

Request For Applications- S-RFA-NIA-14-CA-001

The United States Embassy is looking for qualified organization that will contribute to the U.S. Mission's efforts in promoting fiscal transparency and communication and explanation of budget execution in Niger and produces measurable results that contribute to USG strategic objectives.

Source of Funding : U.S Embassy Niamey, Niger

Project Title: Niger Fiscal Transparency Training and Promotion

Request for Applications number: S-RFA-NIA-14-CA-001

Estimated Total Funding: \$110,260

Estimated Project Start Date: September 30, 2014

Estimated length of Project: 18 months

Eligible Applicants: Nigerienne Local Nonprofit/Non-Governmental Organization NGOs are welcome to apply.

DUNS Number: Prospective applicants must have a valid Dun and Bradstreet (DUNS) number as well as a current Central Contractor Registration (www.sam.gov) – this registration process can take weeks

Funding Instrument: Cooperative Agreement

Important: Email Subject line should read: "Niger Fiscal Transparency"

How to Apply: Interested parties may send applications to the American Embassy Niamey or via e-mail to Niameygrants@state.gov **No later** than 1:00pm Friday August 22, 2014.

Attention: Mireille Gbetholancy-Kun, Grants Manager

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SUMMARY

Training, Oversight and Communication of Transparency Efforts

This program demonstrates the Embassy strong commitment to support State Department efforts in addressing fiscal transparency through innovative efforts. The program's main goal is to develop the capability to analyze and publicize reviews of the government budget, focusing on both the civil society and governmental capabilities. The goal is to use local experts and resources to develop local capabilities.

The selected organization will implement a quarterly working group consisting of civil society, government representatives, international partners and a private sector consultant to discuss progress on transparency and next steps in budget implementation and review. Second, the organization will organize and implement a communication component to inform the general public in layman's terms about budget expenditures and revenues and offer commentary on a transparency website as well as via television and radio updates throughout the year. While not necessary, it is recommended that the selected organization enlist the services of local experts in both accounting and communication to ensure successful accomplishment of the objectives. Training will be given on budget oversight, analysis and reporting.

The selected organization is encouraged to work with international partners, including the IMF, World Bank and European Union to ensure no efforts are duplicated.

In addition to disseminating the information and analysis four times a year, each quarter after the Government of Niger (GON) submits to the National Assembly the budget execution report a public discussion could be held in a collaborative effort with the Ministry of Finance, civil society groups, and members of the National Assembly. The events could be open to the public with reserved seating for civil society activists, members of parliament, court auditors, and the media. The event could provide the GON an opportunity to discuss the performance of the administration on budget execution, problems encountered, possible solutions and recommendations for effective implementation along with public reaction and a Q&A portion.

Embassy Niamey reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted and will determine the resulting level of funding for the award. The authority for this RFA is found in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government, nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. In addition, final award of any resultant grant agreement cannot be made until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated, and committed through internal Embassy procedures. While it is anticipated that these procedures will be

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successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for award. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

BACKGROUND

The Government of Niger has continued to take steps to improve budget transparency. However, everything from a lack of technical capacity to an issue with an unsecure website hosting provider have made progress difficult. Niger has made key budget documents available and worked with the IMF, World Bank, and West African Economic and Monetary Union to improve its budget execution and increase transparency but needs further training and a regularly scheduled working group of international partners, GON officials, and civil society representatives to ensure the proper actions are not just taken but continued. For example, in 2012 the GON published its quarterly budget review document once but has not published any since then. Increased transparency via publication, analysis and reporting on budget execution could benefit the Nigerien public and, in turn, the GON who could benefit from a more engaged and informed public.

With 70 percent of its population under the age of 24, engaging with youth to explain the budget process and importance of understanding what the government is doing with the funds it receives is crucial.

The goals of the American Embassy in Niamey according to the Integrated Country Strategy are (1) to assist Nigeriens in strengthening their democracy and governance, (2) to work with Nigeriens to counter regional threats, and (3) to assist Nigeriens in development and socio-economic opportunity. This project directly supports goals 1 and 3 of the ICS and the goals.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

All proposals must:

- Be no more than nine (9) pages, using 12 point font or larger
- Contain all sections and subsections according to the outline presented below

I. Cover Page (does not count towards 9 page limit)

- US Embassy Niamey, Niger RFA # S-RFA-NIA-14-CA-001
- Name and address of organization
 - DUNS number Organizations can request a DUNS number at
 - <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform> (takes several weeks)
- Type of organization (Non-Profit, for-profit, international organization, etc)
- Contact person (lead contact name; telephone number, fax and e-mail information)
- Name(s) and title(s) of the principal author(s) of the proposal
- Total dollar amount of funds requested for the project period;
- Signature, name and title of the authorized representative of the applicant.

