

Amendment to the OFR RFA as of 11-20-07 (also posted on www.grants.gov)

The purpose of this amendment is (1) extend the closing date of the subject solicitation; (2) to address questions received in response to the solicitation; and (3) inform offerors of the new closing date for questions. The new closing date for the solicitation is January 18, 2008. The new closing date for questions is January 4, 2008. Please note that no changes to the solicitation are being made as a result of the following questions and answers. If there are contradictions between the solicitation and the responses given herein, the solicitation will take precedence.

Questions Received in Response to the Ocean Freight Reimbursement Program

- 1. Could you please read the attached sample consignment affidavit and let me know if it is completed correctly (minus the notary signature)? Also, since Ms. Alzouma is no longer with the OFR program, should we mail the completed application to a different address?**

Response: We cannot review any parts of the application prior to our official review process. Send your application to the same address. It will arrive in the PVC-ASHA Office.

- 2. I am seeking the OFR announcement in a WORD Doc. Is this available?**

Response: The RFA is available only in PDF.

- 3. Do you know when the RFA will come out for 2008-2009 Ocean Freight Reimbursement?**

Response: The RFA was posted on Grants.Gov and on the USAID website on October 16, 2007.

- 4. Please be advised that I attempted to access the full announcement for funding opportunity DCHA-ASHA-08-014 from the grants.gov website and found that both the PDF and ZIP files were corrupt and/or damaged. Please advise if there is another way to access this funding opportunity.**

Response: The RFA can be downloaded from the Grants.gov website or the USAID.gov website under PVC-ASHA link under "What's New."

- 5. Is this RFA pretty much the same as before or are there some substantial differences (besides the countries)?**

Response: Requests for Applications differ from year to year. Be sure to read it carefully.

- 6. The RFA didn't come through to me from Grants.gov and I'm trying to track down whether my filters are properly set. I found it by searching but was it released through grants.gov?**

Response: Yes.

- 7. Could you forward me the new contact for questions?**

Response: Any questions related to this solicitation should be submitted to Dalzouma@usaid.gov. The deadline for questions is January 4, 2008.

- 8. I was attempting to download the OFR RFA Application from the webpage that you have listed on your site, but there seem to be some problems with the site. Could you possibly email me the application?**

Response: The RFA can be retrieved from the USAID website or the Grants.gov website. Both websites are functional.

Questions concerning application forms associated with the OFR RFA

- 9. Government form SF-424 looks like a domestic program form. Is this actually the form that is required with the OFR RFA or is it a typo? If so, how do we complete boxes 10, 11 & 14 since the program is international? Is box 15 to be completed with the requested amount of funding for the RFA on the line for Federal funding?**

Response: Block 10, The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Numbers for USAID is 98.001. Block 11, Descriptive Title of the Applicant's Project must be completed. Block 14, The Congressional District of the Applicant must be completed.

- 10. Who is the "Participant" in regards to Part III – Participant Certification Narcotics Offenses & Drug Trafficking?"**

Response: The "participant" is the grant applicant.

- 11. On the duty free letter, we have one for our organization in Liberia and Uganda but not yet in Sudan and Tanzania, though we are applying. Will this hurt our chances of receiving support for shipping costs to Sudan and Tanzania? Must we have a duty free letter right now from every country we propose shipping to?**

Response: In accordance with the RFA, “If the applicant cannot secure a letter from the destination country government, the PVO may write a letter stating that their organization will take full responsibility for all duties, taxes, tolls, etc. incurred on each shipment.” If you do not have a duty-free letter by the closing date of the solicitation, please include this statement in your proposal. If you receive a duty-free letter after the close of the solicitation, you may submit it for USAID’s consideration.

12. The instructions mention using blank white paper for sheets submitted with the application; are we allowed to use our letterhead for the required cover letter?

Response: You may use your organization’s letterhead.

13. Regarding the form “Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of the Recipient”, we wanted to clarify the meaning of the term “recipient”. My understanding is that this refers to the organization applying for the grant from USAID, not the consignee in the foreign country who will be receiving the commodity in the end, correct? And therefore, we should be the ones filling out this form, correct?

Response: Yes, you are correct.

14. Concerning the consignment affidavit (pg. 35), is this to be signed by the consignee or by our organization? We were hoping it could be signed by our president rather than the consignee as they are located in Honduras (and potentially the Philippines as well), but please advise which is required.

