

Amendment to Request for Proposal

Amendment number: 2

Reference Request for Application Number: RFA-CATALYZE-217772-Ethiopia-2023-0059

Amendment effective date: January 31, 2024

Description of Amendment:

1. This amendment serves to update the closing date language in the cover page. This amendment removes "Closing date for receipt of concept notes (reviewed on a rolling basis): January 31, 2024 at 17:00 EAT" on the cover page and replaces it with "Closing date for receipt of concept notes (reviewed on a rolling basis): June 30, 2024 at 17:00 EAT"
2. This amendment serves to amend the submission of questions date language in the cover page. This amendment removes "Date for submission of questions (responded to on a rolling basis): January 15, 2024 at 17:00 EAT" on the cover page and replaces it with "Date for submission of questions (responded to on a rolling basis): June 15, 2024 at 17:00 EAT"
3. This amendment serves to amend the date listed in the cover page. It replaces "CATALYZE MS4G requires that concept notes be submitted by e-mail to CATALYZE-Ethiopia.ms4g.grants@thepalladiumgroup.com no later than January 31, 2024, at 17:00 EAT" with the following "CATALYZE MS4G requires that concept notes be submitted by e-mail to CATALYZE-Ethiopia.ms4g.grants@thepalladiumgroup.com no later than June 30, 2024, at 17:00 EAT"



Issuance Date: March 1, 2023

Request for Application (RFA): CATALYZE MS4G Partnership and Innovation Facility

Request for Application Number: RFA-CATALYZE-217772-Ethiopia-2023-0059

Date for submission of questions (responded to on a rolling basis): June 15, 2024 at 17:00 EAT

Closing date for receipt of concept notes (reviewed on a rolling basis): June 30, 2024 at 17:00 EAT

Average funding range of each grant: \$100,000 to \$500,000

REF: USAID/CATALYZE MS4G Partnership and Innovation Facility

Prime Contract Number: 7200AA19C00080

Subject: Palladium's Request for Applications (RFA) Number RFA-CATALYZE-217772-Ethiopia-2023-0059

To Interested Applicants:

USAID CATALYZE Market Systems for Growth (CATALYZE MS4G), an initiative funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by Palladium LLC, is inviting interested parties to submit interest in receiving funding to implement activities to enhance the resiliency and sustainability of enterprises and create employment, particularly for youth and women in Ethiopia. under USAID Prime Contract #7200AA19C0080. This RFA solicits proposals for interventions that will be implemented in all areas of Ethiopia. Special consideration will be given to activities serving communities beyond Addis Ababa.

The RFA is comprised of the following main sections.

- 1) FUNDING OPPORTUNITY
- 2) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
- 3) APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS
- 4) AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Successful Applicants will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of program objectives. Please refer to the Program Description section of this RFA for a complete statement of goals and expected results.

Subject to the availability of funds, CATALYZE MS4G intends to issue grants for results achieved from March 2023 to June 2024. CATALYZE MS4G reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

To be eligible for an award, applicants must provide all requested information in their concept note and application, including the requirements found in any attachments to this RFA. Concept notes and applications that are submitted past the RFA deadline, or incomplete, will not be considered. Awards will be made to the applicants whose applications best meet the requirements of this RFA and the evaluation criteria contained herein.

The Selection Process will involve a multi-step evaluation that will allow the CATALYZE MS4G to be highly involved in co-creating and co-designing the partnership structure and approach. The process will consist of three stages:

- Phase 1: Expression of interest.
- Phase 2: Initial review of concept notes against criteria described in Section 3 of this RFA.
- Phase 3: Co-creation with CATALYZE MS4G to refine the concept note and develop a detailed application including a scope of work, targets, and budget.

If potential applicants have any questions, queries, or clarifications, they may forward them to the following email address before the date stated on the cover page of this RFA:

CATALYZE-Ethiopia.ms4g.grants@thepalladiumgroup.com. Answers will be posted to catalyze-procurement.com.

CATALYZE MS4G requires that concept notes be submitted by e-mail to CATALYZE-Ethiopia.ms4g.grants@thepalladiumgroup.com no later than June 30, 2024, at 17:00 EAT.

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of CATALYZE MS4G, nor does it commit CATALYZE MS4G to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Further, CATALYZE MS4G reserves the right to reject any or all applications received. Applications are submitted at the risk of the Applicant; all preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's own expense.

