

United States Department of State
Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL)
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO): DRLA-DRLAQM-17-037

Promoting the Human Rights of Women and Girls, Persons with Disabilities, and LGBTI
Persons

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.345

Application Deadline: January 23rd, 2017

A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) announces an open competition for organizations interested in submitting applications for a program that will advance an integrated, intersectional approach to advancing the human rights of women and girls; persons with disabilities, and; LGBTI persons. Competitive proposals will present unique opportunities and creative strategies for coordinated engagement across these three communities to combat structural forms of stigma and discrimination facing women and girls; persons with disabilities, and; LGBTI persons. Programs should focus on one country in any region, globally. Where appropriate, proposals should include government participation or take advantage of existing political will. Program proposals should be in accordance with the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, the United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender Based Violence, the norms and objectives of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and with President Obama's Memorandum to promote International Initiatives to Advance the Human Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Persons.

Requested Proposal Program Objectives

DRL seeks to support programming ideas that will have a direct and lasting impact by promoting reforms and structural changes that take advantage of changing social and political dynamics. DRL invites organizations to submit proposals outlining program concepts and organizational capacity to manage programs that will protect and advance the human rights of the marginalized populations named above. Proposals could focus on areas including, but not limited to:

- **Protection from violence, including sexual violence and hate crime, and combating impunity:** Objectives may include, but are not limited to, increased capacity to document violence targeting these marginalized populations, as well as investigation processes (or lack thereof); increased and proactive engagement from national authorities, including police and other law enforcement agencies, to prevent, mitigate, or respond to violence impacting marginalized communities; increased protection, safety and support for marginalized persons and their advocates at risk of violence, or who have experienced violence; and, establishment of or support to broad-based advocacy coalitions working to reduce and prevent bias-motivated violence.

- **Ensuring and increasing access to and inclusion within social systems:** Objectives may include, but are not limited to, increasing access to justice, including through expanded access to and provision of legal services; advancing inclusion and tolerance in public attitudes and cultural norms; increasing political participation; improving capacity of lawyers and civil society organizations to assist target populations in accessing or protecting their full human rights; combating discrimination against and exclusion of and ensuring legal protections for target populations in access to employment, housing, education, family and relationship-based legal protections, and other social institutions; ensuring access to public services and assistance.
- **Organizational Development and Capacity:** Objectives may include, but are not limited to, building or strengthening inclusive coalitions; building advocacy skills toward inclusive legislative reforms; increasing capacity of local or regional organizations to develop and implement strategic plans, work plans, budgets, communication strategies, risk assessments, and security plans; increased capacity of organizations to mobilize community members and build constituencies, and to improve documentation and reporting of human rights violations and abuses.

Other activities which support the goals noted above may also be considered. While DRL utilizes an inclusive and broad-human rights based perspective, proposals should focus on advancing the human rights of persons who face discrimination or violence based on their membership to the marginalized populations named above. As this proposal seeks to address structural issues impacting multiply-marginalized communities, proposals addressing the needs of only one marginalized community will not be deemed competitive.

Programs must be led by or have strong support from and participation by local organizations of the three communities listed above in each target country. Proposals should evidence and explain how local organizations have been involved in the proposal development process.

Organizations are encouraged to include components that focus activity at the local and/or community level, and that include sub-grants to local organizations. Organizations may also want to consider different forms of inclusive sub-granting, such as advisory committees for grant selections.

Projects should have the potential to have an immediate impact leading to long-term sustainable reforms, and should have potential for continued funding beyond DRL resources. DRL prefers innovative and creative approaches rather than projects that simply duplicate or add to efforts by other entities. This does not exclude projects that clearly build off existing successful projects in a new and innovative way from consideration. DRL also strives to ensure its projects advance the rights and uphold the dignity of the most vulnerable or at-risk populations.

Activities that typically are **not** considered competitive include:

- The provision of large amounts of humanitarian assistance;
- English language instruction;
- Development of high-tech computer or communications software and/or hardware;
- Purely academic exchanges or fellowships;

- External exchanges or fellowships lasting longer than six months;
- Off-shore activities that are not clearly linked to in-country initiatives and impact or that do not relate to security concerns;
- Theoretical explorations of human rights or democracy issues, including projects aimed primarily at research and evaluation that do not incorporate training or capacity-building for local civil society;
- Micro-loans or similar small business development initiatives;
- Activities that go beyond an organization's demonstrated competence, or fail to provide clear evidence of the ability of the applicant to achieve the stated impact;
- Initiatives directed towards a diaspora community rather than current residents of targeted countries.
- Significant U.S.-based activities.