Response: The consignment affidavit should be signed by your organization. One affidavit should include all countries you propose to send commodities through the OFRP.

15. Regarding section C on pg. 25 (“Applications for Reimbursement”), my understanding is that these are documents we must submit after sending a shipment through this grant program (and is only being listed at this time to identify the requirements if we were to receive the grant). If I misunderstood this and we do need to submit them at this time, should these been done as an estimated shipment?

Response: This section refers to the document required after sending a shipment through this program. Accordingly, it will only apply to successful offerors.

16. On page 20 in table 1, one of the columns is labeled “% of OFR commodities being shipped”; the table includes a list of various countries and it appears that this column refers to the percentage of the commodities/shipments we want to send through OFR that will be going to that country...is that correct? So if we were

applying for only one country (right now we are debating between one and two), then that would automatically be 100%, correct? Please let me know if I'm not understanding this correctly.

Response: Correct. It is the type and percentage of the commodities you plan to send to a particular country through this program.

17. For the budgets on pages 14-16, this are only our budgets for the shipments we wish to do through this program, correct? Is there any other section where we should be submitting our overall budget, or even our overall shipping budget for review as well or is this not a requirement?

Response: Yes, only the budget for this program. We do not require an overall budget for shipping commodities outside the OFRP.

18. There are many example tables in the instructions (particular under section C, p.17 (application format)), should these be included using these exact tables or are we allowed to modify them as long as they contain the necessary information?

Response: No. Please adhere to the overall format.

19. On page 22, at the top of the page, it asks for an organizational chart of those involved in our shipping program. Our organization is going through some changes at the moment—if this were to change, would we need to notify USAID to modify this chart? And if so, I would guess this needs to be done immediately, correct?

Response: The organizational chart should reflect the staffing as of the application's submission.

20. On page 9, under Program Requirements, it mentions needing to “provide a letter from each destination country government stating that their shipments may be received duty-free”. Would a duty-free certificate from that country (in both the native language and English) be sufficient for this requirement? Or is something else needed as well?

Response: Yes, a letter or certificate from each country stating that shipments may be received duty free is required.

21. Concerning the SF-424, number 16, the instructions mention needing to contact the “State Single Point of Contact for Federal Executive Order 12372” to find out if the application “is subject to the State intergovernmental review process”; do you know

how we find out who this person is? Or is this question not relevant to our application for this grant in general?

Response: You may select the “Program is not covered by E.O. 12372” box.

22. On page 12 of the application it says that "one electronic copy (diskette or CD) of the table of contents, budget and body of the application" must be submitted. However, the next paragraph reads, "The diskette or CD must have one single file with the entire proposal including attachments, as well as separate files for the body and various attachments." It seems as if these two sentences are listing different parts of the proposal that must be submitted on the CD/diskette. Can you please clarify what must be submitted on the CD/diskette, and in how many files?

Response: The entire application with attachments must be on the diskette or CD in one file. In addition, the diskette should have separate files for each component (body, attachments the components—body and attachments.

23. Can the submitting NGO sign one affidavit for all the country partners taking responsibility for receiving and distributing supplies? Rather than have one affidavit for each partner for each country?

Response: Yes.

24. Does the Ocean Freight Reimbursement program apply to Executive Order 12372 as it is a federal program?

Response: No.

Questions concerning the OFR Program

25. On page 19, Situational Analysis and Rationale for OFR Support: Our organization has multiple programs in 15 countries that will receive OFR support if approved. For the application, we will focus on 3 regions –Africa, Central America and Asia. In Africa, we have programs in 6 countries at present. For the portion related to description and number of beneficiaries, do I need to select one country’s programs as an example and provide the numbers of beneficiaries there, or do I combine all beneficiaries for the 6 countries-the populations are somewhat different. Or should one program be the focus of the description with brief information about other countries and their programs?

26. Response: Each country you request OFR support for must be included with the beneficiary information requested. If you are sending commodities to a total of 40 countries, we want to know who is using these commodities in each country.

Response: Make sure to indicate the specific program in each country to which donated supplies will be going and shipped under the OFRP.

27. Section II.C.3 – third bullet point (page 17): “[Briefly describe] the alternative sources of funds (donors, private funds, foundations, etc.) available to cover transportation costs in your programs. How much is provided annually from each source?”

