

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Date: Feb 28, 2023

Reference Request for Proposal Number: RFP-CATALYZE-217772-Ethiopia-2023-XXX

Dear Applicants,

Please see below the answers to the questions submitted to CATALYZE-Ethiopia.ms4g.grants@thepalladiumgroup.com and raised during the pre-application conference.

Increase Non-Chemical Fertilizer Production and Distribution to Farmers through Skilled and Formalized Youth Groups

| No | Question | Answer |
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| 1 | When is the deadline for submitting the proposal. | The deadline is March 03 and there is no room for flexibility. |
| 2 | Is it a must to apply for all kinds of non-chemical fertilizer production/distribution? | No, it's not. Potential applicants can submit proposal on one of the listed non-chemical fertilizer types or any other kind. The main objective for MS4G is accessibility and marketability of the product. |
| 3 | What is meant by secondary city? Please clarify. | Secondary city is a city with a population of greater than 100,000, inclusive of surrounding and nearby towns. |
| 4 | Is it possible to apply as consortium PLC, Universities and NGO? | MS4G will only sign agreement with one lead organization, but that organization may form a consortium with plc and NGOs/CSOs or private actor on behalf of universities and other government stakeholders. MS4G will not provide direct grant to government or government structures. |
| 5 | What is the budget ceiling per a submission | We have allocated USD 1M for five awardees (average USD 200,000 each). |
| 6 | What is the age limit for youth and women? | The age we consider as youth is from 18-29 but considering the complexity of non-chemical fertilizer production MS4G is flexible to accept up to 35. |

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| 7 | Is there a minimum and a maximum number of projects that can be submitted through a proposal? Is there a minimum and maximum amount of grant for a project? | If there is only one proposal being submitted, there is no limit on how many projects. We have allocated USD 1M for five awardees (average USD 200,000 each) |
| 8 | In my experience, Vermicomposting needs a shade construction, how can we manage unless construction is not allowed? | Construction is not allowed under the USAID's grant policy. But it may be considered as in-kind contribution of the grantee. |
| 9 | How much is the applicable rate of NICRA? | If organizations have an approved NICRA they may use the rate stated. Otherwise, proposed indirect rates must be supported by audited financials. |
| 10 | What is Unique ID? | The new Unique Entity Identifier is now the primary means of identifying entities for US Government awards in the System for Award Management (SAM). A UEI is required at the time of award, however, not mandatory for the technical evaluation process. You may request a UEI at https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration . |
| 11 | What about the southwest region? the new region separated from south region? | Applicants may propose activities targeting that region. |
| 12 | Do you have the maximum amount of grants per activity? | We have allocated USD 1M for five awardees (average USD 200,000 each). A grantee could come up with one proposal containing several interrelated activities. |
| 13 | Is it allowed to include purchase of equipment and refurbishment of workshop? | No, purchase of equipment and refurbishment is not an allowable cost under this grant. |
| 14 | Can we work in partnership with an international organization? Can we cover their cost for travelling and so on? | Yes, you can partner with international organizations but MS4G will not directly contribute to the partner organization's expenses through this grant. |
| 15 | Are salaries and consultancy fees of international partners also allowed? | If it is part of the administrative cost, MS4G will cover the salary of an international personnel if that is necessary and reasonable to accomplish the intended activities. However, MS4G will not be covering international travel cost. |
| 16 | What is the expected own contribution in percentage terms? And the contract will be firm fixed price? | Your highest contribution is highly encouraged either in cash or in kind. The contract is fixed amount award. |