The authority for this funding opportunity is found in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (FAA).

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

DRL anticipates having approximately \$400,000 available to support between one to two successful applications submitted in response to this NOFO, subject to the availability of funding.

DRL may issue one or more awards resulting from this NOFO to the applicant(s) whose application(s) conforming to this NOFO are the most responsive to the objectives set forth in this NOFO. The U.S. government may (a) reject any or all applications, (b) accept other than the lowest cost application, (c) accept more than one application, (d) accept alternate applications, and (e) waive informalities and minor irregularities in applications received.

The U.S. government may make award(s) on the basis of initial applications received, without discussions or negotiations. Therefore, each initial application should contain the applicant's best terms from a cost and technical standpoint. The U.S. government reserves the right (though it is not under obligation to do so), however, to enter into discussions with one or more applicants in order to obtain clarifications, additional detail, or to suggest refinements in the project description, budget, or other aspects of an application.

Applications should not request less than \$200,000 and no more than 400,000. Applicants should include an anticipated start date between April 2017 and July 2017 and the period of performance should be between 12 months to 36 months. New DRL awards are typically between one to three years and must not be for longer than 5 years.

DRL anticipates awarding either a grant or cooperative agreement depending on the application's risk factor, or the needs of the program, which is determined by the grant officer for applications that are successful. If it is determined to award a cooperative agreement, DRL expects to be substantially involved during the implementation of the cooperative agreement. Examples of substantial involvement can include:

- 1) Approval of the Recipient's annual work plans, including: planned activities for the following year, travel plans, planned expenditures, event planning, and changes to any activity to be carried out under the cooperative agreement;
- 2) Approval of sub-award Recipients, concurrence on the substantive provisions of the sub-awards, and coordination with other cooperating agencies;
- 3) Other approvals that will be included in the award agreement.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1 Eligible Applicants

DRL welcomes applications from U.S.-based and foreign-based non-profit organizations/nongovernment organizations (NGO) and public international organizations; private, public, or state institutions of higher education; and for-profit organizations or businesses. DRL's preference is to work with non-profit entities; however, there may be occasions when a for-profit entity is best suited.

For-profit entities should be aware that its application may be subject to additional review following the panel selection process and that the Department of State generally prohibits profit under its assistance awards to for-profit or commercial organizations. Profit is defined as any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs. The allowability of costs incurred by commercial organizations is determined in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) at 48 CFR 30, Cost Accounting Standards Administration, and 48 CFR 31 Contract Cost Principles and Procedures. Project income earned by the recipient must be deducted from the total project allowable cost in determining the net allowable costs on which the federal share of costs is based.

C.2 Cost Sharing or Matching

Providing cost sharing, matching, or cost participation is not an eligibility requirement for this NOFO.

C.3 Other

Applicants must have existing, or the capacity to develop, active partnerships with thematic or in-country partners, entities and relevant stakeholders including industry and NGOs and have demonstrable experience in administering successful and preferably similar projects. DRL encourages applications from foreign-based NGOs headquartered in the geographic regions/countries relevant to this NOFO. Applicants may form consortia and submit a combined application. However, one organization should be designated as the lead applicant with the other members as sub-award partners. DRL reserves the right to request additional background information on applicants that do not have previous experience administering federal grant awards, and these applicants may be subject to limited funding on a pilot basis.

DRL is committed to an anti-discrimination policy in all of its projects and activities. DRL welcomes applications irrespective of an applicant's race, ethnicity, color, creed, national origin,

gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other status. DRL encourages applications from organizations working with the most at risk and vulnerable communities, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, members of ethnic or religious minority groups, and LGBTI persons.

Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System in the System for Award Management (SAM)(www.sam.gov) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR,1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR,1989 Comp., p. 235), “Debarment and Suspension.” Additionally no entity listed on the Excluded Parties List System in SAM can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the Excluded Parties List System in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

D.1 Address to Request Application Package

Applicants can find application forms, kits, or other materials needed to apply on www.grants.gov and www.grantsolutions.gov under the announcement title “Promoting the Human Rights of Women and Girls, Persons with Disabilities, and LGBTI Persons” funding opportunity number “DRLA-DRLAQM-17-037.” Please contact the DRL point of contact listed in section G if requesting reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities or for security reasons. Please note: reasonable accommodations do not include deadline extensions.

D.2 Content and Form of Application Submission

For all application documents, please ensure:

- 1) All documents are in English and all costs are in U.S. dollars. If an original document within the application is in another language, an English translation must be provided (please note: the Department of State, as indicated in 2 CFR 200.111, requires that English is the official language of all award documents. If any documents are provided in both English and a foreign language, the English language version is the controlling version);
- 2) All pages are numbered, including budgets and attachments;
- 3) All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper; and,
- 4) All documents are single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, with 1-inch margins. Captions and footnotes may be 10 point Times New Roman font. Font sizes in charts and tables, including the budget, can be reformatted to fit within 1 page width.

Complete applications must include the following:

1. Completed and signed SF-424, SF-424A, and SF-424B, as directed on GrantSolutions.gov or Grants.gov; completed and signed SF-LLL, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities”(if applicable) (which can be found with the solicitation on GrantSolutions.gov or Grants.gov and on the DRL website at:

<http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/c12302.htm>); and your organization's most recent audit (A-133 audit, if applicable, or standard audit).

2. Table of Contents (not to exceed one [1] page in Microsoft Word) that includes a page numbered contents page, including any attachments.
3. Executive Summary (not to exceed two [2] pages in Microsoft Word) that includes:
 - a) The target country/countries and thematic area;
 - b) Name and contact information for the project's main point of contact;
 - c) The total amount of funding requested and project length;
 - d) A statement of work or synopsis of the project, including a concise breakdown of the project's objectives, activities, and expected results; and,
 - e) A brief statement on how the project is innovative, sustainable, and will have a demonstrated impact.
4. Proposal Narrative (not to exceed ten [10] pages in Microsoft Word). Please note the ten page limit does not include the Table of Contents, Executive Summary, Attachments, Detailed Budget, Budget Narrative, or Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA). Applicants are encouraged to submit multiple documents in a single Microsoft Word or Adobe file, (i.e., Table of Contents, Executive Summary, and Proposal Narrative in one file).
5. Detailed Line-Item Budget (in Microsoft Excel) that includes three [3] columns including the request to DRL, any cost sharing contribution, and total budget (see below for more information on budget format). A summary budget should also be included using the OMB approved budget categories (see SF-424A as a sample). Costs must be in U.S. dollars. Detailed line-item budgets for sub-awardees should be included in additional tabs within the excel workbook.
6. Budget Narrative (in Microsoft Word) that includes substantive explanations and justifications for each line item in the detailed budget spreadsheet, as well as the source and a description of all cost-share offered. For ease of review, DRL recommends applicants order the budget narrative as presented in the detailed budget. Personnel costs should include a clarification of the roles and responsibilities of key staff, base salary, and percentage of time devoted to the project. The budget narrative should provide additional information that might not be readily apparent in the detailed-line item budget, not simply repeat what is represented numerically in the budget, i.e. salaries are for salaries or travel is for travel. Please see DRL's Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for Applications, as updated in July 2015, for more information.
7. Attachments (not to exceed fourteen [14] pages total, preferably in Microsoft Word) that include the following in order:
 - a) Logic model – Page 1-2: Please see DRL's Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for Applications, as updated in July 2015, for more information.

