

ISSUANCE DATE: 3 September 2003  
CLOSING DATE: 29 September 2003

Ladies/Gentlemen:

SUBJECT: Solicitation for Services of a Field Advisor – Afghanistan, Solicitation No. DCHA/OTI-03-2183

The United States Government, represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is seeking applications of qualified U.S. Citizens interested in providing Personal Services Contract (PSC) services as described in the attached solicitation.

Submittals shall be in accordance with the attached information at the place and time specified. In order to be considered for the position a candidate must meet the Minimum Qualifications listed in the solicitation. Consideration and selection will be based on a panel evaluation of the applications vis-a-vis the Evaluation Criteria. Resumes may be attached to the SF-171 or OF-612 and applicants are encouraged to write a brief appendix to demonstrate how prior experience and/or training addresses these criteria. Applicants are reminded and required to sign the certification at the end of the SF-171 or OF-612.

The U.S. mail system is not as reliable as other methods of submitting applications, such as courier, overnight mail services, hand delivery, fax (at the number below) or by e-mail to grender@usaid.gov (hard copies of certain documents may be requested.) Applicants are responsible for submitting the SF-171 or OF-612, so as to reach the Government office designated in the solicitation by the closing date and time specified in the solicitation whether submitted by courier, overnight mail services, hand delivery, fax or e-mail. An application received after the closing date and time will be considered late, unless there is acceptable evidence to establish that it was received by the Government installation prior to the time and date specified in the solicitation.

Any questions as well as submission of proposals in response to this solicitation must be directed to:

Gerald C. Render, Management Team Leader  
U.S. Agency for International Development  
DCHA/Office of Transition Initiatives  
Room 2.09-063, RRB  
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20523-2900

Telephone: 202-712-0113  
Fax: 202-216-3406  
e-mail: grender@usaid.gov

Applications that are submitted by courier service or hand carried must be accepted at the 14th Street entrance of the Ronald Reagan Building. The courier must inform the guard there is a package for OTI, Gerald C. Render. The guard will contact that person and inform them that there is a package for pick-up at the 14th Street entrance. Packages cannot be dropped off at the desk, someone must accept the application from the courier.

Applicants should retain for their records copies of all enclosures which accompany their applications.

Sincerely,

Gerald C. Render  
Contracting Officer



**SOLICITATION NUMBER:** DCHA/OTI-03-2183  
**ISSUANCE DATE:** 3 September 2003  
**CLOSING DATE/TIME:** 29 September 2003, 4:00pm Local Time  
**POSITION TITLE:** Field Advisor - Afghanistan  
**MARKET VALUE:** \$61,251 - \$89,774  
**PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:** One Year  
**PLACE OF PERFORMANCE:** Wash, DC, with a majority of time in Afghanistan  
**SECURITY ACCESS:** Secret Clearance Required  
**AREA OF CONSIDERATION:** U.S. Citizens Only (Security Clearance Required)

## **I. POSITION DESCRIPTION**

### **A. Introduction**

The Office of Transition of Initiatives (OTI) was created in 1994 as a distinct operating unit within the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to help local partners advance peace and democracy in priority, conflict-prone countries. Seizing critical windows of opportunity, OTI works on the ground to provide fast, flexible, short-term assistance targeted at key transition needs.

Countries experiencing a significant political transition in the midst of a disaster or emerging from civil conflict have unique needs that cannot be fully addressed by traditional disaster relief. Timely and effective assistance to promote and consolidate peaceful, democratic advances can make the difference between a successful or a failed transition.

OTI uses such mechanisms as support for development of initiatives to promote national reconciliation; identification of quick-impact community self-help projects to meet urgent material needs; aid to independent media outlets; and community-based organizations to help promote informed debate and broaden public participation.

For more information about OTI and its country programs please see:

[http://www.usaid.gov/hum\\_response/oti/](http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/oti/)

### **B. Country Background**

Decades of conflict, natural disasters, military conflict, government mismanagement, and the related loss of livelihoods and educational opportunities for the Afghan people, especially women and girls, have created a humanitarian and development crisis in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is today desperately poor; distressed by a five year drought; caught in the middle of an active war against Taliban and Al Qaeda terrorist elements; fractionalized by long-standing ethnic, tribal and political rivalries, and; bereft of national

institutional structures and infrastructure. At the same time, the collapse of the Taliban government followed by the Bonn Agreements provide Afghanistan with an unprecedented opportunity to break with the past and offer new hope to its people. Estimates suggest that over 50 percent of the population live in absolute poverty, with average life expectancy only 46 years. Afghans experience exceptionally high levels of malnutrition and maternal and child mortality, and up to 7.5 million Afghans are estimated to be dependent on external food aid. Approximately one-third of the world's polio cases are in Afghanistan. Unemployment is 50 percent or higher, with the illiteracy rate as high as 70 percent. With virtually all key institutions destroyed, the recovery and reconstruction of Afghanistan will require a concerted and financially significant, multi-year, national and multi-donor effort.

