this for India?	Focus of this activity is on the five countries listed in the FON. At this time, CATALYZE EduFinance will not be implementing in India.
2	Is there a list of priority USAID Key Performance Indicators for education projects that applicants should be aware of?	CATALYZE EduFinance will identify appropriate Key Performance Indicators that capture key results for each objective of the FON, e.g. capital mobilized will be captured by $ mobilized from other sources.
3	When will successful applicants be notified?	Unless there are exceptional circumstances, we will be able to notify successful applicants within 4 weeks of submission deadline.
4	What is the earliest anticipated project start date?	At this time, the earliest anticipated start date is July 2021.
5	Is there a maximum or minimum implementation time for the project?	At this time, EduFinance anticipates an end date for this activity no earlier than September 2023 and no later than September 2024. Offerors are encouraged to submit their best proposals using a timeline beginning July 2021 and ending no earlier than September 2023 and no later than September 2024.
6	For applications which intend to leverage funds from other donors/philanthropies, is there a particular time frame within which these funds need to be secured/approved?	There is no specific timeframe for securing funds, but we are looking at seeing results of providing blended finance so we would like to see the funds raised and deployed within the life of project, and a significant portion of those to be deployed within 1.5-2 years to see the results before the project ends.
7	How many awards will be given through this FON?	We anticipate as few as one and as many as four awards under this FON.
8	What is the expected period of performance/duration for this FON?	See question 5.
9	What is the expected timeline for review, approval, and award of this FON?	Illustrative timeline: Selection decision - within 4 weeks after submission deadline Submission for USAID Consent - 3-4 weeks after selection decision Award – within 2 weeks of receiving USAID consent to subcontract
10	Can you provide examples of sources of blended finance?	Private or philanthropic sources, anyone other than a public/ government source.
11	What are the criteria to award funding as a subcontract vs. grant?	The award mechanism will be determined following proposal evaluation, pending the needs and qualifications of the final awardee.
12	Grants shall not include any profit or fee when priced; does it include indirect and admin. costs?	Yes. Supporting documentation justifying all indirect rates will be needed.

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13	If you could please share with us some of the projects that have been funded under this initiative?	This is the first activity/project being funded in the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region. To date, in Sub Saharan Africa, we have funded activities in Zambia, Democratic Republic of Congo, and South Africa.
14	What is the project timeframe or length?	See question 5.
15	What have blended finance activities looked like in other projects like this?	While it varies by country/region, some of the activities funded so far include financing to schools, pre-primary centers, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) students, etc.
16	Is there a minimum commitment the implementer needs to commit to the project?	There is no minimum, but this is a blended finance activity so we will be looking at who else is committing resources into the activity besides USAID.
17	What time on May 3rd does the application need to be submitted by ?	5 pm ET
18	Is there a specific time on May 3 that proposals are due?	See question 17.
19	The solicitation emphasizes the need to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on education, particularly through distance learning approaches. In many countries we have observed the trend towards school reopening and a normalization of education service delivery with in-person teaching. Does USAID/CATALYZE envisage that this trend will reverse over the next three years?	Solicitation does not recommend any one solution for mitigating effects of COVID-19, but aims to identify some of the approaches currently being tried.
20	What is the expected start and end date of activities awarded through this FON?	See question 5.
21	Does USAID/CATALYZE have any indication of how many awards it intends to make through this FON?	See question 7.
22	Has USAID/CATALYZE earmarked any of the funding for specific countries? Are these funds from specific Missions' budgets or are they regional in nature?	Funds are not earmarked for any of the countries.
23	The solicitation outlines four objectives of the activity. In a multi-country approach do all four objectives need to be achieved in all countries, or could some be achieved in one country and others in another country?	All objectives should be achieved in each country where the activity is implemented.
24	Are multi-laterals (such as the World Bank) eligible to apply?	Yes.
25	Just to clarify, the proposals must address all four objectives in ALL target countries? Or can we propose activities that accomplish those objectives in a subset of those countries?	Bidders can choose to propose the activity in one or multiple countries, but all four purposes must be addressed in each country.
26	For the Blended Finance from a private investor + USAID - is there a minimum or maximum? Does it have to be a 1-1 match?	There is no minimum or maximum contribution amount. Applicants are encouraged to aim for highest amount of blended finance possible and demonstrate ability and track record for mobilizing this funding.
27	Must the additional financial sources be secured and committed at the time of the proposal application?	No.

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28	You mentioned blended finance includes private and philanthropic funds, does that exclude local government funding?	There is no expectation/ rule that excludes government funding. We have funded proposals where the activity was funded by a public-private funding partnership. Proposed activity(s) and the funding source(s) will be evaluated in totality.
29	Can private matching funds that are part of an existing Global Development Alliance be considered as funds needed for matching USAID funds in this opportunity?	Again, there is no expectation/ rule. The proposed activity(s) and the funding source(s) will be evaluated in totality.
30	Do you have a preferred budget template?	Please email catalyze.procurements@thepalladiumgroup.com for a copy of the Palladium budget template.
31	Should the proposed budget include both consultancy services and the budget toward the proposed solution/ blended finance mechanism? In other words, can the budget include the expenses associated with the design and planning of the mechanism as well as the costs to deploy the actual solution?	All relevant costs to complete the scope of work should be included.
32	The non-state education sector is often partially subsidized by the government. Can we still consider them as a non-state education sector?	Yes, in many instances, Government partly or wholly funds the non-state education sector. Non-state schools are considered distinct from public (government-owned) schools on basis of their ownership and management, not just sources of funding. Sometimes these lines are blurry and boundaries can be unclear. If there are still any questions, please send us an email at: catalyze.procurements@thepalladiumgroup.com
33	If we have formal and informal education settings as our target, is there any minimum formal education ratio as required?	No minimums required.
34	"...Increase in access to education for low-income households..." How can we identify the low-income households for each country? At provincial, district or household level?	See definition provided on page 2 of this FON.
35	What do you mean then you say formal or non-formal education settings? Are we talking about schools or out-of-school settings?	Definitions can vary by country, but generally, formal education is always organized and structured with learning objectives. Schools, colleges, TVET institutes, and workplace trainings are considered formal education settings. Non-formal settings are more nebulous, generally referring to adult/ lifelong learning.
36	Could you please provide us an estimated timeline after the submission of concept papers, such as the final result release date, project start/duration date, and others?	See question 9.