- b) Risk Assessment – Page 3: Please see DRL’s PSI for Applications, as updated in July 2015, for more information.
 - c) Narrative of Monitoring and Evaluation Plan – Pages 4-5: Please see DRL’s PSI for Applications, as updated in July 2015, for more information.
 - d) Monitoring and Evaluation Performance Indicator Table – Pages 6-9: Please see DRL’s PSI for Applications, as updated in July 2015, for more information. This section can be up to four pages long if necessary.
 - e) Roles and responsibilities of key project personnel – Page 10: Please include short bios that highlight relevant professional experience. This relates to the organization’s capacity. Given the limited space, CVs are not recommended for submission.
 - f) Timeline of the overall proposal – Page 11: Components should include activities, evaluation efforts, and project closeout.
 - g) Additional optional attachments – Page 12-14: Attachments may include further timeline information, letters of support, memorandums of understanding/agreement, etc. Letters of support and MOUs must be specific to the projects implementation (e.g. from proposed partners or sub-award recipients) and will not count towards the page limit.
8. If your organization has a NICRA and includes NICRA charges in the budget, your latest NICRA should be included as a .pdf file. This document will not be reviewed by the panelists, but rather used by project and grant staff if the submission is recommended for funding and therefore does not count against the submission page limitations. If your proposal involves subawards to organizations charging indirect costs, please submit the applicable NICRA also as a .pdf file (see DRL’s PSI for Applications, as updated in July 2015, for more information on indirect cost rates). If your organization does not have a NICRA per 2 CFR 200. 414(f) the organization can elect to charge the de minimis rate of 10% of the modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68. The budget narrative should indicate what costs will be covered using the 10% de minimis rate.

Please note: DRL retains the right to ask for additional documents not included in this NOFO. Additionally, to ensure all applications receive a balanced evaluation, the DRL Review Panel will review the first page of the requested section up to the page limit and no further. DRL encourages organizations to use the given space effectively.

Additional information that successful applicants must submit after notification of intent to make a Federal award, but prior to issuance of a Federal award, may include:

- 1) Written responses and any revised application documents addressing any conditions or recommendations from the DRL Review Panel;
- 2) Completion of the Department’s Financial Management Survey, if receiving DRL funding for the first time;
- 3) Submission of required documents to register in the Payment Management System managed by the Department of Health and Human Services if receiving DRL funding for the first time, unless an exemption is provided;

- 4) Other requested information or documents included in the notification of intent to make a Federal award or subsequent communications prior to issuance of a Federal award.

D.3 Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Applicants must have an active registration in SAM (www.sam.gov) prior to submitting an application, must prove a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number, formerly referred to as a DUNS number, and must continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by the U.S. government.

The Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards. SAM is the Federal government's primary database for complying with FFATA reporting requirements. OMB designated SAM as the central repository to facilitate applicant and recipient use of a single public website that consolidates data on all federal financial assistance. Under the law, it is mandatory to obtain a UEI number and register in SAM.

SAM requires all entities to renew their registration once a year in order to maintain an active registration status in SAM. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure it has an active registration in SAM and to also maintain its active registration in SAM.

No entity listed on the Excluded Parties List System in SAM is eligible for any assistance or can participate in any activities in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR Part 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR Part 1989 Comp., p. 235).

DRL may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time DRL is ready to make an award, DRL may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

An exemption from this requirement may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if:

1. An applicant is a foreign organization located outside of the U.S., does not currently have a UEI, and the Department determines that acquiring one is impractical given the geographic location; or
2. If the applicant's identity must be protected due to possible endangerment of their mission, their organization's status, their employees, or individuals being served by the applicant.

Please note: foreign organizations will be required to register with the NATO Support Agency (NSPA) to receive a NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) code in order to register in SAM. NSPA will forward your registration request to the applicable National

Codification Bureau (NCB) if your organization is located in a NATO or Tier 2 Sponsored Non-NATO Nation. (As of January 2015, NATO nations included Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States of America; and Tier 2 nations included Australia, Austria, Brazil, Finland, Israel, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Morocco, New Zealand, Serbia, and Singapore.)

NSPA and/or the appropriate NCB forwards all NCAGE code information to all Allied Committee 135 (AC/135) nations, which as of January 2015 also included Afghanistan, Argentina, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Colombia, Egypt, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Montenegro, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand, Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, and the United Arab Emirates. **All organizations are strongly advised to take this into consideration when assessing whether registration may result in possible endangerment.**

D.4 Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due no later than 11:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST), on January 23rd, 2017, on www.grantsolutions.gov or www.grants.gov under the announcement title “Promoting the Human Rights of LGBTI Persons, Persons with Disabilities, and Women and Girls” funding opportunity number “DRLA-DRLAQM-17-037.”

