

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

**Date:** December 5, 2023

**Reference Request for Proposal Number:** RFA-217772-CATALYZE-APEP-2023-0074

Dear Offerors,

Please see below answers to the questions submitted [catalyze.procurements@thepalladiumgroup.com](mailto:catalyze.procurements@thepalladiumgroup.com).

No	Question	Answer
1	Would the grantee/partner be expected to have presence and operate the program in all 10 target countries?	The partner is not required to have presence in all 10 countries, however applications should demonstrate how partners plan to leverage local partners/networks to reach entrepreneurs from the 10 target countries. If it's not possible for partners to reach all 10 target countries, their proposal will still be considered but results and budget should be adjusted to account for this.
2	Does the program require that participating enterprises be equally distributed among the 10 target countries?	The program does not require an equal distribution of participating enterprises across the 10 target countries, however the acceleration program should include participation from each target country.
3	The objective section of the RFA states that at minimum the grant should reach 10,000 informal beneficiaries with each participating startup reaching 100 beneficiaries. Is it required that each participating enterprise assist 100 beneficiaries, or can the distribution be different?	The distribution of informal beneficiaries assisted does not have a strict breakdown. The project values meeting the goal of 10,000 informal beneficiaries over having an equal distribution. In other words, it is allowable for some participating enterprises to have a higher number of informal beneficiaries within their reach as opposed to others so long as a minimum of 10,000 informal beneficiaries are assisted.
4	Are there any specific capacity trainings that should be prioritized for startups participating in the accelerator?	Trainings should be structured around the specific needs of the participating enterprises, however the project has highlighted certain trainings that can assist startups in reaching scale and generating social impact. These include trainings on development and execution of growth strategy, entering new markets, capitalization strategy, investment readiness, and leadership/management.
5	The Eligibility Requirement on the RFA states "Be currently active in the targeted region or with targeted beneficiaries with existing programs and have relevant previous work experience". Can applicants include regions where allies have projects?	If the applicant would be able to leverage the alliance for the purpose of completing the scope of the grant, the region of the ally can be included as part of the applicant's reach (proposal should include plan to leverage local partners/networks).
6	The RFA mentioned that the CATALYZE APEP Accelerator would be available to make connections with other local actors if necessary. Could the CATALYZE APEP Accelerator team facilitate connections with local partners that can increase the reach of the applicant?	Yes, the project conducted a mapping of the Latin American and Caribbean entrepreneur ecosystem. Through this mapping the project has identified potential stakeholders that selected grantees could leverage to further their reach and impact.
7	Is it a requirement for the partner to have previous experience managing USAID resources or projects?	No, the partner is not required to have previous experience with USAID projects. During the grant kick-off, the CATALYZE team will provide the selected partner with an orientation on applicable USAID policies and regulations that should be considered for implementation of the activity.
8	What is the level of in-person execution expected for the delivery of the program	The exact level of in-person execution is dependent on the applicant's methodology in implementing the accelerator program. At minimum, the project expects that the participating enterprises receive specialized support and that a minimum of one in-person events be held (could consist of a program launch event or an investor deal day event upon program completion).

No	Question	Answer
9	With respect to the expected in-person events, is there a separate budget that will be given for travel/transport of the participants?	Applicants should include any travel/transportation costs that will be incurred alongside in-person events within their budgets. If the applicant plans to cover travel costs for participating enterprises, this should also be included in the total budget (to be covered by this grant or by any matching funding that the applicant might have available).
10	What is the relationship between the focus on the informal sector and addition of climate resilience? Should applicants prioritize one theme over the other if required?	We see climate resilience/sustainability practices and impact on the informal sector as cross-cutting themes in the target sectors of the accelerator. As such we hope the program includes both of these themes in the selection criteria of participating enterprises. We also expect that the capacity building provided to the selected businesses should help them improve their climate resilience and/or sustainability practices within their value chains. An example of intersectionality would be an enterprise that provides services to agricultural workers or small holder farmers, how are part of the rural informal labor. The accelerator can enable such an enterprise integrate climate resilience tools in improving the success of such a business
11	If multiple partners are selected to receive the grant would the work be complementary or independent? In other words, would each selected partner operate in the 10 target countries or would the countries be split among them?	This is dependent on the selected grantees; however we do strive that the work be complementary as much as possible. For example, if one of the selected grantees can provide support to the 10 target countries, but their support isn't as robust in certain countries then the second selected grantee could work to focus their support on that region. If multiple grantees are selected the CATALYZE team will organize a co-creation meeting to ensure collaboration among the grantees and align on what their specific focus and objectives should be.
12	What is the expected budget range of the proposed grant?	The proposed grant has a total funding amount of \$900,000 which will be used across all selected partners. For example, if two partners are selected, they may each receive \$450,000 or one may receive \$600,000 and another \$300,000 depending on the expected reach/outcome of each partner. There is a possibility for a one year costed extension based of performance of the selected partner(s).
13	Is there a particular budget format to use for the concept note? What guidelines are to be taken into account? How detailed should it be?	There is no particular format/template for the budget that applicants include on the concept note. Applicants should include all costs that would be required to carry out the scope of the grant (labor, travel, marketing, consultants, indirects).
14	What are the indirect rates that are likely to be approved?	Organizations with an approved NICRA rate should include their approved indirect rates. Nonprofits without an indirect rate may elect to use the USAID approved 10% de minimis rate for indirect costs. Organizations without an approved NICRA rate, and that are not considered nonprofits, should apportion their direct costs and calculate their indirect rates in relation to their specific business models.
15	Are applicants required to have a UEI number to apply for the RFA?	Applicants are not required to have a UEI during the application process, however as the amount of the award will be over \$25,000 the selected partner(s) will need to have a UEI before an agreement is signed. The project recommends that applicants begin their UEI application as soon as possible to avoid potential delays.
16	Can the concept note be sent by anyone from the organization or should it be sent by the organization's director?	The concept note can be shared by anyone from the organization but should contain a signature from the organization's representative.

Please find the full RFA and its annexes on the [CATALYZE Procurement site here](#).

Kind Regards,  
CATALYZE Procurement Team