CATALYZE MS4G will conduct meetings for all interested applicants to answer any questions related to this RFA.

Sincerely,

CATALYZE MS4G Grant Team

Attachments:

- A. Concept Note Template
- B. Initial Cost Proposal Template

SECTION 1: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

1. PROGRAM SUMMARY

USAID CATALYZE Market Systems for Growth (CATALYZE MS4G) focuses on creating transformative outcomes in the food security and the water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sectors to benefit all Ethiopian people. To achieve these goals, the activity engages youth, mobilizes capital, increases access to finance, connects enterprises to markets, pilots inclusive business models, and supports stakeholders to self-advocate towards policy change which will promote opportunities for the private sector community as a partner in transformation.

- Objective 1: Strengthen Enterprise Ecosystem
- Objective 2: Engage Youth (Improve Skills and Productivity)
- Objective 3: Improve the Business Enabling Environment
- Objective 4: Facilitate Access to Finance and Investment
- Objective 5: Advance the Digital Economy

With additional funding from the USAID Ukraine Supplemental Economic Support Fund focused on fertilizer access and investment, CATALYZE MS4G is also working towards the following two objectives:

- Objective F1: Increase smallholder farmers' access to fertilizer
- Objective F2: Enhance the resilience of the Ethiopian fertilizer market and supply chain.

With further funding to address the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, MS4G will support recovery of market systems and enterprises.

2. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

CATALYZE MS4G is designed to work with and through private sector, NGOs, and local, regional, and international partners present and active in Ethiopia to achieve its program objectives and sustained systems change. Specifically, CATALYZE MS4G looks to explore new and innovative means to stimulate the adoption, adaption and scaling of market-based, enterprise-led, inclusive approaches, solutions, initiatives, and business models to transform the lives of Ethiopians. This is achieved through the application of pay-for-results (P4R) awards and partnerships that involve significant partner contributions and co-investment alongside CATALYZE MS4G funding. Interested applicants are encouraged to propose:

- a. pay-for-results (P4R) concepts where funding is based on achieving specific development outcomes with achievable targets such as job placements, farmers served, value of financing provided, number of SMEs supported or,
- b. partnership concepts that involve no more than 50 percent MS4G funding, with a strong preference towards concepts leveraging significant non-USAID funds and achieving a high budget to impact ratio.

Actual terms of collaboration and co-investment approach will be agreed upon in the co-creation phase.

All concepts must propose activities that fall within the following domains:

Food Security CATALYZE MS4G will support improved production, access, availability, and reliability of nutritious foods in the domestic market, while also improving and diversifying income and employment opportunities through fostering the growth of private enterprises and engaging with smallholder farmers operating within the food security sector. Areas of intervention include, but are

not limited to, finance and investment; workforce capacity building; mechanization; and digital solutions designed to accelerate growth, improve market linkages, or decrease the effects of market shocks and food insecurity. CATALYZE MS4G is especially interested in partnering with enterprises led by women and young people and with those pursuing climate-smart solutions. Potential partners include, but are not limited to business advisory service providers, accelerators, incubators, anchor firms, financial intermediaries, innovators, and other relevant non-governmental organizations. Additionally, CATALYZE MS4G will support organizational strengthening of sectoral associations and other groups that provide training and relevant certifications, promote evidence-based advocacy of the enabling environment to the best interest of the private sector, and organize private sector responses to public policies that impact and enable private enterprises.

Fertilizer Access and Investment CATALYZE MS4G will collaborate with partners to expand the fertilizer market, diversify fertilizer production and supply chains, and accelerate lending to smallholders and SMEs for fertilizer purchase. CATALYZE MS4G aims to scale production and distribution of both non-chemical and chemical fertilizers. Areas of intervention include but are not limited to, financing and investment; workforce capacity building; the introduction and scaling of digital solutions to increase access to fertilizer; and the coordination of private sector actors in the fertilizer space to jointly identify, prioritize and advocate for eased and enabling policy ecosystem for the expansion of existing businesses and enhance the attractiveness of the sector to potential investors. Potential partners include, but are not limited to enterprises, service providers, social enterprises, institutions, technology-based companies, financial intermediaries, and other relevant non-governmental organizations. Potential partners should be integrated into fertilizer value chains as suppliers, employees, distributors, retailers, and customers using commercially viable methods to expand access and improve lives through solutions that are sustainable, replicable, and scalable.

