

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Date: Feb 24, 2023

Reference Request for Proposal Number: RFP-CATALYZE-217772-Edu-2023-0352

Dear Offerors,

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

No	Question	Answer
1	What qualifies as a “U.S. Government contracted auditor”? Does an auditor who does government audit standards (GAS) audits, (and meets CPE requirements) qualify?	A US Government contracted auditor refers to an auditor who is contracted by the US government to conduct audits on recipients of USG funding. Offerors may submit a written opinion from an auditor who conducts accounting system reviews in line with USG audit standards for consideration.
2	Could you please clarify what should be included in the “written opinion or other statement”? Would this be on the organization’s financial statements as a whole?	The written opinion or other statements should include evidence that the offeror possesses an adequate accounting system. Subject to the author of the written opinion, different information could be provided or presented in different ways; however, it should generally address the criteria found in Standard Form 1408 - Pre-Award Survey of Prospective Contractor (Accounting System)
3	Annex A.1 specifies that within deliverable #2 (country activities), the subcontractor should submit a final 15-page report detailing all activities completed by all five country activities by February 2024. However, the key deliverables/timeline table indicates that country projects should be completed by December 2024. Is the February 2024 report giving an overview of planned activities or completed activities (and perhaps different due date)?	Thank you for highlighting this point. This was an error and it should read February 2025 instead of February 2024.
4	For website maintenance (Activity 3.4)- could the Together for Early Childhood Evidence website be a “microsite” within another website? In Phase 2, for example, the T4ECE website was a microsite on the broader Research Technical Assistance Consortium website. For this next phase, our organization might propose including a T4ECE website as a microsite on our organization’s website. Assuming we follow all other policies for third-party websites (as stipulated in 41.6.23 in contract), would this be OK?	Yes, a microsite is acceptable for the deliverable on the Together for Early Childhood Evidence Activity 3.4.
5	Please let us know if your team has any specific guidance on the indirect rates and/or overall total budget we should be aiming for in the cost proposal.	Indirect costs should be based on Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) or on audited financial statements for the last three years. The total budget should be no more than \$850,000.

No	Question	Answer
6	Will there be a Q&A period or a live session?	As stated in the first page of the RFP, offerors had until February 8 th to submit questions for consideration. Answers are circulated shortly after, comprising the Q&A period. We will not be holding a live session
7	Also, in Section 3.3 "Budget and Ceiling Price" appears to not be filled out. Is there an anticipated budget and/or ceiling price for this piece of work?	Please see answer to question 5.
8	On page 45, article 22 on INSURANCE, specifies over a million dollars insurance coverage and auto liability coverage of about half a million dollars. My question is regarding its feasibility; " could this be exempted for the team?" If not, it will be difficult to secure such amount for insurance.	Subject to the selected offerors' proposal, Palladium may consider adjusting the insurance amounts provided the selected offeror provides sufficient justification and evidence of other appropriate insurance policies in place.
9	On page 35, it says "the sub contractor is governed by the Law of the United States". We suggest to modify this as " in case of legal issues and conflict resolutions, the sub contractor is governed by the Law of the Land, Ethiopia " In fact we should be governed by the Codes of Conduct specified in the agreement document.	The jurisdiction of the subcontract will be the United States
10	Can you please elaborate on the nature of the relationships with government stakeholders in each of the countries? With whom might we anticipate working and how direct will the connections be between our team and their offices?	Subcontractors should anticipate working with members of the already established Together for ECE Evidence Country Teams, which are comprised of USAID, government, multilateral, and civil society stakeholders. For example, in Ethiopia, the country team is co-chaired by USAID and the Ministry of Education and thus the subcontractor would work directly with those co-chairs to provide technical assistance on planning and activity development.
11	Likewise, can you describe how the provider of this piece will work with the USAID missions? Will there be direct collaboration?	Please see the response to question 10 above.
12	In USAID and CATALYZE's eyes, what constitutes "data"? Does this include rigorous impact evaluation data? Might the production of systematic reviews fit the bill?	In this case, data refers to generating information for decision making, so the production of systematic reviews or past country activities detailed in section 1.1 would fit the definition.
13	We are unable to find information about the budget. Can you share an expected range to help us gauge what kinds of services would be a best fit? Alternatively, can you provide some ideas of anticipated deliverables which would help us ground our budget in that way?	Please see answer to question 5 for budget information. Deliverables are included in the RFP. Please see the deliverables expected of the subcontract under the SOW in Annex A.
14	Given that we have not yet received the Q&A, would CATALYZE be open to extending the deadline for submission? (Thanks!)	Please see answer to question 6.
15	Can you confirm who the incumbent for this work is? What is the nature of the incumbency vis a vis this Phase III work? Is this a continuation of that work, or a piece of parallel work?	This is a continuation of work and will be granted under full and open competition.

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16	Does Palladium have an expected budget envelope for the work?	Please see answer to question 5.			
17	In Annex A (pg. 11) it is stated that the third phase of the T4ECE project will provide continuity to the technical lines of work led by the existing subcontractor in prior phases. The first activity is ‘Research and reporting on effective models for improving quality and access to early childhood education’. Is there a defined research agenda for phase 3? Can any research/learning products from phases 1 or 2 be shared?	There is no defined research agenda for Phase 3. The awarded subcontractor will receive the research/learning products from the previous phases and will consult with each of the country teams to develop the research/learning agenda for Phase 3. Previous country activities can be found linked in the RFP under SOW and Standards, 1.1 Country Activities.			
18	In order to inform our decision whether to bid, could you kindly share any guidance (even indicative) on the expected budget range for this work?	Please see answer to question 5.			
19	Will the contractor manage the funding for the “country activities” or will the funds be managed by the “in-country teams”?	The funds would be managed by the contractor or an identified subcontractor in each of the country’s activities.			
20	<p>We are noting on page 7 where it says:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="154 884 743 936"> <tr> <td data-bbox="154 884 196 936">(f)</td> <td data-bbox="196 884 456 936">Company must not have controlling interest held by a government, government agency, or agent thereof</td> <td data-bbox="456 884 743 936">Confirmation statement included in Technical Proposal under “background and organizational capacity on the firm.”</td> </tr> </table> <p>We are a state-controlled institution of higher education – a University which is considered a state-entity. I am looking for confirmation that our legal status would disqualify us from applying under this RFP.</p>	(f)	Company must not have controlling interest held by a government, government agency, or agent thereof	Confirmation statement included in Technical Proposal under “background and organizational capacity on the firm.”	<p>Please find a list of institutions that work with USAID. Institutions of Higher Education per the definition at 2 CFR 200.1 are eligible to submit a proposal under this RFP.</p>
(f)	Company must not have controlling interest held by a government, government agency, or agent thereof	Confirmation statement included in Technical Proposal under “background and organizational capacity on the firm.”			