II. Project Description

a. Situational analysis (1 page maximum)

Brief background analysis on fiscal transparency in Niger, the landscape of organizations working on fiscal transparency in Niger; how these organizations can be strengthened and work more effectively; and how improved capacity and communication efforts could positively impact the situation.

b. Approach to achieving the general goals set out in the RFP (1 pages maximum)

A more detailed delineation of project objectives and expected results, and description of how the applicant proposes to achieve these. Description should also include proposed approaches for communication and coordination with the U.S. Embassy, Niamey (including its different sections and agencies).

c. Illustrative grants/supported activities (1 page maximum)

Examples of potential activities with an emphasis on activities to strengthen the work of existing organizations and initiatives.

d. Monitoring and evaluation (1 page maximum)

Brief plan of how the Applicant would measure the stated objectives and expected results. This will include a list of targets and results anticipated for key performance indicators, along with a list of those indicators and how the objectives and results would be measured. The recipient will be responsible for monitoring and reporting during and after the project, and the embassy and Grants Officer will regularly monitor the project's performance to assess whether project activities are on track and targets are being achieved

e. Timeline (1 page maximum)

Estimated proposed timeline/work plan of project start-up, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, reporting, and close-out, with a maximum of one year of project period of performance.

III. Organizational Capacity and Experience (1 pages maximum)

- Concise description of the Applicant's organizational capacity and relevant experience, particularly related to grant management, and organizational capacity strengthening
- Summary of qualifications and experience of proposed staff who would be critical for the successful implementation of the project
- Summary (objectives, amount of funding, activities, results) of any previous projects in Niger supported by the U.S. State Department, USAID, and/or any other international partner
- Summary argument justifying why the Applicant is the appropriate entity to lead this initiative

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IV. Cost Proposal

a. Detailed Budget (2 page maximum)

Delineation in the attached excel spreadsheet format table format of projected costs, including:

- Direct program costs (salaries for grant manager and other project staff according to time spent directly on this project; and other costs directly attributable to this project including workshops, travel, communications, report preparation, etc.)
- Any cost share that the organization is able to provide, from other non US government sources.
- If Indirect Costs are requested, the organization must have an established Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)

b. Budget Narrative/Notes (1 page maximum)

Explanation of items and estimated costs presented in the proposed detailed budget

V. Other Required Documents:

1. Completed and signed SF-424, SF-424a, and SF424b (attached)
2. Your organization's most recent financial audit.
3. A completed Financial Management Survey (attached)

VI. Other Optional Attachments (no page limit, but please be concise)

- o Applicant's organizational chart
- o Previous work product or project summaries for initiatives related to fiscal transparency, network facilitation, and/or organizational capacity strengthening

APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

An evaluation committee, using the criteria shown in this Section, will evaluate the proposals, based on the weighted scores below.

The relative importance of each criterion is indicated by the number of points assigned. A total of 100 points is possible.

Quality of Program Idea Rating (Total Possible 25) :

Does the proposal fit the requirements of the RFA? Is it appropriate in the country/regional context? Is it original, substantive, and feasible, without duplicating similar projects?

Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives Rating (Total Possible 25)

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Is it clear how activities contribute to the overall goal? Are activities well-thought out? Is there a work plan? Are objectives clear, specific, attainable, measurable? Does it describe roles and who will do what?

Cost Effectiveness/Cost Sharing (Total Possible 15)

Are all budget items necessary, appropriate and linked to program objectives? Are personnel costs reasonable for the work involved? Optional: The proposal offers meaningful cost-sharing (over and above?)

Program Monitoring and Evaluation (Total Possible 15)

Is it clear what the objectives, targets, and indicators are? Is there a strong monitoring plan?

Sustainability of Impact (Total Possible 10)

Will impact be sustainable beyond the life of the grant?

Institution's Record and Capacity Rating (Total Possible 10)

Does the applicant have a record of successful programs? Does primary staff have relevant professional experience? Does the applicant have the capacity to manage US government funds responsibly?

PLEASE SUBMIT ALL APPLICATIONS BY 1:00 PM Friday, AUGUST 22, 2014