Increasing the role of the private sector in WASH CATALYZE MS4G seeks to fund enterprise-led and market-based solutions designed to improve the quality and accessibility of water, hygiene, and sanitation products and services to underserved urban, peri-urban, and rural areas. Areas of intervention include, but are not limited to, capacity building of small, private WASH enterprises; development of innovative local WASH products and solutions; financial solutions that support both consumers and private WASH enterprises; development of WASH ecosystems that promote enhanced participation of the private sector; deployment of digital solutions in the WASH sector; last mile distribution of hygiene products for women; and business models promoting youth and women employment. Potential partners include, but are not limited to enterprises, innovators, business advisory service providers, accelerators, incubators, financial intermediaries, and other relevant non-governmental organizations. Additionally, CATALYZE MS4G will support organizational strengthening of sectoral associations and other groups that provide training and relevant certifications, promote evidence-based advocacy of the enabling environment to the best interest of the private sector, and organize private sector responses to public policies that impact and enable private enterprises.

COVID-19 Economic Recovery CATALYZE MS4G seeks to fund market-based solutions for enabling the recovery of enterprises impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic-related economic slowdown and further affected by the conflict in northern Ethiopia. Types of intervention may include but are not limited to debt relief and restructuring, SME advisory services, rebuilding a skilled workforce, youth entrepreneurship, market linkages across regions, and digital enablement of SME recovery. Potential partners may include, but are not limited to, SME-serving financial institutions, enterprise and entrepreneurship training and capacity building organizations, employment and skills-building organizations, medium and large enterprises that create large number of jobs or trade with large numbers of SMEs or smallholder farmers. In this domain, MS4G is focusing on supporting pandemic recovery and resilience of enterprises and market systems in the following areas: Afar region, North Wollo zone of Amhara region, and Tigray region.

Within these broader sectors, CATALYZE MS4G seeks to engage potential partners in multiple program areas, as presented below. Interested partners are encouraged to submit concepts that align with one or more of these program areas:

Strengthening Enterprise Ecosystems CATALYZE MS4G seeks to engage private sector chambers and associations, business advisory service providers (BASPs), start-up incubators and accelerators, and anchor firms in partnerships that do the following:

- deliver market-based business and financial advisory services to Ethiopian SMEs,
- mobilize investment in SMEs,
- improve SME performance, growth, and resilience, or
- enhance the application of inclusive business strategies.

Key results under this program area include number of SMEs receiving assistance to improve performance, increased sales of supported SMEs, and increased access to finance for SMEs.

Youth Programming (Improving skills and productivity) CATALYZE MS4G seeks to engage employers, educational and training institutions, job matching/placement firms, chambers and associations, and NGOs in initiatives that result in the following new or better employment – including self-employment – opportunities for youth, women, and marginalized groups through skills building, training, certifications, networking, job placement and matching services, and entrepreneurship support. CATALYZE MS4G also seeks to partner with large employers looking to upgrade the productivity of their current workforce or improve the pool of qualified candidates to fill needed roles. Interested applicants are encouraged to propose a) pay-for-results (P4R) concepts where funding is based on achieving job training, placement, or self-employment outcomes and job retention or b) partnership concepts that involve no more than 50 percent CATALYZE MS4G funding.

Key results under this program area include: the number of individuals who find new or improved employment as well as enhancement of job matching services.

Facilitating Access to Finance and Investment CATALYZE MS4G will engage financial institutions and financial advisory service providers to support private capital mobilization for growth of Ethiopian organizations with the potential for growth in areas of food security, WASH, fertilizer access and investment and COVID recovery and resilience. CATALYZE MS4G will work on both ends of the financial sector, expanding access to finance for small and medium enterprises through support to financial institutions and supporting enterprises interested in accessing investment opportunities and projects. CATALYZE MS4G will also work with private capital partners to support creative blended finance opportunities and solutions, e.g., moveable asset financing, etc.

Key results under this program area include the number of SMEs supported, the number of investment opportunities accessed, and the amount of private capital mobilized for innovative blended finance opportunities.

Advancing the digital economy. CATALYZE MS4G seeks partnerships advancing the development of a private sector-led digital economy that is open, inclusive, and secure, to ensure inclusive prosperity. CATALYZE MS4G seeks innovative concepts from e-commerce platforms, business solution providers, digital solution providers, FinTech firms, chambers and associations and other business ecosystem actors for initiatives that accelerate digital transformation at the firm and sector level, use of digital payment solutions, or adopting e-commerce business strategies and solutions.