Grants.gov and Grantsolutions.gov automatically logs the date and time an application submission is made, and the Department of State will use this information to determine whether an application has been submitted on time. Late applications are neither reviewed nor considered unless the DRL point of contact listed in section G is contacted prior to the deadline and is provided with evidence of system errors caused by www.grants.gov or www.grantsolutions.gov that is outside of the applicants’ control and is the sole reason for a late submission. Applicants should not expect a notification upon DRL receiving their application.

If ultimately provided with a notification of intent to make a Federal award, applicants typically have two to three weeks to provide additional information and documents requested in the notification of intent. The deadlines may vary in each notification of intent and applicants must adhere to the stated deadline in the notification of intent.

D.5 Funding Restrictions

DRL will not consider applications that reflect any type of support for any member, affiliate, or representative of a designated terrorist organization. No entity listed on the Excluded Parties List System in SAM is eligible for any assistance.

Project activities that provide training or other assistance to foreign militaries or paramilitary groups or individuals will not be considered for DRL funding given purpose limitations on funding.

Restrictions may apply to any proposed assistance to police or other law enforcement. Among these, pursuant to section 620M of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (FAA), no assistance provided through this funding opportunity may be furnished to any unit of the security forces of a foreign country when there is credible information that such unit has committed a gross violation of human rights. In accordance with the requirements of section 620M of the FAA, also known as the Leahy law, project beneficiaries or participants from a foreign government's security forces may need to be vetted by the Department before the provision of any assistance.

Federal awards generally will not allow reimbursement of pre-Federal award costs; however, the grants officer may approve pre awards cost on a case by case basis. Generally, construction costs are not allowed under DRL awards. For additional information, please see DRL's PSI for Applications, as updated in July 2016.

D.6 Other

All application submissions must be made electronically via www.grantsolutions.gov or www.grants.gov. Both systems require registration by the applying organization. Please note: the Grants.gov registration process can take 10 business days or longer, even if all registration steps are completed in a timely manner.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that it has an active registration in GrantSolutions.gov or Grants.gov and that an application has been received by GrantSolutions.gov or Grants.gov in its entirety. DRL bears no responsibility for applicants not being registered before the due date or for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

GrantSolutions.gov is highly recommended for submission of all applications and is DRL's preferred choice for receiving applications.

Faxed, couriered, or emailed documents will not be accepted. Reasonable accommodations may, in appropriate circumstances, be provided to applicants with disabilities or for security reasons.

Applicants must follow all formatting instructions in the applicable solicitation and these instructions.

GrantSolutions.gov Applications

All applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications via www.grantsolutions.gov. Applicants using GrantSolutions.gov for the first time should complete their "New Organization Registration" as soon as possible. This process must be completed before an application can be submitted. Registration with GrantSolutions.gov usually occurs directly after an applicant submits their registration. To register with GrantSolutions.gov, click "Login to GrantSolutions" and follow the "First Time Users" link to the "New Organization Registration Page." There are different ways to register your organization, click on the link that fits best.

Upon completion of a successful electronic application submission, the GrantSolutions system will provide the applicant with a confirmation page indicating the date and time (Eastern Time) of the electronic application submission as well as an official Application Number. This confirmation page will also provide a listing of all items that constitute the final application submission. Please save this page for your records.

GrantSolutions.gov Help Desk:

For assistance with GrantSolutions.gov accounts and technical issues related to the system, please contact Customer Support at help@grantsolutions.gov or call 1-866-577-0771 (toll charges for international callers) or 1-202-401-5282. Customer Support is available 8 AM – 6 PM EST, Monday – Friday, except federal holidays.

Grants.gov Applications

Applicants who do not submit applications via GrantSolutions.gov may submit via www.grants.gov. It is DRL's preference that applications be submitted through GrantSolutions.gov.

Please be advised that completing all the necessary registration steps for obtaining a username and password from Grants.gov **can take more than two weeks**

Please refer to the Grants.gov website for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation. Applicants will receive a validation e-mail from Grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application. Validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days.

Grants.gov Helpdesk:

For assistance with Grants.gov, please call the Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 or email support@grants.gov. The Contact Center is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except federal holidays.