Although we receive funding from a range of donors for other program costs, our organization does not currently receive funding specifically for transportation/shipping costs as we normally cover shipping costs ourselves. We understand the above section to mean that our application must detail any funds we receive from other donors that only pertain to the transportation costs involved in implementing our programs. Could you please confirm that this is the case?

Response: Even if funds cover non-transportation costs, if any part is for transportation, include that information.

28. Section II.C.5 (page 21) – “Program Management and Structure”— “If you have more than three programs, you may wish to provide a detailed Response regarding at least one program in each region which exemplifies other programs in those regions, with a minimum of three examples. Note: the “example” program(s) should be one(s) for which your organization is requesting funding.” The section above states that we must give three examples of programs, including the one(s) for which we are requesting funding, if we are applying for more than three programs. However, this requirement of listing three examples including the one for which we are requesting funding was not stated in the earlier “Program Description” section (Section II.C.4, page 19). Should we only list the three examples in the “Program Management and Structure” section of our application or should we list three examples in both the “Program Description” and “Program Management and Structure” sections of our applications?

Response: If you are applying for one program, then there is no need to list three examples. For three or more programs for OFR transportation support, provide three examples in both sections.

29. Regarding the OFR; is there a preference for organizations working in multiple locations, dispersing USAID money wider, or is there a preference for organizations to work with just a few locations and thus dispersing USAID money more intensely.

Response: There is no preference.

30. In the “situational analysis” section of the application it asks that we describe the intended beneficiaries, their needs and provide a breakdown by gender and age of

those served. The first two pieces of information we have, unfortunately, we do not have the number of people served by each institution broken down by gender and age. It would probably prove extremely time consuming and difficult to retrieve this information. Might you be able to tell me how to rectify this situation?

Response: Age and, in particular, gender differentiation, is a priority consideration for USAID programs. Health care centers should have information relating to gender and age of their clients. Retrieve that information only for the commodities you plan to send under the OFRP and answer it as best as you can.

31. Section I.C.2 – third bullet point (bottom of page 8): “Programs must involve partnership(s) with local government, a nongovernmental organization (including affiliates), community partner, or other in-country organization (page 21).” We understand this statement to mean that eligible programs are those that involve partnership with any of the listed entities, rather than all of the listed entities. Could you please confirm that this is the case?

Response: Yes, you are correct.

32. For a program description, is "child development" acceptable? This summarizes all of our activities in a nutshell, from providing humanitarian aid to building schools, renovating orphanages, training caregivers, sponsoring foster care programs, etc.

Response: The term “child development” can be used where appropriate. However, it is important to discuss the specific sectors involved in the program (health, education, etc.) The components of the intended program must be explained in the application.

33. Under section C, the application format, (around pages 18 & 19) the term “program” is used a lot: does this refer to a specific program in one country, such as “Humanitarian Aid in Honduras” or an overall program for an organization, such as “Health Education”, which could be located in more than one country, or even as a program in one country, such as Honduras which may have different components such as humanitarian aid, health education, medical clinics, etc.? We want to be sure that we are describing our programs in the manner expected for the application.

Response: Program is being used in the context of the specific program or programs for which you are requesting OFRP support.

Questions concerning commodities

34. Are plastic bio-sand water filters for use in prevention of diarrhea in a number of eligible countries being accepted by OFR as an allowable commodity?

Response: Plastic bio-sand water filters for use in prevention of diarrhea is an allowable commodity. Please be sure to place it in a health context when you explain the program.

35. Page 15, Budget. AERDO Gifts in Kind valuation. If an organization does not use these methods, the organization must explain what method they use. If the organization does not use the AERDO valuation, should the OFR budget for July/August 2008 and July /August 2009 etc. use the AERDO guidelines “value of commodities?”

Response: We strongly advise that AERDO valuation be used as it helps to ensure OFR program consistency. If you cannot use it, fully explain the method used.

Questions concerning allowable costs/fees

36. What does OFR mean by "nominal" cost? (Refer to page 9, number 3, 3rd bullet)

Response: Nominal cost – A nominal cost refers to a token cost for certain programs. Charging a nominal cost is restricted under this program. For the applicant intending to charge nominal costs, include an explanation of the applicant’s intention to do so. Keep in mind that beneficiaries unable to pay for commodities sent under the OFRP cannot be charged fees.