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| 17 | Do you have any criteria to selecting employee? | No, we don't. We do get involved in the hiring process of the organization. It is totally up to the company to hire based on its own qualification criteria. |
| 18 | What is the required documents for submitting technical proposal, budget proposal, cover letter and references? | Applicants shall submit editable excel budget, technical proposal shall be submitted in PDF format and the cover letter shall be signed by authorized personnel and stamped. Templates may be found here https://catalyze-procurement.com/ . Applicants aren't required to provide references at this stage but will be required to demonstrate experience. |
| 19 | Is it possible to synergize the technology such as Vermicompost + Biointensive Gardening (BIG)? | Yes, it is possible. |
| 20 | What are the modalities of finance transaction? Reimbursement or another scheme? | MS4G will negotiate pre-determined milestones and means of verification. Payment will be made upon successful completion of the milestones. No advance payment is allowed. Payments are made in ETB. |
| 21 | The technologies need a lot of effort and innovative approaches to introduce to the farming communities, is there a room for re-consideration of the number of farmers to be reached? | No. As per our research, the grantee is expected to come up with innovative solutions to meet the target. |
| 22 | What is required to demonstrate we can reach 5000 farmers? | This will depend on the activity the grantee will propose. For example, if farmers are participating in a training session, the list of participants who attended the training will serve as a means of verification. |
| 23 | In most of the research assessment results, the aspiration level of youth to be engaged on agriculture-related activities is too low which will be a challenge to achieve the objectives of the program. Hence, is there a reconsideration of the targets? | MS4G conducted an assessment to set targets for number of youth to be engaged and feels it is reasonable. Therefore, there will not be a re-consideration as of now. |
| 24 | Are the attachments the ONLY documents you expect us to submit? | Yes. Please submit all documents based on the RFA. |
| 25 | Can we partner with research institutions and other companies for this activity? | Yes, you can partner with any organization you think will be the project a success. However, MS4G will be signing a grant agreement with only of the lead organizations. |

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| 26 | Do applicants need to submit certification? | The verification of the different certification will be conducted by MS4G as part of the due diligence process. |
| 27 | What do you mean by the decent job or full time equivalent? | Full time equivalent job means a job with a possibility of retention for minimum of six months. |
| 28 | Why the performance period only one year? | <p>MS4G has two reasons for making the performance period for one year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MS4G is looking for applicants with existing intervention and the aim of the grant is to engage partners that can quickly scaleup production and distribution and increasing access to non-chemical fertilizer; • MS4G needed to design the program based on the life of the project and expected timeline to document results. Based on MS4G’s current program life, all results must be achieved by June 2024 at the latest. |
| 29 | Are we expected to develop and branding and marketing strategy at this stage? | No, MS4G doesn’t require applicants to submit a branding and marketing strategy. However, it's advisable for applicants to show the marketability of the product or solution proposed. |
| 30 | Compost and Vermi composting need some sort of construction like shade. your comment please!! | Construction is not allowed under the USAID’s grant policy. But it may be considered as in-kind contribution of the grantee. |
| 31 | A company has 27 districts (one stop shop) in south & southwestern region not only south people regional state. Is it possible or eligible our geographic distribution for your project? | Yes, it is within our geographic scope. |
| 32 | What kind of mechanism do we need for running cost? | You may include administrative costs in detailed line items in the proposed budget. All administrative costs must be directly tied to the activities proposed for MS4G support. |
| 33 | Will the project be covering administrative cost? | Yes, it will. MS4G is also covering your program costs except construction and equipment purchases. |
| 34 | Can you further explain the reimbursement procedures? | MS4G will negotiate pre-determined milestones and means of verification. Payment will be made upon successful completion of the milestones. No advance payment is allowed. Payments are made in ETB. |

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| 35 | Is there anyone can send the link it may help us to get UEI? | You may request a UEI at https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration . |
| 36 | Is that possible to participate by those who were not the part of this session? | Yes |
| 37 | How can businesses trace the smallholder farmers? | MS4G together with the selected applicant will have different kinds of tools and mechanisms to follow-up and trace farmers accessing the non-chemical fertilizer. |
| 38 | CAPEX: Are CAPEX investments eligible costs? If yes, how should these costs be budgeted for? At full cost, or only depreciation? What are the rules about depreciation. | CAPEX Is not allowed and can be considered as in-kind contribution by the partner. Depreciation is not allowed as we are not providing. |