Should an applicant experience technical issues, contacted the applicable helpdesk, and is not receiving timely assistance (e.g. if you have not received a response after 2 days of contacting the helpdesk), you may contact the DRL point of contact listed in section G, who may assist in contacting the appropriate helpdesk but an applicant should document their efforts in contacting the help desk. Also, applicants may contact the DRL point of contact listed in section G if experiencing technical issues with grants.gov or grantsolutions.gov that may result in a late submission.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

E.1 Criteria

Evaluators will judge each application individually against the following criteria, listed below in order of importance, and not against competing applications.

Quality of Project Idea

Applications should be responsive to the NOFO, appropriate in the country/regional context, and should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to DRL's mission of promoting human rights and democracy. DRL prioritizes innovative and creative approaches rather than projects that simply duplicate or add to efforts by other entities. This does not exclude projects that clearly build off existing successful projects in a new and innovative way from consideration. In countries where similar activities are already taking place, an explanation should be provided as to how new activities will not duplicate or merely add to existing activities and how these efforts will be coordinated.

Project Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives

A strong application will include a clear articulation of how the proposed project activities contribute to the overall project objectives, and each activity will be clearly developed and detailed. A comprehensive monthly work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and the logistical capacity of the organization. Objectives should be ambitious, yet measurable results-focused and achievable in a reasonable time frame. A complete application must include a logic model to demonstrate how the project will have an impact on its proposed objectives. Applications should address how the project will engage relevant stakeholders and should identify local partners as appropriate. If local partners have been identified, DRL strongly encourages applicants to submit letters of support from proposed in-country partners. Additionally, applicants should describe the division of labor among the direct applicant and any local partners. If applicable, applications should identify target areas for activities, target participant groups or selection criteria for participants, and the specific roles of subawardees, among other pertinent details. In particularly challenging operating environments, applications should include contingency plans for overcoming potential difficulties in executing the original work plan and address any operational or programmatic security concerns and how they will be addressed.

Institution's Record and Capacity

DRL will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. Applications should demonstrate an institutional record of successful democracy and human rights projects, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past grants. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the project's objectives.

Inclusive Projecting

DRL strives to ensure its projects advance the rights and uphold the dignity of the most at risk and vulnerable populations, including women, youth, people with disabilities, members of racial and ethnic or religious minorities, and LGBTI persons. To the extent possible, applicants should identify and address considerations to support these populations in all proposed project activities and objectives, and should provide specific means, measures, and corresponding targets to include them as appropriate. Applicants should provide strong justifications if unable to incorporate the most at risk and vulnerable populations within proposed project activities and objectives. Applications that do not include this will not be considered highly competitive in this category.

Cost Effectiveness

DRL strongly encourages applicants to clearly demonstrate project cost-effectiveness in their application, including examples of leveraging institutional and other resources. However, cost-sharing or other examples of leveraging other resources is not required and does not need to be included in the budget. Inclusion in the budget does not result in additional points awarded during the review process. Budgets however should have low and/or reasonable overhead and administration costs and applicants should provide clear explanations and justifications for these costs in relation to the work involved. All budget items should be clearly explained and justified to demonstrate its necessity, appropriateness, and its link to the project objectives.

Please note: If cost-share is included in the budget then the recipient must maintain written records to support all allowable costs that are claimed as its contribution to cost-share, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. In the event the recipient does not meet the minimum amount of cost-sharing as stipulated in the recipient's budget, DRL's contribution may be reduced in proportion to the recipient's contribution.

Multiplier Effect/Sustainability

Applications should clearly delineate how elements of the project will have a multiplier effect and be sustainable beyond the life of the grant. A good multiplier effect will have an impact beyond the direct beneficiaries of the grant (e.g. participants trained under a grant go on to train other people, workshop participants use skills from a workshop to enhance a national level election that affects the entire populace). A strong sustainability plan may include demonstrating continuing impact beyond the life of a project or garnering other donor support after DRL funding ceases.

Project Monitoring and Evaluation

Complete applications will include a detailed plan (both a narrative and table) of how the project's progress and impact will be monitored and evaluated throughout the project. Incorporating a well-designed monitoring and evaluation component into a project is one of the most efficient methods of documenting the progress and results (intended and unintended) of a project. Applications should demonstrate the capacity to provide objectives with measurable outputs and outcomes and engage in robust monitoring and assessment of project activities.