In response, USAID's current plans for programs in Afghanistan include assistance for the Rural Economy, Health, Education, Infrastructure, Economic Governance, and Democracy Strengthening. The USAID mission in Afghanistan was established in Afghanistan in early 2002 to carry out this mandate. The mission has a very small program office in Kabul handling project design, monitoring, budget management and reporting. USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives began providing assistance in October 2001.

USAID/OTI's program goal in post-conflict Afghanistan is to support the process of recovery, rehabilitation and political development. Working with local and international partners, USAID/OTI's program is building citizen confidence in the progress of political development, empowering citizens to address basic community needs, and building an alliance between legitimate government structures and citizens. In addition, USAID/OTI supports efforts to strengthen independent media. USAID/OTI's overall program strategy is to help the Afghan government to function outside Kabul by planning and implementing projects guided by community priorities, and by creating and/or strengthening linkages among the national, provincial, and district governments. USAID/OTI's projects strengthen economic recovery by improving essential commercial and public infrastructure and fostering the re-establishment of community cohesion. These projects further contribute to stability and recovery by establishing links between the community and governmental authorities at the local level, while building connections between the provinces and Kabul. USAID/OTI is also improving the communication infrastructure and implementing a comprehensive media strategy.

### **C. Duties And Responsibilities**

The worldwide nature of OTI's program requires a Field Advisor who can provide immediate consultation on the OTI project in Afghanistan. The proper execution of OTI programs demands that an individual with managerial and operational skills for is available for critical work in Washington and the field, determined in this case to be working long-term TDY in Afghanistan, to perform specific operational and advisory

functions.

The Field Advisor's role would be to act primarily as OTI's Afghanistan Country Program Manager or Deputy Director as required in Afghanistan, under the direction and supervision of the designated OTI Country Representative in Afghanistan. The Field Advisor will travel to Afghanistan on long-term assignments of 4-5 months at a time, returning to Washington, DC headquarters two or three times in one year.

This is a position requiring excellent management skills, a high degree of communications skills and negotiation ability to serve as a liaison between the OTI Country Representative for Afghanistan, other USAID field officers, other USAID/OTI implementing partners, Afghan government officials, Afghan community members, and others as required. The incumbent will be sent to a wide range of OTI project sites in Afghanistan. If required by Washington, the incumbent will be sent to other country program sites. In some locations this individual will be called upon to work with officials from other international organizations, bilateral donors, and non-governmental organizations. The Field Advisor will report to the OTI Country Representative or his/her designee.

The incumbent will be responsible for the following types of activities in Afghanistan or other countries as required: assessing the needs of the OTI program, evaluating the work of the grantee, and ensuring the various USG interests are coordinated and policy implemented. The Field Advisor will consult with the OTI/Afghanistan Country Representative, or designee, on a regular basis to develop a clear and coherent basis from which to implement programmatic changes and needs. The Field Advisor may also be required to assist in Washington and/or the field with new country program start-ups, providing operational support in periods of need, review and evaluation of ongoing projects, and country-program closeouts.

The Field Advisor will, to the maximum extent possible:

- Conduct, with in-country representatives, visits to field sites in areas where OTI has projects
- Fill critical staffing needs in Afghanistan or Washington or other countries as required including the provision of support to new country start-ups and on-call technical assistance if required
- Assess the status of micro-projects and report on all coordination activities and command structures, including the effectiveness of each site's operations
- Review and monitor the plans and activities of any OTI grantee and ensure coordination of grantee programs with USAID mission and other international organizations

- Execute other closeout activities related to OTI programs and provide technical assistance to ongoing evaluations of OTI programs in the field.

#### **D. Required Skills**

Because of the need for quick response and creativity in complex situations, the Field Advisor is expected to operate within a team and also with autonomy when required for example with the OTI/Afghanistan Country Representative is out of country), responsibility and authority. The sensitive nature of the work demands that the incumbent be an individual with good skills of social interaction and a skilled interpreter of politically charged situations. Since work may require continued changes in program direction and implementation, including frequent coordination, the individual will be someone who is highly flexible and willing to work under conditions of ongoing change.