Key results under this program area include: the number of enterprises or private sector organizations with increased capacity to participate in the digital economy.

3. Award information

The type of grant mechanism will be determined by the CATALYZE MS4G team during the co-creation process based on the nature of the proposed activity and the financial and management capacity of the selected organization.

If determined appropriate, a Fixed Amount Award (FAA) with pay for results milestone-based payments will be issued. Awards are anticipated to be between US \$100,000 and \$500,000. However, the final amount will be dependent upon the proposed activities and final negotiation that will take place in phase 3 and may be lower or higher than that range.

In some instances, MS4G may choose to co-invest in a partner's concept through the deployment of program funds, without making an award to the partner. Instead, the terms of the agreement will be outlined within a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). In these instances, MS4G will in-kind deliver or procure services on behalf of its partner(s).

Estimated Funding Level

The award amount will depend upon: 1) the proposed activities; 2) potential partner contributions; and 3) final negotiation that will take place in Phase 3. Applicants are encouraged to consider the budget to impact ratios and their ability to use their own funding or the funding of other non-USAID sources to match or exceed CATALYZE MS4G funding. Preference will be given to Ethiopian private sector businesses and organizations with previous experience implementing projects or activities in the related activity area and showing tangible results and impact, though direct USAID experience is not required. CATALYZE MS4G will place a high preference on concepts that leverage significant non-USAID resources and will favor concepts with a direct impact on youth and women.

Anticipated Outcomes

CATALYZE MS4G, through grants issued under this RFA, seeks to raise USD 10 million from partner financial intermediaries.

Schedule

The period of performance for each grant is expected to be up to 12 months. Awards may be issued anytime between March 2023 and February 2024. All awards must end no later than June 30, 2024.

Project Guidance and Post-Award Support

During the grant period, the Grantee will report to the CATALYZE MS4G grants team for overall guidance related to this grant, to appropriate technical staff for technical matters, and to the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) team regarding monitoring deliverables. CATALYZE MS4G will provide the following to the selected Grantee(s):

- Project activity brief
- Simplified report template including, type of MSME, financing type, ownership structure, geography, and loan repayment status, among others
- Kick-off meeting

Monitoring

CATALYZE MS4G will monitor the implementation of the grant to enable sound oversight and management. Examples of such monitoring include:

- Monthly meetings with project team

- Quarterly program reviews to assess:
 - Accomplishments in the prior period
 - Planned activities for the upcoming period
 - Identification of any problematic issues
 - Modification of deliverables, if required

SECTION 2: ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

In order to be considered eligible for a grant award, prospective grantees must:

- Be legally registered in accordance with the laws of Ethiopia (registration documents required)
- Not be part of a government or any government structures.
- Not appear on any list of debarred or suspended entities (as found on www.sam.gov), or on any terrorist watch list or other published list of ineligible recipients.
- Certify that they are not affiliated with any political party nor engaged in any partisan activities.
- In addition, all prospective Grantees under consideration for an award exceeding \$25,000 (or local equivalent) must have or be able to obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number. UEI number or proof of registration for UEI number must be submitted for application to be considered.*
- Certify that it is receptive to 1) participate in a co-creation process that might involve CATALYZE MS4G inviting new partners our counterparts – as appropriate – and a partnership concept that may differ from applicant’s initial concept; and 2) co-investing or leveraging non-USAID funds towards the success of the activity.

*Note: GSA has developed a useful interactive PDF tool that guides through the most common scenarios about UEI

(https://www.fsd.gov/sys_attachment.do?sys_id=af05f8fb1b44851006b09796bc4bcb6d)

SECTION 3: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

CATALYZE MS4G will award up to 25 grants resulting from this solicitation to the responsive applicant(s) that demonstrate the capability to carry out activities conforming to the project objectives and within the funding and other parameters set by this RFA.

This solicitation does not commit CATALYZE MS4G to make an award. Palladium may at its sole discretion (a) accept or reject any or all applications, at any step, in part or in full without assigning a reason; and (b) waive informalities or irregularities in applications received.

The structure of this RFA is intended to provide CATALYZE MS4G staff the opportunity to actively engage interested partners in a collaborative co-creation process to design partnerships and initiatives likely to have the greatest impact on the resilience of Ethiopian businesses and employment for women and youth.