The quality of the M&E plan will be judged on the narrative explaining how both monitoring and evaluation will be carried out, who will be responsible for those related activities. Projects are strongly encouraged to include an external mid-term and/or final evaluation. Explain how an external evaluation (mid-term and/or final) will be incorporated into the project implementation plan or how the project will be systematically assessed in absence of one. Please see DRL's PSI for Applicants, updated in December 2015, for more information on what is required in the narrative.

The M&E plan will also be rated on the M&E performance indicator table. The output and outcome-based performance indicators should not only be separated by project objectives but also should match the objectives, outcomes, and outputs detailed in the logic model. Performance indicators should be clearly defined (i.e., explained how the indicators will be measured and reported) either within the table or with a separate Performance Indicator Reference Sheet (PIRS). For each performance indicator, the table should also include baselines

and yearly and cumulative targets, data collection tools, data sources, types of data disaggregation, and frequency of monitoring and evaluation; There should also be metrics to capture how project activities target the most at risk and vulnerable populations or addresses their concerns, where applicable.

E.2 Review and Selection Process

DRL strives to ensure each application receives a balanced evaluation by a DRL Review Panel. The Department's Office of Acquisitions Management (AQM) will determine technical eligibility for all applications. All applications for a given solicitation are then reviewed against the same seven criteria, which includes quality of project idea, project planning/ability to achieve objectives, institution's record and capacity, inclusive programming, cost effectiveness, multiplier effect/sustainability, and project monitoring and evaluation.

In most cases, the DRL Review Panel includes representatives from DRL, the appropriate Department of State regional bureau (which includes feedback from US embassies), as well as U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) (which includes feedback from USAID missions). In some cases, additional panelists may participate, including from other Department of State bureaus or offices, U.S. government departments, agencies, or boards, representatives from partner governments, or representatives from entities that are in a public-private partnership with DRL. At the end of discussion on an application, the Panel votes on recommending the application for approval by the DRL Assistant Secretary. If more applications are ultimately recommended for approval than DRL has funding available for, the Panel will rank the recommended applications in priority order for consideration by the DRL Assistant Secretary. The Grants Officer Representative (GOR) for the eventual award does not vote on the panel. All Panelists must sign non-disclosure agreements and conflicts of interest agreements.

DRL Review Panels may provide conditions and recommendations on applications to enhance the proposed project, which must be addressed by the applicant before further consideration of the award. To ensure effective use of DRL funds, conditions or recommendations may include requests to increase, decrease, clarify, and/or justify costs and project activities.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

F.1 Federal Award Notices

DRL will provide a separate notification to applicants on the result of their applications. Successful applicants will receive a letter electronically via email requesting that the applicant respond to panel conditions and recommendations. This notification is not an authorization to begin activities and does not constitute formal approval or a funding commitment.

Final approval is contingent on the applicant successfully responding to the panel's conditions and recommendations, being registered in required systems, including the U.S. government's Payment Management System (PMS), unless an exemption is provided, and completing and providing any additional documentation requested by DRL or AQM. Final approval is also

contingent on Congressional notification requirements being met and final review and approval by the Department's warranted grants officer.

The notice of Federal award signed by the Department's warranted grants officers is the sole authorizing document. If awarded, the notice of Federal award will be provided to the applicant's designated Authorizing Official via GrantSolutions to be electronically counter-signed in the system.

F.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards set forth in 2 CFR Chapter 200 (Sub-Chapters A through F) shall apply to all non-Federal entities, except for assistance awards to Individuals and Foreign Public Entities (for more information on these exceptions, see Chapters 5, Federal Assistance to Individuals, and 6, Federal Assistance to Foreign Public Entities Directive.) Sub-Chapters A through E shall apply to all foreign organizations, and Sub-Chapters A through D shall apply to all U.S. and foreign for-profit entities.

The applicant/recipient of the award and any sub-recipient under the award must comply with all applicable terms and conditions, in addition to the assurance and certifications made part of the Notice of Award. The Department's Standard Terms and Conditions can be viewed at <https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/Documents/2015DeptTermsAndConditionsForUSandForeignOrg.pdf>.