In order to be considered for this position a candidate must meet the Minimum Qualifications listed below. Consideration and selection will be based on panel evaluation of the Evaluation Factors. Applicants are encouraged to write a brief appendix to the OF-612 or SF-171 to demonstrate how prior experience and/or training addresses these factors.

#### **E. Minimum Qualifications**

- A minimum of five years of professional experience and project management in USG foreign affairs agencies or international affairs organizations
- A professional degree in the field of international development, social sciences or equivalent experience (4 years of directly related experience)
- Demonstrated experience in the conceptualization, design and management of projects similar to OTI's.
- U.S. citizenship and ability to receive a U.S. Government security clearance and a medical clearance are required in accordance with USAID hiring policy

#### **F. Evaluation Factors**

Consideration and selection will be based on panel evaluation of the applications in accordance with the Evaluation Factors. The following criteria are listed in descending order of importance:

1. Experience working and communicating with USAID and/or US Embassies overseas to achieve critical, high profile objectives;
2. Ability to operate independently or on a team in complex political or emergency situations in pre/post-conflict countries or countries undergoing political transitions;
3. Experience designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating relief and/or development activities overseas, especially small grant activities;
4. Excellent written and personal communication skills, demonstrating an ability to communicate and represent the OTI mission, core values and ethos to key partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries both within and without the USG, and from all walks of life;
5. Ability and willingness to take direction from a supervisor, as well as the ability and willingness to give direction as necessary to staff or implementing partners as a supervisor.
6. An active or recent (within 1 year) USG security clearance with a US Government Agency

## **II. BENEFITS/ALLOWANCES:**

As a matter of policy, and as appropriate, a PSC is normally authorized the following benefits and allowances:

### **A. Benefits:**

- (1) Employee's FICA Contribution
- (2) Contribution toward Health & Life Insurance
- (3) Pay Comparability Adjustment
- (4) Eligibility for Worker's Compensation
- (5) Vacation & Sick Leave

### **B. Allowances (If Applicable):**

- (1) Post Differential (Chapter 500\*) and
- (2) Danger Pay (Section 650\*)

\* Dept. of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR) (Government Civilians Foreign Areas).

**C. Federal Taxes:** USPSCs are not exempt from payment of Federal Income taxes.

### **III. APPLYING:**

#### **A. Qualified Individuals should note that:**

1. Applications must be received by the closing date and time at the address specified in the cover letter or they will not be considered eligible for evaluation or award, unless the Contracting Officer determines that the documents were mishandled by the receiving agency.
2. To ensure consideration of applications for the intended position, please reference the solicitation number on your application, and as the subject line in any cover letter, as well as using the address/delivery point specified in this solicitation.
3. The highest ranking applicants may be selected for an interview, but an interview is not always necessary.
4. The market value of this position is the equivalent of a GS-13 level position. The actual salary of the successful candidate will be negotiated within the daily pay range depending on qualifications, experience and salary history. **Salaries over and above the top of the pay range will not be entertained or negotiated.**

#### **B. List of REQUIRED Forms for PSCs**

Forms outlined below can found at  
[www.usaid.gov/procurement\\_bus\\_opp/procurement/psc\\_solicit/](http://www.usaid.gov/procurement_bus_opp/procurement/psc_solicit/)

1. Standard Form 171 or Optional Form 612. (U.S. Government Standard Form 171 or Optional Form 612 are available at the USAID web site, [http://www.usaid.gov/procurement\\_bus\\_opp/procurement/forms](http://www.usaid.gov/procurement_bus_opp/procurement/forms) or internet <http://fillform.gsa.gov>, or at Federal offices.)

Forms 2 through 5 shall be completed only upon the advice of the Contracting Officer that an applicant is the successful candidate for the job.

2. Medical History and Examination (DS-1843).
3. Questionnaire for Sensitive Positions (for National Security) (SF-86), or
4. Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions (SF-85).
5. Finger Print Card (FD-258).

#### **IV. CONTRACT INFORMATION BULLETINS (CIBs) PERTAINING TO PSCs**

CIBs contain changes to USAID policy and General Provisions in USAID regulations and contracts. Please refer to this web site [http://www.usaid.gov/procurement\\_bus\\_opp/procurement/psc\\_solicit/](http://www.usaid.gov/procurement_bus_opp/procurement/psc_solicit/) to determine which CIBs apply to this contract.