Phase 1: Explore Collaboration and Expression of Interest

Interested partners are required to reach out to CATALYZE-Ethiopia.ms4g.grants@thepalladiumgroup.com to indicate an interest in exploring collaboration with MS4G. In this email communication, interested partners shall include the following information:

- 1) Indicate which program area(s) listed above the concept seeks to address.
- 2) Maximum two (2) paragraph description of the interested partner and any current activities or capacities relevant to the concept.

- 3) Maximum two (2) paragraph brief description of the concept and its expected outcome or impact.
- 4) An indication of the likely or potential non-USAID resources the interested partner expects to bring to collaboration.
- 5) A Statement confirming that the applicant meets the minimum eligibility requirements.

Based on this communication, CATALYZE MS4G will consider whether the proposed concept and partner profile align with its program objectives and requirements. CATALYZE MS4G will then either:

- 1) Invite the interested partner to submit a concept note without further exploratory discussions;
- 2) Invite the interested partner to have exploratory discussions with the requisite CATALYZE MS4G technical staff to further consider and co-create the activity. Following these discussions, CATALYZE MS4G may or may not invite the interested partner to submit a concept note; or
- 3) Inform the interested partner that CATALYZE MS4G does not wish to receive a concept note on the proposed activity. CATALYZE MS4G may provide feedback on the concept but reserves the right to decline a concept without a detailed explanation.

Important: Potential partners connected to CATALYZE MS4G via USAID or other stakeholders may have concepts accepted without this step, however, all interested partners must receive verbal or written communication inviting them to submit a concept note for their concept note to be reviewed.

Phase 2: Concept Note Submission and Evaluation

CATALYZE MS4G will review concept notes from invited interested applicants on a rolling basis. If a concept note is submitted and evaluated, there is no guarantee that it will be chosen to continue to co-create the concept or award a grant or deploy program costs.

Instructions for Concept Note Preparation & Submission

Invited applicants are required to submit a short technical concept note that is specific, complete, and concise. The concept note should demonstrate the applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this program. Applicants can use their own format or use the template provided in Attachment A.

The concept note must be written in English and formatted in Microsoft Word, with each page numbered consecutively. The concept note must be submitted by email to: CATALYZE-Ethiopia.ms4g.grants@thepalladiumgroup.com no later than the closing date of this RFA. The subject line of the email shall refer to this RFA (RFA-CATALYZE-217772-Ethiopia-2023-0059). CATALYZE MS4G may contact applicants for clarifying questions.

Concept notes should be prepared according to the structural format set forth below:

1. **Cover Page** (no more than 1 page). The cover page must include:
 - a. Concise title of proposed activity
 - b. Name of Organization
 - c. Address of organization
 - d. Contact point (lead contact name, relevant telephone, fax, e-mail information)
 - e. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), if applicable.
 - f. Signature of authorized representative of the applicant.

2. **Technical approach** (no more than 3 pages): This section should include:
 - a. The sector and program area the concept focuses on (see Section 1 for details).
 - b. Brief description of the problem or challenge the concept aims to resolve.
 - c. A description of the proposed activities and how they will help address the stated challenges and advance CATALYZE MS4G’s objectives within the stated program area.
 - d. The key results it will produce (see Section 1 for details).
 - e. A description of how the activity will involve or benefit women, youth, and businesses outside of Addis Ababa.
 - f. A brief description of how the applicant will continue to maintain or scale the activities after the grant funding.

3. **Capabilities Statement** (no more than 1 page). Present the background and capabilities of the applicant and other organization(s) in the partnership, with an emphasis on experience with the programmatic areas described in Section 1 and within the relevant sectors, as well as experience in Ethiopia. In the event that the applicant’s concept builds upon current or past initiatives, provide information on the outcomes of those activities.

4. **Initial Cost Proposal:**
 - a. Proposed total amount of funding requested.
 - b. Proposed non-USAID/USG funding to be leveraged or co-invested.
 - c. A description of the type of support the applicant is requesting (e.g., funding for facilities, equipment, materials, personnel resources, etc.). If invited to submit a full application, CATALYZE MS4G will require more detailed budget information.
 - d. A table of key activities and their overall cost and an indication of what the applicant proposes CATALYZE MS4G fund and what portion would be funded by the applicant or other sources.

