



Local Capacity for Local Solutions

Call for Concept Papers for a Comprehensive Capacity Grant

Project Background and Purpose of the Comprehensive Capacity Grants

The USAID/Eastern and Southern Caribbean Local Capacity for Local Solutions (LCLS) project is focused on building the managerial, organizational, and administrative capacity of selected non-governmental organisations (NGOs), utilizing innovative methods and approaches to support them in expanding services and improving sustainability in the Eastern and Southern Caribbean (ESC) region. The LCLS project supports the goal of USAID’s Regional Development Cooperation Strategy which is: “Safer, more prosperous Caribbean Communities.” Its development assistance “seeks to: (1) reduce youth involvement in crime and violence; (2) reduce risks and adapt to the impacts of the environment; and (3) achieve epidemic control of HIV/AIDS throughout the region.”

In support of USAID’s development objectives and the focus of the LCLS project, RTI International (the prime recipient of the Local Capacity for Local Solutions award) will issue Comprehensive Capacity Grants with an approximate ceiling value of **US\$25,000.00 (over a maximum of 12-month period)** to NGOs operating in the following sectors: youth/citizen security; HIV/AIDS; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transexual, and intersex (LGBTI); and the environment. The **purpose** of the Comprehensive Capacity Grants is to strengthen the operational and managerial capacity of NGOs so that they can be more efficient, effective, and sustainable in their operations and better contribute to development goals in their countries. The grant includes a compensation provision that allows for payment to staff for time spent in select grant activities; specifically the application of their skills to coordinate and lead activities.

1. Who is Eligible:

- Any Non-U.S. NGOs that are:
 - Implementing activities in one of the key USAID sectors: youth/citizen security¹ (priority sector), HIV/AIDS, LGBTI or the environment.
 - Registered and working in at least one of the following countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.
 - Interested in improving their organizational and managerial capacity by fully participating in capacity building activities.

¹Youth/Citizen Security programmes describe community-based efforts to prevent crime and gang activity; support highest risk youth; strengthen community-police relationships; provide school-based violence prevention programmes; and offer life-skills training and vocational education to at-risk youth. NGOs involved in these types of activities are those whose programmes involve initiatives to educate and empower youth to address the root issues that cause young people to become involved in criminal activities and implement judicial reforms to promote recidivism among youth. Organizations identifying as youth and citizen security must be involved in work that not only involves youth but working in areas such as workforce development for at risk youth, skill training (vocational or academic) for at risk youth, cognitive behavioral interventions (anger management, counselling, conflict management, problem solving etc.), juvenile justice programs (diversion or rehabilitation or reintegration support).



- A priority will be placed on NGOs that work with USAID-funded projects, although this is not a requirement.

In order to be eligible for a grant, applicants **must**:

- be legally registered and operating in one of the six countries mentioned above;
- have access to physical space to conduct their activities;
- have proven track records of successful implementation of projects in the proposed country;
- have been active for at least 3 years operating within their sector and respective country;
- have at least three (3) staff, which can be a mix of full-time, part-time, and volunteers;
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the project; not acting in the capacity of an intermediary/consultant;
- be willing to comply with all technical and financial requirements for participation in the program - including reporting and documentation of project activities;
- be willing to participate in assessments, trainings, workshops, or other activities considered important for achieving project goals and be eligible to receive funded awards from the United State Government.

Organisations that do not meet the criteria above will not be considered.

2. The Application Process:

The application process for the Comprehensive Capacity Grants will take place in two steps:

- 1) **Step One – Concept Note:** Following the instructions contained in this document, applicants will express their preliminary interests and ideas for a Comprehensive Capacity Grant by submitting a Concept Note. All concept notes will be evaluated by a technical committee and applicants will be notified of the results. Those who are selected to advance to the 2nd stage of the process will be invited to submit a full grant application.
- 2) **Step Two – Full Application:** The full proposal will be evaluated and will be the basis on which award selection is determined.

2.1 Submitting the Concept Paper:

- (1) Applicants are invited to submit a concept paper which **must not exceed 6 pages** using the form provided in Attachment A. (Concept Paper Template). Concept papers will be received from February 1 – March 1, 2019. Only typed, electronic submissions will be accepted and must be sent to capacitygrants@lcls.rti.org. **Applicants may only submit one Concept Note per organization.**



(2) Concept papers must specify: (1) the areas in which organizations would like to see their capacity improved; and (2) how they will apply their skills within their organization during the life of the grant to improve organizational performance. The areas for capacity building (a minimum of one must be selected and there is no maximum) are as follows:

- Strategic Planning
- Financial reporting and systems for financial accountability
- Leadership skills of staff, management and/or Board members
- Fundraising
- Marketing and Communication
- Networking
- Monitoring and evaluation to better track institutional results and outcomes;
- Project management
- Advocacy

Proposals that do not meet these objectives will not be evaluated.

(3) The applicant is responsible for identifying the appropriate set of activities necessary for the achievement of the action's objectives within the Concept Note in Attachment A. Some illustrative activities may include but are not limited to the following:

- institutional planning geared toward improving operational functioning and sustainability including: development of strategic plans, resource mobilization and human resource management strategies, programme reports and plans to support organizational restructuring;
- development and completion of financial reports, financial audits, budgeting and forecasting assessments, development of accounting procedures and updating of accounts, and staff training for financial management;
- membership assessments to improve communication and responsiveness including surveys of member's need, design of communication protocols to improve outreach to members and to inform outreach strategies, development of materials for enhanced organizational outreach, staff training to undertake member assessments; and
- training for staff and members in areas of: social media, lobbying and advocacy, proposal writing, project development and management, monitoring and evaluation, participatory methodologies, fundraising, knowledge management.

(4) **Only complete concept papers will be evaluated.** Please complete the Checklist in Attachment B to ensure you have submitted all required materials.



(5) All concept papers will be evaluated upon the following criteria. The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheading. Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1=very poor; 2=poor; 3=adequate; 4=good; 5=very good.

1. Relevance of the action	Sub score	35
1.1 Does the Concept Note meet the goal and purpose of the LC4LS project?		10
1.2 Are the needs and constraints of the applicant organization clearly defined?		10
1.3 How clearly defined are the proposed capacity building activities and how the applicant will apply these newfound skills (<i>e.g. is the information sufficient to demonstrate how organization growth and/or improved performance over the life of the award will be achieved</i>)		10
1.4 Does the proposal contain specific added-value elements, including elements that ensure accountability to members and donors; ensure long term organizational sustainability?		5
2. Design of the Action	Sub score	15
2.1 How clear and coherent is the presentation of the information contained concept note?		5
2.2 Is the proposed action feasible to achieve the expected results?		10
TOTAL SCORE		50

Once all Concept Notes have been assessed, we will create a list of applicants ranked according to their total score.

Only organisations that submit a Concept Note with a score of at least 25 will be invited to the next stage of the process.