37. (Page 9, number 3) Do you need a formal letter of request for prior approval for cost recovery for health commodities like eyeglasses, or medicines? If we do, do you have a format or guideline? Some of the health programs our partners are implementing like village pharmacies usually charge for over-the-counter medicines so they can locally replenish and make the village pharmacies sustainable. The prices are far lower than prevailing market rates of drugstores. These village pharmacies are normally in very remote areas where one has to travel (hours of walking or by horses) to go to town or "poblacion" to buy medicines.

Response: Donated commodities shipped under the OFRP are not intended for partners to charge beneficiaries. If there is a strong justification for why the applicant intends to charge beneficiaries, explain that in the application. If a grant is awarded, write a letter requesting approval. If written approval is not granted, a fee to beneficiaries for OFR transported goods will not be allowable and transportation costs for those commodities would not be reimbursed.

38. Is there a certain percentage of the value that the cost must be (such as the cost of the container cannot be more than 10% of the value of the container)? We have run into this elsewhere and wanted to know if this is a rule for this program as well.

Response: No.

39. *The Ocean Freight Reimbursement cannot be used where the PVO or local partner charges the consumer a fee for the supplies or commodities proposed to be shipped under the OFR Program (unless prior written approval is given).* Our organization has partnerships with hospitals and clinics that provide services on a sliding scale. Our donations are frequently used to provide the service and the patient is charged based on their income. This is the case with prosthetics that are donated by Physicians for Peace (PFP). The prosthetics provided could be part of a full prosthetic unit and technicians in those countries provide the services for the entire treatment/care. In cases where the clinic charges for prosthetics that did not use any Physicians for Peace components, the patients still pay according to a sliding scale. We have an eye care program that is similar- the eye exam is provided and frequently the eyeglasses come from PFP donations-the patient pays a nominal fee. Could we obtain written approval in these cases?

Response: See Responses to questions 34 and 35.

40. *Section I.C.3 – third bullet point (page 9): “Where the PVO or local partner charge the consumer a fee for the supplies or commodities proposed to be shipped under the OFR program (unless prior written approval is given)...”* We would like further clarification as to how an applicant goes about getting prior written approval from PVC-ASHA when consumers of shipped supplies are to be charged a fee that constitutes payment for work, a promotion of self-help and economic development, etc. Who does the applicant contact? What is the process? When does the approval take place – prior to submitting the application, or afterwards? If it is to take place prior to submission, in what section of the application is the written approval to be included? Is there a deadline for requesting approval?

Response: This program is not intended for beneficiaries to pay for donated commodities that are shipped free of charge under the OFRP. As stated earlier, the application should explain the rationale for programs that intend to charge beneficiaries. If a grant is awarded, a written request for a waiver can be made.

Questions concerning grant award amount/reporting cycle

41. Is the maximum that can be awarded to an NGO \$150,000 per year for a max of \$300,000 for the two years, or is the max \$150,000 total for the two years? Please clarify.

Response: Yes, contingent on the OFRP receiving sufficient funds, the ceiling for each year is \$150,000. If awarded the maximum, an organization could receive \$300,000.

42. What is the maximum amount allocated to the entire OFR program for FY08-09 and FY 09-10 to date?

Response: We expect the total funding for 2008 to be \$2 million and the same for 2009.

43. How many organizations received OFR funding during the last RFA cycle? \$150,000 is the maximum reimbursement during this cycle – per fiscal year. What was the range of total reimbursement per organization in each fiscal year of the last cycle?

Response: Forty-nine grantees were awarded in the last two-year cycle. The funding range was between \$2,500 and \$100,000.

44. I note that it says that PVOs may have reduced funding if they have pipelines of 50% or more. Sorry for my ignorance but could you explain what is meant by this? Does it refer to whether or not a PVO has already used at least 50% of its allotted grant funding? And, I guess the relevant question for me is, is this be an issue for CWS?

Response: If a current grantee has a substantial pipeline, it will be taken into account if and when decisions are made on the funding level for a new award. We would like to see that the pipeline is 50% or below by June or July of 2008.

45. At this point in time I would like to check in with you to find out about the likely proposal and reporting cycle for the next two years for the OFR program.

Response: Proposals are due January 18th. We anticipate that grants will be awarded during the last quarter of the fiscal year. However, USAID reserves the right not to award any grants.