Evaluation Criteria for Concept Note

Concept note will be reviewed by a technical evaluation committee (TEC) in terms of responsiveness to the RFA, and scored according to the criteria below:

Criteria	Scoring Factors	Points
Sound Technical Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clear articulation of the problem or challenge and how the said solution will address the challenge. ● Soundness of the proposed solution and strategy to bring said solution to market (including roles and responsibilities for each partner) ● Operational feasibility and appropriateness of the proposed solution in the Ethiopian context. 	35
Potential Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Impact of the proposed approach on the inclusive development of the market systems in Ethiopia, including 1) Potential number of beneficiaries served through proposed solution; 2) Benefits to and inclusion of underserved segments like women and youth. 	30
Potential Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clear pathway to sustainability for the initiative to ensure successful approaches are continued, replicated, and scaled without grant funding in the future. 	10
Applicant Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Past performance and buy-in of the applicant and other proposed partners. ● Demonstrated track record rolling-out similar solutions or initiatives in Ethiopia. 	10

Co-investment Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrated Commitment to leverage private sector resources to achieve program objectives (financial and in-kind). ● Potential amount and feasibility of applicant and other private sector partner in-kind or financial co-investments to ensure success, impact, and sustainability of the proposed solution, partnership or initiative. 	15
Total		100

Concept notes must achieve an evaluation score of 70 or higher to be considered to proceed. Selected applicants may be invited participate in co-design sessions with CATALYZE MS4G staff to expand and refine the concepts prior to development of a full application.

Applicants that are not selected will be notified and may request a debrief, after which they may resubmit concept notes for consideration with feedback from CATALYZE MS4G.

Phase 3: Co-creation to Structure Award or Full Application

Do not submit a full application unless requested by CATALYZE MS4G.

Based on the evaluation of concepts, CATALYZE MS4G may invite applicants for co-creation sessions to further design and consider the proposed concept. Co-creation is a design approach that brings people together to collectively produce a mutually valued outcome using a participatory process that assumes some degree of shared power and decision making. It is a time-limited process that focuses on generating a specific outcome.

During this process, CATALYZE MS4G will work with applicants to determine the most appropriate award or collaboration mechanism (e.g., grants, technical assistance packages, or other in-kind services). A full application or draft award resulting from the co-creation process will consist of a technical scope of work and a detailed cost proposal. If in-kind services are deemed most appropriate, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) may be drafted between CATALYZE MS4G and the applicant.

Instructions for Full Application Preparation & Submission

Full applications should be prepared according to the structural format set forth below:

1. **Cover Page** (no more than 1 page). The cover page must include:
 - a. Concise title of proposed activity
 - b. Name of Organization
 - c. Address of organization
 - d. Contact point (lead contact name, relevant telephone, fax, e-mail information)
 - e. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), if applicable.
 - f. Signature of an authorized representative of the applicant.

2. **Technical Approach** (no more than 4 pages)
 - a. Statement of Purpose and Background
 - i. Describe the problem or challenge the concept aims to resolve.
 - b. Goals and Objectives
 - i. A description of the proposed activities and how they will help address the stated challenges and advance CATALYZE MS4G's objectives within the stated program area.
 - ii. The key results the activity will produce, including a description of how the activity will involve or benefit women, youth, and businesses outside of Addis Ababa.

- c. A proposed milestone table with deliverable description, proposed dates, and corresponding payments.

Instructions for Preparation of the Cost Application

During co-creation, CATALYZE MS4G will provide the applicant with a budget template. In addition, the applicant shall include the following:

- I. Transmittal Letter

The application must be signed by an individual authorized to commit the organization.

- II. Organizational Information and Certifications

The applicant shall submit the following annexes to the cost application:

- a. "ADS 303mav: Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient". Attachment E of this RFA.
- b. Copy of the organization's chart and bylaws and power of attorney of the authorized signer.
- c. Copy of the organization's legal registration under the laws of Ethiopia.
- d. Copies of the last annual financial report(s) completed by an authorized/certified accountant.

- III. Budget Narrative and Detail

This section should include a summary of the information provided in the application budget forms and includes the total grant funding request. The applicant must provide a budget, a budget narrative, and adequate cost and historical or unit pricing data to establish a reasonable cost and the assurance that the recipient will not realize any profit above the actual cost.

The applicant shall include a budget narrative that breaks down proposed costs in sufficient detail corresponding to the attached budget template to permit cost analysis. The budget shall be denominated in Ethiopian Birr (ETB).