F.3 Reporting

Applicants should be aware that DRL awards will require that all reports (financial and progress) are uploaded to the grant file in GrantSolutions on a quarterly basis. The Federal Financial Report (FFR or SF-425) is the required form for the financial reports and must be submitted in PMS as well as downloaded and then uploaded to the grant file in GrantSolutions. The progress reports uploaded to the grant file in GrantSolutions must include page one (signed and completed) of the SF-PPR (Performance and Progress Report); a narrative attachment to the SF-PPR as described below; and the SF-PPR-B: Project Indicators (or other mutually agreed upon format approved by the grants officer) for the F Framework indicators.

Narrative progress reports should reflect the focus on measuring the project's impact on the overarching objectives and should be compiled according to the objectives, outcomes, and outputs as outlined in the award's Scope of Work (SOW) and in the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Statement. An assessment of the overall project's impact, should be included in each progress report. Where relevant, progress reports should include the following sections:

- Relevant contextual information (limited);
- Explanation and evaluation of significant activities of the reporting period and how the activities reflect progress toward achieving objectives, including meeting benchmarks/targets as set in the M&E plan. In addition, attach the M&E plan, comparing the target and actual numbers for the indicators;

- Any tangible impact or success stories from the project, when possible;
- Copy of mid-term and/or final evaluation report(s) conducted by an external evaluator; if applicable;
- Relevant supporting documentation or products related to the project activities (such as articles, meeting lists and agendas, participant surveys, photos, manuals, etc.) as separate attachments;
- Description of how the Recipient is pursuing sustainability, including looking for sources of follow-on funding;
- Any problems/challenges in implementing the project and a corrective action plan with an updated timeline of activities;
- Reasons why established goals were not met;
- Data for the required F Framework indicator(s) for the quarter as well as aggregate data by fiscal year using the SF-PPR-B: Project Indicators or other mutually agreed upon format approved by the Grants Officer. Evaluation indicators from the Foreign Assistance Framework can be found at <http://www.state.gov/f/indicators/> ;
- Proposed activities for the next quarter;
- Additional pertinent information, including analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs, if applicable.

A final narrative and financial report must also be submitted within 90 days after the expiration of the award.

Please note: delays in reporting may result in delays of payment approvals and failure to provide required reports may jeopardize the recipients' ability to receive future U.S. government funds.

DRL reserves the right to request any additional programmatic and/or financial project information during the award period.

G. CONTACT INFORMATION

For technical submission questions related to this solicitation, please contact Travis Benaiges at BenaigesTC@state.gov.

For assistance with GrantSolutions.gov accounts and technical issues related to using the system, please contact Customer Support at help@grantsolutions.gov or call 1-866-577-0771 (toll charges for international callers) or 1-202-401-5282. Customer Support is available 8 AM – 6 PM EST, Monday – Friday, except federal holidays.

For assistance with Grants.gov accounts and technical issues related to using the system, please call the Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 or email support@grants.gov. The Contact Center is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except federal holidays.

For a list of federal holidays visit:

<http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/snow-dismissal-procedures/federal-holidays/#url=2015>

With the exception of technical submission questions, during the solicitation period U.S. Department of State staff in Washington and overseas shall not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process has been completed and rejection and approval letters have been transmitted.

H. OTHER INFORMATION

Applicants should be aware that DRL understands that some information contained in applications may be considered sensitive or proprietary and will make appropriate efforts to protect such information. However, applicants are advised that DRL cannot guarantee that such information will not be disclosed, including pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or other similar statutes.

The information in this NOFO and DRL's PSI for Applications, as updated in July 2016, is binding and may not be modified by any DRL representative. Explanatory information provided by DRL that contradicts this language will not be binding. Issuance of the NOFO and negotiation of applications does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government. DRL reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the project evaluation requirements.

This NOFO will appear on www.grants.gov, www.grantsolutions.gov, and DRL's website <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/c12302.htm>.

Background Information on DRL and general DRL funding

DRL is the foreign policy lead within the U.S. government on promoting democracy and protecting human rights globally. DRL supports projects that uphold democratic principles, support and strengthen democratic institutions, promote human rights, prevent atrocities, combat and prevent violent extremism, and build civil society around the world. DRL typically focuses its work in countries with egregious human rights violations, where democracy and human rights advocates are under pressure, and where governments are undemocratic or in transition.

Additional background information on DRL and its efforts can be found on www.state.gov/j/drl and www.humanrights.gov