Cost estimates must be submitted in Excel format using the provided budget template. The file must be unprotected and there should be no hidden columns, rows, or cells. Each cost element must include a basis for estimate or rationale.

Applicants must show proposed co-investment in the activities.

CATALYZE MS4G will not fund capital expenditure (including land acquisition), capital loans, support for political party, religious activities, or support of police and military. If capital expenditure or capital loans are required as part of the activity, they can be secured from a financial institution and incorporated as part of the cost share from the applicant.

NOTE: USAID Policy Prohibits the Payment of Fee/Profit to recipients under assistance instruments.

Submission of the Full Application

Full applications must be submitted electronically (via email) to CATALYZE-Ethiopia.ms4g.grants@thepalladiumgroup.com by the deadline specified for each invited applicant. The subject line of the email shall refer to this RFA (RFA-CATALYZE-217772-Ethiopia-2023-0059).

IMPORTANT NOTE: Technical and financial applications should be submitted in two separate electronic files.

Evaluation Criteria for Full Application

Upon completion of the co-creation process, CATALYZE MS4G will complete an internal review to determine whether or not proceed with a final award, based on the following criteria:

- Achievement of results against target program indicators as described in the program statement;
- Soundness and reasonableness of technical approach;
- Incorporation of feedback and guidance from co-design phase;
- Sustainability of approach in terms of applicant's incentives to sustain/expand the activities once USAID funding is completed.

Budgets, cost proposals and proposed milestone payments (as applicable) within final applications resulting from the co-creation process will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Realism and reasonableness of the work to be performed;
- Cost is consistent with various elements of the technical requirements;
- Incorporation of co-investment.

SECTION 4: AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Award Notices

Successful applicants can expect to receive the following upon approval by USAID:

- A notice of USAID approval
- Draft grant agreement

2. Award Administration Standards

Grants resulting from this solicitation will be administered by the approved Project Grants Manual, and the following regulations (as applicable):

- FAR Part 31 – Cost Principles for For-Profit organizations used to negotiate award amounts https://www.acquisition.gov/far/part-31#FAR_31_000 and terminations per 2 C.F.R. 200.201 (b)(1) - <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.201>
- Automated Directives System (ADS) Chapter 303 Grants & Cooperative Agreements to Non-Governmental Organizations: 303.3.25 Fixed Amount Awards to Non-Governmental Organizations - <http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303saj>
- A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 303: 303_mak Fixed Amount Award Entity Eligibility Checklist – <http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mak> as adapted by Palladium
- A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 303: 303_mat Fixed Amount Awards to Non-Governmental Organizations - <http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303saj> as adapted by Palladium
- ADS 302.3.4.13 Grants Under Contracts (GUCs) - <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/302>
- 2 C.F.R. 200.1 Definition Fixed Amount Awards - <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.201>
- 2 C.F.R. 200.201 Use of grant agreements (including fixed amount awards), cooperative agreements, and contracts (as referenced in ADS 303.3.25.a.) - <http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mak>

- 2. C.F.R. 200 Subpart E – Cost Principles for non-profit and educational organizations – used to negotiate award amounts and terminations per 2 C.F.R. 200.201 (b)(1)) - <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.201>

3. Branding & Marking Requirements

Should successful applicants have the plan to publicize any document relating to this grant, they will be required to submit a Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan that complies with the approved Branding and Marking Plan for the project and must follow the mandatory standard provision entitled “MARKING AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS UNDER USAID-FUNDED ASSISTANCE (DECEMBER 2014)” (for standard cost type grants) or “MARKING AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS UNDER USAID-FUNDED ASSISTANCE (JULY 2015)” (for FAAs) in preparing the Branding and Marking Plan for approval.

4. Environmental Compliance

The grants program anticipates funding only activities that fall under the categorical exclusions of “USAID Environmental Guidelines”. Therefore, if all activities under a specific grant are identified as categorical exclusions, the project will not conduct any additional environmental assessment or will not require prior review by USAID’s environmental officer. However, in instances where the proposed activity may directly affect the environment outside the exclusions, the project will seek guidance from the COR, to ensure compliance with 22 CFR 216 and the “USAID Environmental Guidelines.”

CATALYZE MS4G will ensure all stipulated environmental measures and conditions in the award are implemented throughout the life of the award, and that timely amendments are undertaken, as needed, by obtaining the relevant USAID Environmental Officer’s prior approval in writing to ensure compliance with 22 CFR 216 and the applicable USAID Environmental Guidelines.